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## **LIFE IN THE BODY**

As we allow God to teach us how to effectively live as a body, we will see love and unity spring forth that you may not have experienced before. Effective body life begins when each individual is rightly related to God in an intimate love relationship. It continues as all members become rightly related to Jesus Christ as the Head of the church. Right relationships with God are far more important than buildings, budgets, programs, methods, church personnel, or size.

### **1. How should we relate to one another in the body?**

- The Scriptures teach a church body how to be rightly related to one another.
- As you read the New Testament, you will find many instructions that speak specifically to the way God's people ought to relate to one another. Healthy guidelines are not in the Bible just for you to study, memorize, discuss, or debate. They are written so you can know how

to experience abundant life in Christ. When you have doubts about how to apply a Scripture, take your concern to the Lord. His Spirit can help you understand spiritual truth.

**2. Read Scripture below and under each one write a brief statement of God's will for relationships in the church body.**

a. "Welcome anyone who is weak in faith, but don't argue about disputed matters. Each of us will give an account of himself to God. Therefore, let us no longer judge one another. Instead decide never to put a stumbling block or pitfall in the way of your brother or sister." (Rom. 14:1,12-13).

**God's will:** Be patient and accepting of those whose faith is weak or those who are immature.

b. "No one is to seek his own good, but the good of others." (1 Cor. 10:24).

**God's will:** Don't be selfish. Seek the good of others even at your own expense.

c. "Therefore, putting away lying, speak the truth, each one to his neighbor, because we are members of one another" (Eph. 4:25).

**God's will:** Be truthful in all you say.

d. "No foul language should come from your mouth, but only what is good for building up someone in need, so that it gives grace to those who hear" (Eph. 4:29).

**God's will:** Be an encourager. Build people up. Keep their needs in mind as you speak.

e. "Let all bitterness, anger and wrath, shouting and slander be removed from you, along with all malice. And be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving one another, just as God also forgave you" (Eph. 4:31-32).

**God's will:** Get rid of anger, arguments, and slander. Don't intentionally try to hurt another person (physically, emotionally, or spiritually).

f. "Speaking to one another in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, singing and making music with your heart to the Lord, giving thanks always for everything to God the Father" (Eph. 5:19-20).

**God's will:** Encourage one another in your joint worship of God. Make music together.

g. "Submitting to one another in the fear of Christ" (Eph. 5:21).

**God's will:** Die to self-daily and submit to one another. Do this in reverence for Christ, who submitted Himself to death on the cross for you.

h. "Bearing with one another and forgiving one another if anyone has a grievance against another. As the Lord has forgiven you, so you are also to forgive. Above all, put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity" (Col. 3:13-14).

**God's will:** Forgive one another as Christ forgave you. Don't let a root of bitterness remain between you and another.

- Be patient with one another, even when you have been mistreated or offended. Forgive even the worst offenses as God does.
- Love one another.

### A COVENANT RELATIONSHIP

(1 Corinthians 12:7,18) tells us God adds members to the body as it pleases Him for the common good of the whole body. When God add a member to our body, we should rejoice and began talking about what being the body of Christ meant. As the pastor I want the congregation to establish covenant relationship with the new members. (A covenant is a sacred pledge or agreement.)

- Do you believe God is adding you to this body of Christ? (Or tell us how you have come to sense God is adding you to this body.)
- God is adding you to our church for a reason. He wants to do something through your life to help us become all He wants us to become.
- Will you allow God to work through you to make this body more complete?
- Will you open your life to allow this body to minister to you and help you grow into all God wants you to become?

## **Do the Body you're in match your assignment?**

### **GOD BUILDS THE BODY TO MATCH THE ASSIGNMENT**

- If you wanted to be a weightlifter, you would train your body so it could lift weights effectively. If you wanted to be a sprinter, you would train your body differently. When you want to do a job well, you train your body to match the assignment.
- When God builds a local church as the body of Christ, He adds members to the body and equips them to match the assignment He has for that body. He builds a local church body in a way that enables it to respond to His activity. Then God accomplishes His purposes through it.
- Because we know God builds the body to match the assignment, we should pay close attention to the people He adds to it. Sometimes that indicates an assignment God is preparing us for.

### **SUMMARY STATEMENTS**

- Right relationships with God are far more important than buildings, budgets, programs, methods, church personnel, size, or anything else.
- God doesn't add members to the body accidentally.
- God builds the body to match the assignment.
- God builds the body, gives it an assignment, and equips it to carry out its assignment.
- We should pay close attention to the people God adds to our church.