

### Learning to Live with One Another

*Oh! To live above with saints I love, that would be glory.  
To live below with saints I know? That's another story!*

(An old Irish toast)

Relationships can be wonderful, but they can also be hard. Just ask anyone in a good marriage how much work it takes. Or visit an elementary school classroom where the teacher and students get along well together; it doesn't take long to see all that goes into it. It's no different in the church.

Jesus knows this. He didn't say, "Just believe in me and you'll all get along just fine!" Instead he said, "If you want to show people you believe in me, you need to love each other." It didn't stop there either. Jesus went on to tell us that the reason we are to love each other is so that even more people will believe in him.

God's people work best by being in relationship with him and with each other. As we will see this week, the Holy Spirit wants to use us all – together – to build God's Kingdom and the Body of Christ.

#### Monday – United with Christ

*"Kingdom transformation begins by recognizing that the kingdom is about a personal connection with Jesus; it begins by turning to Jesus."* Scot McKnight, Professor at North Park University

1. Please read Phil. 2:1-4. This passage is all about relationships. What is the main point of these first four verses?
2. What is the foundation upon which we can pursue unity and begin to value others above ourselves (vs. 1)? Which of the realities in verse 1 do you experience?
3. What practical things can you do to implement the encouragement found in verses 3-4?

#### Tuesday – The Attitude of Christ

*"The Son of God became a man to enable men to become sons of God."* C.S. Lewis

1. Read Philippians 5:3-11. In what ways did Christ practice the lifestyle Paul affirms in verses 3-4? How was he selfless? How did he practice humility?
2. Why was Christ able to do this? What did he possess in his relationship with the Father that enabled him to take the "very nature of a servant?"
3. In the Scriptures it is common that exaltation follows humiliation. How do we see this truth in the life of Christ?

**Prayer Focus** – Ask the Father to grant you the grace to take small steps toward becoming a servant of others.

#### Wednesday - Led by the Spirit

*"As we groan, so also does the Holy Spirit groan with us, putting a meaning into our aspirations which they would not have of themselves."* William Sanday, 19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> c. British theologian

1. Central to all relationships is that of learning about the role of the Holy Spirit in enabling us to love and serve others. Please read 1 Corinthians 12:1-6. What does this passage tell you about unity in Christ?
2. What is the central focus of Jesus' description of the Holy Spirit in John 14:16-17, 15:26 and 16:12-15?
3. Please read 1 Cor. 12:7-13. What are some of the different ways the Holy Spirit equips us to do God's work?

**Making it Personal:** Pray for the Holy Spirit to lead you into unity with others who belong to Jesus.

#### Thursday – We're All in this Together

*"Has it ever occurred to you that one hundred pianos all tuned to the same fork are automatically tuned to each other?"* A.W. Tozer, 20<sup>th</sup> c. American pastor and writer

1. Please read 1 Corinthians 12:14-26. Consider the variety of functions you have in your own physical body, and describe the intricate ways the Body of Christ (all those who belong to Jesus) works together.
2. Have you ever seen Christians sharing the joy or pain experienced by another Christian (1 Corinthians 12:26)? How did they show their sympathy or join the celebration?
3. Is there someone you can rejoice with right now? Someone you can suffer with?

**Prayer Focus:** Pray for those in need in our church, and that the Body of Christ would come alongside and share in that need. Ask God to show you what you can do, and follow through on it.

#### Friday – A Job for Everybody

*"To find out what one is fitted to do, and to secure an opportunity to do it, is the key to happiness."* Richard Cumberland, 17<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> c. English clergyman and philosopher

1. Please read 1 Corinthians 12:27-30. How should a person view the way that the Holy Spirit has chosen to equip him or her to do God's work?
2. According to Rom. 12:3-8, Eph. 4:11-16 and 1 Cor. 10:31, what is the purpose of exercising the Spirit's gifts?

**Text Insight:** Paul did not intend his lists of spiritual gifts to be exhaustive. There are many other passages that identify more ways the Spirit equips God's people to serve.

**Making it Personal:** How can you keep your focus on the relationship God has given you with him, so that you glorify him in your service to others?

#### Weekend – The Most Excellent Way

*"We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence then is not an act but a habit."* Aristotle, ancient Greek philosopher

1. Please read 1 Corinthians 12:31-13:13. What actions are the "most excellent way" to use the Spirit's gifts?
2. According to Romans 13:8, Galatians 5:13 and Ephesians 4:2, what comes first for Christians? How might God's people show their love to one another as they use the gifts God has given them?
3. In John 13:34-35 and 15:8-17, what importance did Jesus put on our love for one another? What is the purpose of this love, according to John 15:8?

**Making it Personal:** Pray that God will build in you the habit of loving his people, so that God will be known by those who do not yet know him.