

Sermon Title: The Church Family Dynamics of Christian Love

Sermon Text: Romans 12:10-13

Sermon Purpose: To call the hearer to reflect the practices of Church family love toward one another.

Sermon Proposition: There are 10 building blocks of church family love.

Introduction:

Charles H. Spurgeon – “Baptist minister of London, England, had a pastor-friend, Dr. Newman Hall, who wrote a book entitled *Come to Jesus*. Another preacher published an article in which he ridiculed Hall, who bore it patiently for a little while. But when the article gained popularity, Hall sat down and wrote a letter of protest. His answer was full of retaliatory invectives that out-did anything in the article which attacked him. Before mailing the letter, Hall took it to Spurgeon for his opinion.

Spurgeon read it carefully then, handing it back, asserted it was excellent and that the writer of the article deserved it all. ‘But,’ he added, ‘it just lacks one thing.’ After a pause Spurgeon continued, ‘Underneath your signature you ought to write the words, “Author of *Come to Jesus*.”’

Two godly men looked at each other for a few moments. Then Hall tore the letter to shreds. [Charles Swindoll, *Swindoll’s Ultimate Book of Illustrations & Quotes*, Thomas Nelson, Nashville, 1998, pp. 41.]

I. Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love. V.10a

Paul’s focus on admonishing Christians to be “devoted” (philostogias) is a compound of Philos (friend, friendly, friendship love) and storge (natural family love, not based on personal attraction or desirability). Yet, brotherly love (Philadelphia are a compound word related to (tender affection) and (brother). **1 John 5:1; 4:20; 1 John 2:9-11; 1 John 3:10, 17-19**

John 13:34-35 "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. **35** "By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

1 Thessalonians 4:9 But concerning brotherly love you have no need that I should write to you, for you yourselves are taught by God to love one another;

The idea and focus is church family relationships. Be loving of one another.

II. Be kindly affectionate to one another by giving preference to one another. V.10b

This is the idea of surpassing one another in showing honor, care, mercy, and concern. This is a reflection on v.3, the virtue of humility. This action and attitude reflects a concern that is mutual.

Philippians 2:3 Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. (Phi 2:3 NKJ)

The idea of putting others first, but it is without hypocrisy.

III. Be kindly affectionate to one another by not lagging in diligence. V.11a

To not be lazy in zeal and intensity. The temptation to lose love for or steam in our Christian life is real. The lifelong pursuit to reverence God, live out God’s will, and to worshipfully serve is real. In our pursuit of what is good, acceptable, and well pleasing to God one must be strenuously persistent.

(Ephesians 5:15-16)

John 9:4 "I must work the works of Him who sent Me while it is day; *the* night is coming when no one can work.

Galatians 6:10 Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.

Ecclesiastes 9:10 Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might; for *there is* no work or device or knowledge or wisdom in the grave where you are going.

IV. Be kindly affectionate to one another by being fervent in spirit. V.11b

1 Corinthians 9:26 Therefore I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as *one who* beats the air.
Colossians 1:29 To this *end* I also labor, striving according to His working which works in me mightily.

The believer is to be full of zeal, the image “of being set on fire” a fire that never burns out. It is the idea of enthusiasm, being at a boiling point, or about ready to boil. To boil in our consecration, worship, humility, service, pursuit of what is good, in order to cling to them. We are to allow the Holy Spirit to “set us on fire.” Do not grieve, quench, resist but submit.

V. Be kindly affectionate to one another by serving the Lord. V.11c

This is the service of a slave (*duleue*) or bondservant. No place for self-centeredness (such as displayed by Corinthians). The idea here is the service of a servant, whose only reason for existing is to do the master’s will. The power or ability to accomplish this service is from our Master Jesus Christ, through the Holy Spirit.

(Colossians 1:29)

1 Corinthians 12:11 But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills.

VI. Be kindly affectionate to one another by rejoicing in hope. V.12a

The hope is the future hope, that is a present reality, that we will share in the glory of God, and Jesus Christ. Without this supernatural hope, we could not survive the Christian life.

(Romans 8:24-25; Hebrews 11)

1 Corinthians 15:58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

Matthew 25:21 "His lord said to him, 'Well *done*, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.'

2 Timothy 4:8 Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.

VII. Be kindly affectionate to one another by being patient in tribulation. V.12b

The end goal or destination of glory, can only be reached by traveling the path of suffering and tribulation. There is the need for endurance in the Christian life. Therefore, we “bear up under” whatever may come. **(Romans 5:2-5)**

VIII. Be kindly affectionate to one another by continuing steadfastly in prayer. V.12c

Because of this hope, and the potential for tribulation, the natural response is constant prayer. We breath in God’s person, we breath out prayer, we breath in God’s promises, we breath out prayer, we breath in God’s worth, we breath out prayer, we breath in etc.

IX. Be kindly affectionate to one another by distributing to the needs of the saints. V.13a

The supernatural life which the Holy Spirit produces in each and every believer, that is submitted to His will, lives a life that is outward other focused, not inward me focused. The passion to meet the needs (legitimate) of fellow believers is more important than meeting our own. The idea is partnership of mutual sharing.

(Galatians 6:10)

1 Timothy 6:17-18 Command those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty, nor to trust in uncertain riches but in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy. **18** *Let them* do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share,

Acts 2:42, 44 And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers. ...**44** Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common,

1 Peter 4:13 but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ's sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy.

X. Be kindly affectionate to one another by being given to hospitality. V.13b

The literal meaning of this phrase in the Greek is “pursuing the love of strangers.” We should look for opportunities to love the brethren and strangers.

Hebrews 13:2 Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so *doing* some have unwittingly entertained angels.

Titus 1:8 but hospitable, a lover of what is good, sober-minded, just, holy, self-controlled,

Luke 14:12-14 Then He also said to him who invited Him, "When you give a dinner or a supper, do not ask your friends, your brothers, your relatives, nor rich neighbors, lest they also invite you back, and you be repaid. **13** "But when you give a feast, invite *the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind.* **14** "And you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you; for you shall be repaid at the resurrection of the just."

3 John 5-8 Beloved, you do faithfully whatever you do for the brethren and for strangers, **6** who have borne witness of your love before the church. *If* you send them forward on their journey in a manner worthy of God, you will do well, **7** because they went forth for His name's sake, taking nothing from the Gentiles. **8** We therefore ought to receive such, that we may become fellow workers for the truth.

2 Timothy 1:16-18 The Lord grant mercy to the household of Onesiphorus, for he often refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain; **17** but when he arrived in Rome, he sought me out very zealously and found *me*. **18** The Lord grant to him that he may find mercy from the Lord in that Day-- and you know very well how many ways he ministered *to me* at Ephesus.

If

“If I belittle those whom I am called to serve, talk of their weak points in contrast perhaps with what I think of as my strong points; if I adopt a superior attitude, forgetting ‘Who made thee to differ? and what hast thou that thou has not received?’ then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If I take offense easily, if I am content to continue in a cool unfriendliness, though friendship be possible, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If I feel bitterly towards those who condemn me, as it seems to me, unjustly, forgetting that if they knew me as I know myself they would condemn me much more, then I know nothing of Calvary love.”

-Amy Carmichael

[Charles R. Swindoll, *Swindoll's Ultimate Book of Illustrations & Quotes*, Thomas Nelson, Nashville, 1998, pp. 356.]