

Love the body of Christ with Christ's love

For a Christian, it's inspiring to realise that *"God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit"* (Romans 5:5). As stunning as that truth is, each Christian is responsible for what they do with that love. While it's one thing knowing that nothing *"will be able to separate us from the love of God"* (Romans 8:39), it's a whole different matter as to how you live His love toward others.



It should go without saying, but your God oriented love must *"be genuine,"* and to do that the Lord says you are to *"abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good"* (Romans 12:9). This is where Christians often have a conflict of interest. Worldly influence and selfish desires have little or no interest in holy living.

At some point, sin whispers in your ear saying; it's OK to do and say what you want. After all, sin argues, you're entitled to be honest, even though your honesty may crush the other person. Sin always puts self-expression before others, and usually at others expense.

Evaluate as God does

Since *"all that you"* do is to *"be done in love"* (1 Corinthians 16:14); it's healthy to evaluate what you think is the way you express love to others. Looking at self from God's perspective is purifying, especially when considering the way in which you

do and say love. Remember, *“love builds up”* (1 Corinthians 8:1), it does not beat the other person down. It doesn't manipulate, nor does it use innuendo or silence to manoeuvre others to where you want.

Authentic, Christ generated love, isn't motivated by self-gratification. Therefore, self-vindication is excluded in preference for outdoing *“one another in showing honour”* (Romans 12:10). Self always comes second, just as it did for Jesus Christ, who *“humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross”* (Philippians 2:8). No wonder Paul instructed the Philippi church to *“have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus”* (Philippians 2:5). Beloved, choose self-sacrificing love! It's the only legitimate love which is from Christ, and others need to see, hear, and feel it through your life.

That being said; the body of Christ does not consist of strict ethnic groupings such as *“Greek and Jew ...but Christ is all, and in all”* (Colossians 3:11). In this Jesus culture, believers are called to *“put on then... compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive”* (Colossians 3:12-13).

Attitude grows behaviour

These attitudes and behaviours make the church a sanctuary for believers in Jesus Christ who chose to make Christ's behaviour their behaviour. And what a wonderful place the church is when Christians behave like Jesus!

However, take note of what Paul says is the crowning jewel of all Christ-like character; *“above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony”* (Colossians 3:14). True unity is constructed with Christ's love as the glue which pulls every other beautiful attribute together in humility towards one another. *“Let each of you look not only*

to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 2:4-5).

I encourage you to love the body of Christ with Christ’s love by passing these truths on to another believer for their benefit. Share Christ for His glory and enjoy!

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