

SIDE TOUR 5: “the Church” vs “the church”

Introductory Definitions:

The ‘Church’:

The Church is the ekklesia or ‘called out’ ones of God. The Church is comprised of all those that have been transferred (called out) from the kingdom of darkness to the Kingdom of Light by the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The Biblical term “born again” refers to those who have been born by the Holy Spirit of God. The work of the Holy Spirit accomplishes this spiritual rebirth in connection with the Word of God. All those who confess Jesus as Lord and believe in their hearts that He rose from the dead comprise the Church. The Church confesses Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior in word and deed.

The Church is the living, holy temple of God comprised of people who are in Christ. Jesus Christ is the cornerstone and the Church is built upon the inerrant Word of God, prayer, fellowship and the Lord’s Table as described in Acts 2:42. The Church is a living organism and is referred to in the Scriptures as the Bride of Christ.

Jesus Christ is the Chief Shepherd and Head of the Church. The Holy Spirit directs the Church in willing and working for God’s purposes and pleasure. The sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit is preparing the Church to be presented to Jesus Christ as the Bride.

The ‘church’:

The ‘church’ in this discussion is the organizational structure that many times may or may not house the Church. The ‘church’ has various leadership styles, denominations, programs and physical buildings. The ‘church’ is not the Church. Many people refer to a building as a church. The Church may meet in a building called a church but the building is not the Church. The organization meeting in the building called a church may or may not be the Church. The programs started by the organization meeting in the building called a church may or may not represent the activities of the Church. The leadership structures comprised of pastors, elders, deacons, teachers or shepherds may or may not be consistent with the leadership of the Church as outlined in Scripture.

The ‘church’ may be large or small and organized around a particular truth or person (i.e. Baptists, Lutherans, Pentecostals, Methodists, etc.). These organizations are not the Church. Membership in a particular church does not mean that a person is a member of The Body of Christ, the Church. Leadership in the church does not mean that a person is Biblically qualified to be a leader in the Church. Training in a particular school or seminary does not qualify a person to be a ‘pastor’ or leader in the Church.

The 'church' is an organization that may have 'sheep and goats' or 'wheat and tares' growing in their midst (real vs. false followers of Christ). The 'church' is merely a structure with some type of leadership and programs that may promote itself as the real Church.

The ' church's' Organizational Structure

God gave Moses an organizational structure for leading and governing God's people in the Old Testament. The structure, leadership, purpose and rules were explicitly communicated by God and were to be followed by His people. The Tabernacle in the wilderness was designed by God. The utensils in the Tabernacle were described and made to God's design. The sacrifices were prescribed by God. The leadership was appointed by God. There is no doubt that God knew exactly what He wanted and how it should be done and by whom. God communicated to His people through Moses (God to Moses to His people). After the priests were appointed, God communicated through the priests to His people (God to priest to people).

Historically, The 'church' adopted a 'God to priest to people' format for religious life. The Catholic church trained priests to be the mediators between God and man. Buildings were the center of worship much like the Tabernacle and eventual Temples were to the Jews. Various physical utensils and religious practices were used to practice their religion. This was 'church' to many people.

Protestants continued with a similar format of worship but tried to focus on Biblical doctrines instead of church doctrines. The structure remained the same in various degrees. The center of a town was the church building. The pastor or preacher is called a man of God. These preachers bring to the people God's Word Sunday after Sunday. The structure of 'God to pastor to people' is still practiced. The pastor or preacher is viewed rightly or wrongly as having the inside track with God. People go to church to hear God's Word and do God's work. The center of religious activity is the building or program orchestrated by the 'church'.

The 'church' has been organized in the USA around an IRS non-profit corporation status. The very word 'incorporation' necessitates a particular structure to be legal and get the appropriate tax status. Requirements for a corporation include various tax laws that control some of what can and cannot be taught by the leaders of the corporation. The non-profit corporation status may drive the direction the church takes for organizing its leaders and boards and limit the content of what can be shared (e.g. political endorsements, etc.). If the government can change what is legal and not legal to be taught in the non-profit corporate church, then the church is subject and could be controlled by man's government._

The 'church's' Leadership

The people of Israel rejected God's leadership and wanted to be like the other nations. They wanted a human king. Although God is the King of Kings and was very capable to lead His people, the people wanted a king. God gave them Saul. Saul was not God's first choice. His first choice was Himself. He gave the people a man who outwardly looked 'kingly'. Saul was a head taller than anyone else and was a warrior. When Saul was confronted by a person larger than himself, Goliath, he shrunk back in fear because he was not God's leader. A young warrior, trained in the sheep pastures to trust in God, stood taller in character and spirit than all others and defeated the giant. Humans do a poor job in picking leaders

The priests and kings led the people in the Old Testament. The series of kings in Israel and Judah demonstrated that earthly kings were not very good at leading God's people. Of the 39 kings only 8 were good. The rest did evil in the sight of God by introducing or continuing to worship false gods. They introduced or continued to engage in despicable practices.

During Jesus' time the Pharisees and Sadducees were the spiritual leaders of God's people. Jesus took them to task over their values, leadership styles and hardened hearts. Following Jesus' resurrection a new thing happened. The Church was birthed. The old leadership (apostles) were reformulated and two major groups were being brought together as one (Jews and Gentiles) in Christ. Peter and the other apostles were primarily speaking to the Jews and Paul was primarily reaching out to the Gentiles. There was a conclave of leaders in Jerusalem but God quickly dispersed them by persecution.

The 'church' has trained and promoted people who from all outward appearances should be leaders. There are a multitude of capable, confident and trained people who lead the 'church'. Many times these people are expected (or expect of themselves) to be capable in all areas of ministry. They should be able to teach and preach good messages. They should be able to lead large and small groups. They should be able to keep things running financially and practically. They should provide vision for the 'church' and have the programs to accomplish the vision.

The leaders of the 'church' can be a "one- man (or woman or other) show" or one of a team of leaders. There is usually a single lead pastor or leader that has been given the authority to rule the 'church'. The normally successful leader is good at the 'business' of the church organization.

The 'church's' Purpose

The 'church' serves a religious need in many people's lives. A person can go to a 'church' and feel that their religious obligation to God has been fulfilled. The 'church' can be filled with the religious lost. People can go to 'church' all their lives and never come into a living relationship with Jesus Christ.

The purpose of the 'church' is to perpetuate itself. The structure, leadership, programs and building are all flexible to meet the goal of continuing the 'church's' existence. Of course, God should be glorified and people should be added and all methods should and can be used to accomplish the vision of the 'church'. But, the bottom line is making sure the organization stays running.

The 'church's' Growth

Along with the 'church's' purpose is growing the organization. The bigger the better. More programs, more locations, more leaders, more people have been a sign of a successful 'church'. In reality a little church with an aging congregation and a smattering of young people may be comfortable for some, but it is not what is considered successful.

The 'church' growth movement and prosperity doctrine have forced one to consider the similarity of the 'church' to how successful businesses are started and run. Businesses need dynamic leadership, a good product tailored to meet the people's wants and desires, convenience for access and a good name. The 'church' has operated with the same principles to grow their congregations. Many large churches are centered on one dynamic leader; the messages are inspiring and can be spiritual; there are many convenient services to attend; the reputation of the church remains good within the circle of those that think similarly.

The 'Church's' Organizational Structure

The Church is an organism. It is a living, breathing, growing, dynamic life form. When Jesus came He changed religion to a relationship with God. The Old Testament religious organizational structure was done away with. The center of the Old Testament worship was the sacrifices that were made for various sins and offerings. Jesus is the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world. The Old Testament structure was just a shadow of the reality that is found in Jesus Christ.

The Church is organized around the risen Christ. The Lord's Table is an outward reminder of this truth. The Lord's Table is not some ritual or righteous act that is performed to gain God's favor. The heart of the Lord's Table is to remind the Church that life comes from the One who suffered, died and conquered the grave. The Church lives because He lives.

The closest analogy to the Church is the family. Both The Church and the family were ordained by God. The life of a family is centered on the name of the family. The Church is centered on the Name of Jesus. A family remains a family even if they change their housing arrangements. Whether in a castle, condominium or the street, a family remains a family by the blood they share. The Church remains the Church no matter in what structure they meet because of the blood of Christ they share.

The Church's Leadership

Leaders are needed. Leaders need to be equipped. The Church's leaders are equipped by the Holy Spirit. They are formed in the forges of life in Christ. The qualifications for leaders are clear. God describes His leaders all through the Bible. Moses: 40 years in training in Egypt, 40 years in the desert, 40 years in the wilderness; David: leading, warring, loving, failing, surviving; Joseph: dreaming, slavery; ruling; prison; leading and ruling; Nehemiah, Elijah, Isaiah, Amos, all great and small forged for leadership by life.

I Timothy and Titus describe the New Testament leaders' character and life qualifications.

" It is a trustworthy statement: if any man aspires to the office of overseer, it is a fine work he desires to do. An overseer, then, must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not addicted to wine or pugnacious, but gentle, peaceable, free from the love of money. He must be one who manages his own household well, keeping his children under control with all dignity (but if a man does not know how to manage his own household, how will he take care of the church of God?), and not a new convert, so that he will not become conceited and fall into the condemnation incurred by the devil. And he must have a good reputation with those outside the church, so that he will not fall into reproach and the snare of the devil. Deacons likewise must be men of dignity, not double-tongued, or addicted to much wine or fond of sordid gain, but holding to the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. These men must also first be tested; then let them serve as deacons if they are beyond reproach. Women must likewise be dignified, not malicious gossips, but temperate, faithful in all things. Deacons must be husbands of only one wife, and good managers of their children and their own households. For those who have served well as deacons obtain for themselves a high standing and great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus." (1 Timothy 3:1-13, NASB95)

" For this reason I left you in Crete, that you would set in order what remains and appoint elders in every city as I directed you, namely, if any man is above reproach, the husband of one wife, having children who believe, not accused of dissipation or rebellion. For the overseer must be above reproach as God's steward, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not addicted to wine, not pugnacious, not fond of sordid gain, but hospitable, loving what is good, sensible, just, devout, self-controlled, holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching, so that he will be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict." (Titus 1:5-9, NASB95)

These leaders have the high calling of representing and reflecting Christ in their lives as they lead; in their families; in the Church; in the world. The Church's leaders have their values straight. They pay attention to their spiritual, marital, parental and

employmental priorities. The leadership gifts that they are given are stewarded for building the Church and not their own ministries. They have the same calling that Jesus shared in the upper room...to serve and not to be served; give their lives for others; equip others for the work of ministry; help all believers to be ministers in Christ.

The Church's leaders hold God and His will tightly and their own goals, reputations and concerns lightly. Their heart and passion is to see Jesus glorified in life or death. God has given the Church a living example by those who are giving their lives up in countries that are persecuting the Church. These leaders have a goal to duplicate themselves so when they are imprisoned or killed; the Church continues replicating the same passion and love for Jesus.

The Church's leaders come from all walks of life. They may be trained like Peter in the 'blue collar' world of making a living. They may be trained like Paul in the scholarly pursuits of learning. Either way to live is Christ and to die is gain. Either way every gift or talent is employed to build the Kingdom of God and not their own kingdom. They die daily. They take up their cross and follow Him whether they are compensated in this life or not.

"And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, **for the equipping of the saints** for the work of service, to the **building up of the body of Christ**; until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ." (Ephesians 4:11-13, NASB95)

The Church's Purpose

Loving God and loving others is the purpose of The Church. The Church is to die to self and live to God. The way the Church interacts is clearly shown in Acts 2:42: Apostle's teaching, Lord's Table, fellowship and prayer. The Bible is a love letter to God's people. It shows the Church how best to love God in spirit and truth. Remembering the Lord's Table; singing and making melody in the heart; rejoicing in all things; giving thanks in all things; fleeing evil; pursuing God in prayer; engaging in spiritual warfare...means loving God.

Please see the attached study on the 'one another' passages for a more detailed explanation of how the Church is to be in relationship with one another. The real purpose of the Church is to be in relationship with God and one another to the glory of God.

The Church's Growth

The Church grows just like the cells in the body...multiply then divide. The Church is a living organism. As a cell of believers grows it will get to a point when it

should divide. The purpose is not to grow so big that it can't take care of one another. Leadership must be developed to help support and equip the new cell to do the same.

Paul taught Timothy in the presence of other men who in turn would be able to teach others.

"The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also." (2 Timothy 2:2, NASB95)

There are four generations of believers referred to in this passage: 1.) Paul 2.) Timothy 3.) Faithful men 4.) Others. This type of growth is organic. The equipping and discipling of others is at the heart of the Church.

"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." (Matthew 28:19-20, NASB95)

The principle is to grow intentionally and divide joyfully. As people are added by God's grace, the intent is to equip the believer to minister to others using the gifts God has given them. God will add those that can lead, serve, give, teach, etc. When a compliment of gifting is duplicated within a cell, the cell is ready to divide. The division is embraced knowing that we will all be rejoined in heaven at the feet of Jesus. The growth model has a vision to become the good leaven in every neighborhood in the world as God leads. The goal is to build and expand the Kingdom of God.

The Church is free from the necessity to have a particular building or program or leader. The Church's head is Jesus. The Holy Spirit leads The Church in loving Him and loving others. Under-shepherds are not elevated but used to equip others to minister. Every member is equipped and encouraged to minister their gifting. The Church can manifest in any environment, rich or poor with the love that transcends any race, religion, nationality or family.

One Another Study: Relationships in the Church

THAT WHICH MUST BE *AVOIDED* IN OUR RELATIONSHIPS WITH ONE ANOTHER

#1 -- "And at that time many will fall away and will *deliver up* (betray) one another and *hate* one another and most people's love will grow cold" (Matthew 24:10, 12). "For we also once were foolish ourselves spending our life in malice and envy, hateful, *hating* one another" (Titus 3:3).

#2 -- "How can you believe if you *accept praise from* one another, yet make no effort to obtain the praise that comes from the only God?" (John 5:44). See also: Galatians 1:10.

#3 -- "Jesus answered and said to them, 'Do not *grumble with* one another'" (John 6:43). This is the Greek word *gogguzo* which means "to murmur, grumble; to express indignant complaint; to utter secret and sullen discontent; to speak privately and in a low voice" (*The Analytical Greek Lexicon of the NT*). See also: I Peter 4:9.

#4 -- "And on the following day he appeared to them as they were fighting together, and he tried to reconcile them in peace, saying, 'Men, you are brethren, why do you *injure* (hurt, wrong, act unjustly toward) one another?'" (Acts 7:26).

#5 -- "And there arose such a sharp disagreement that they *separated* (parted company) *from* one another" (Acts 15:39). This incident has been viewed both positively and negatively. The truth is probably a combination of the two.

#6 -- "The men abandoned the natural function of the woman and *burned in their desire toward* one another, men with men committing indecent acts..." (Romans 1:27).

#7 -- "Therefore let us stop *passing judgment on* one another" (Romans 14:13). "Who are you to judge the servant of another?" (Romans 14:4). "Do not judge lest you be judged. For in the way you judge, you will be judged; and by your standard of measure, it will be measured to you" (Matthew 7:1-2).

#8 -- "Stop *depriving* one another, unless perhaps by mutual consent for a time, to devote yourselves to prayer" (I Corinthians 7:5). Advice given to husbands and wives so that they might remain united in marriage and not be tempted by Satan to sin sexually in such a way as to destroy their "oneness."

#9 -- "If you keep on *biting and devouring* one another, watch out or you will be *destroyed* (consumed) *by* one another" (Galatians 5:15). The NAB, St. Joseph Edition renders it this way: "If you go on biting and tearing one another to pieces, take care! You will end up in mutual destruction!"

#10 -- "Let us not become boastful, *challenging* (provoking, irritating) one another, *envying* one another" (Galatians 5:26).

#11 -- "Do not *lie to* one another" (Colossians 3:9).

#12 -- "Do not, my brothers, *speak ill of* (slander, speak out against) one another. The one who speaks ill of his brother or judges his brother is speaking against the law There is but one Lawgiver and Judge, one who can save and destroy. Who then are you to judge your neighbor?" (James 4:11-12).

#13 -- "Do not *complain*, brethren, *against* one another, that you yourselves may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing right at the door" (James 5:9). This is the Greek word *stenazo* which means "to groan or sigh inwardly; to complain or murmur against; to give vent to peevish, critical, fault-finding feelings" (*The Analytical Greek Lexicon of the NT*).

THAT WHICH MUST BE *CULTIVATED* IN OUR RELATIONSHIPS WITH ONE ANOTHER

#1 -- "*Be at peace with one another*" (Mark 9:50). "If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men" (Romans 12:18). "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God" (Matthew 5:9). "So then let us pursue the things which make for peace and *the building up of one another*" (Romans 14:19). Jesus is our peace; He broke down all barriers that divide us and made us into ONE BODY, "thus establishing peace" (Ephesians 2:14-18). "Be diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Ephesians 4:3).

#2 -- "If I then, the Lord and the Teacher, washed your feet, you also ought to *wash one another's feet*. For I gave you an example that you also should do as I did to you" (John 13:14-15). Jesus did not intend here to institute a new symbolic rite/ritual or an actual sacrament, rather He showed that "He, their leader, had stooped to serve their needs, and that they should do the same for one another. The emphasis is on the inner attitude of humble and voluntary service for others" (*The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, Vol. 9, p. 137).

#3 -- "A new commandment I give to you, that you *love* one another, even as I have loved you, that you also *love* one another. By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have *love for one another*" (John 13:34-35). "This is My commandment, that you *love* one another, just as I have loved you. This I command you, that you *love* one another" (John 15:12, 17). See also: Matthew 22:37-40; Romans 13:8-10; I John 2:9-11; 3:10-11, 14-15, 23; 4:7-21.

#4 -- "For I long to see you in order that you and I may be *mutually encouraged by one another's faith*" (Romans 1:11-12). "...not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but *encouraging* one another; and all the more, as you see the day drawing near" (Hebrews 10:25). "Therefore *encourage* one another, and build up one another, just as you also are doing" (I Thessalonians 5:11).

#5 -- "For as each of us has one body with many members, and not all the members have the same function, so too we, though many, are one body in Christ and individually *members one of another*. We have gifts (abilities, talents) that differ according to the favor bestowed on each of us" (Romans 12:4-6). "We are *members of one another*" (Ephesians 4:25). See also: I Corinthians 12:4-30; Ephesians 4:1-16; I Peter 4:10.

#6 -- "Be *devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor* one another above yourselves" (Romans 12:10). "Let each of you *regard* one another *as more important than himself*" (Philippians 2:3). "All of you, clothe yourselves with *humility toward one another*" (I Peter 5:5). "*Submit to* (defer to, be subject to) one another out of reverence for Christ" (Ephesians 5:21).

#7 -- "Be of the *same mind toward* one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited" (Romans 12:16). The NIV phrases it this way:

"Live in harmony with one another." The NAB says: "Have the same attitude toward all." "May God, the source of all patience and encouragement, enable you to *live in perfect harmony with one another* according to the Spirit of Christ Jesus" (Romans 15:5, NAB).

#8 -- "Owe nothing to anyone except to *love* one another; for he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the law. Love does no wrong to a neighbor; love therefore is the fulfillment of the law" (Romans 13:8, 10).

#9 -- "Let us pursue the things which make for peace and *the building up of one another*" (Romans 14:19). "Therefore encourage one another, and *build up* one another, just as you also are doing" (I Thessalonians 5:11). When each member of the Body does its part in love, it "causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love" (Ephesians 4:16).

#10 -- "*Accept* one another, just as Christ also accepted us to the glory of God" (Romans 15:7). See also: Romans 14:1-3.

#11 -- "And concerning you, my brethren, I myself also am convinced that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, and able also to *admonish* one another" (Romans 15:14). This is the Greek word *noutheteo* which means: "to place within the mind; to instruct; warning based on instruction" (Vine's *Expository Dictionary of NT Words*). The NIV says: "Competent to instruct one another." The NAB & NEB say: "Able to give advice to one another."

#12 -- "*Greet* one another with a holy kiss" (Romans 16:16; I Corinthians 16:20; II Corinthians 13:12). "*Greet* one another with a kiss of love" (I Peter 5:14). A visible, physical expression of love and fellowship.

#13 -- "There should be no division (schism, dissension) in the body, but the members should *have the same care* (equally concerned) *for* one another. If one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; if one member is honored, all the members share its joy" (I Corinthians 12:25-26). "*Help carry* (bear) one another's burdens; in that way you will fulfill the law of Christ" (Galatians 6:2).

#14 -- "Through love *serve* one another" (Galatians 5:13). "As each one has received a special gift (talent, ability), employ it in *serving* one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God" (I Peter 4:10).

#15 -- "Walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, *showing forbearance* (bearing with, endure patiently) *to* one another in love, being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Ephesians 4:1-3). "Put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; *bearing with* one another, and *forgiving* each other whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And beyond all these things put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace" (Colossians 3:12-15). "Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. And *be kind to* one another, tender-hearted, *forgiving* one another, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you" (Ephesians 4:31-32). "Therefore, *confess your sins to* one another, and *pray for* one another, so that you may be healed" (James 5:16).

#16 -- "May the Lord cause you to *increase and abound in love for* one another, and for all men" (I Thessalonians 3:12). "Now as to the love of the brethren, you have no need for anyone to write to you, for you yourselves are taught by God to *love* one another; and this you are doing with respect to all the brothers throughout Macedonia. But we urge you, brethren, to excel still

more" (I Thessalonians 4:9-10). "The *love of* each one of you *toward* one another grows ever greater" (II Thessalonians 1:3).

#17 -- "Therefore *comfort* one another" (I Thessalonians 4:18). This is from a Greek word which conveys the idea of calling someone to your side and placing an arm around them for the purpose of giving comfort, consolation and encouragement.

#18 -- "See that no one repays another with evil for evil (or "wrong for wrong" ---NIV), but always *seek after that which is good for* one another and for all men" (I Thessalonians 5:15).

#19 -- "Let us consider how to *stimulate* (stir up, rouse, spur on) one another to love and good deeds" (Hebrews 10:24).

#20 -- "*Be hospitable to* one another without complaining (grumbling)" (I Peter 4:9). "Practice hospitality" (Romans 12:13). "An overseer, then, must be hospitable" (I Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:8).

#21 -- "Since you have in obedience to the truth purified your souls for a sincere (unhypocritical) love of the brethren, *fervently love* one another from the heart" (I Peter 1:22). "Above all, *keep fervent in your love for* one another, because love covers over a multitude of sins" (I Peter 4:8).

#22 -- "For this is the message which you have heard from the beginning, that we should *love* one another" (I John 3:11). "And this is His commandment, that we believe in the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and *love* one another, just as He commanded us" (I John 3:23). "Beloved, let us *love* one another, for love is from God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love" (I John 4:7-8). "Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to *love* one another. No one has beheld God at any time; if we *love* one another, God abides in us, and His love is perfected in us" (I John 4:11-12). "If someone says 'I love God,' and hates his brother, he is a liar; for the one who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen. And this commandment we have from Him, that the one who loves God should love his brother also" (I John 4:20-21). "And now I ask you, lady, not as writing to you a new commandment, but the one which we have had from the beginning, that we *love* one another" (II John 5).

There is one final "one another" passage that we should examine. This passage should be a challenge to each disciple of Christ! "Now Herod and Pilate became *friends with* one another that very day; for before they had been at *enmity with* one another" (Luke 23:12). If two pagans can put their conflict behind them and become friends over their hatred for Jesus Christ, is it not possible for Christians to put their conflict behind them and become friends over their love for Jesus Christ?! (Notes: Al Maxey)