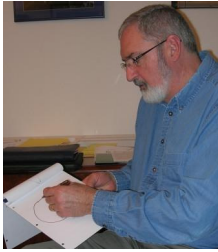


Empowering Healthy Leaders for Missional Impact

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Making Disciples of Jesus Using Disciplines, Reciprocal Commands & Framework for Community

Introduction

In this study we want to explore specific ways to actually walk with each other so we experience hearts of faith, hope and love that are worshipping, growing, caring, witnessing and serving.

This study presents practical models for living out the purposes of the church by examining:

- 1) A spiritual 'tool box'**
- 2) A relational 'tool box'**
- 3) A framework for a healthy church**

As I was growing up I worked alongside my Dad who was an excellent auto mechanic. We had tool boxes filled with drawers of tools. If we were working on the engine we rolled one tool box over close. If we were doing electrical or body work then we carried or rolled other boxes closer.

In some small way I would compare God's work in the heart to working on a car. There are major purposes outlined in the Bible that are to be true of every church: Worship, Making Disciples, Member Care, Serving, and Evangelism (near and far). These purposes are the engine, electrical wiring, outer body work, interior etc., The point of this very weak illustration is that there are some specialized tools for each of these different types of work. But there are also basic tools, like screw drivers, that are used in many different ways to repair or restore various systems of the car so they accomplish their purpose. These tools are like the disciplines of Bible Study and Prayer --- all purpose tools for everything God does in, on and through us.

But there are also some tools that seem more specialized. Most of us are more effective if we take some time to organize the tool box for effective church planting and leadership development. It should also help you be intentional about God's work in our own life.

When we would take a restored antique truck to a car show the offers to buy it, and other praise for the restored, redeemed from a junkyard glory, made us forget the months of sweat and pain. So, get ready to bust your knuckles and strain and grunt with effort on rusted bolts.

1. A spiritual 'tool box'

The church exists to make followers of Jesus who then make other followers. Disciple making is not just exchanging information or getting the new Christian to purchase, consume and then be repeat customers of a product. We are seeking an earthquake in the human heart. Disciples are dead wood

coming alive and instead of lying on the ground rotting becoming living, rooted, and fruit bearing. I like Ezekiel's valley of bones as an image of God's Spirit breathing life into a valley of dead bones and raising up a people for himself.

In redemptive communities of disciples' spiritual habits sometimes called Spiritual Disciplines or "Means of Grace" are formed and ingrained as the proper steps to pursuing God. Our hunger for God and His life are fed and motivated through the spiritual disciplines.

One way to organize this spiritual tool box is to see how God uses them in our hearts:

1. Some disciplines help me move my heart into a position of humility before God. This is the essential and primary posture for God working in me. It begins when a rebel lays down his weapons and surrenders to fighting against our God for other kings and rulers – including the devil and our self rule among a whole shelf of idols competing for our allegiance. These disciplines help me attentive to and aware of God's presence. One purpose of the disciplines is to help me bow down before God in my spirit.

EXAMPLES: Fasting, Confession, Simplicity, Prayer, Thanksgiving

2. Some disciplines are opening my heart to receive from God. I like the visual of holding my shirt, unbuttoned, and with both hands holding it back to bare my chest toward heaven and invite the loving, good, holy and merciful one to pour out healing touch on me. These disciplines would include the utensils of feeding on God's truth, and the glass for him to feel with refreshing, life giving water. Some disciplines help me lift an empty hand up to God anticipating his blessing and provision.

EXAMPLES: Sabbath, Singing, Mourning, Feeding on Scripture

3. Other disciplines are help me open my heart, move my hands and feet, and devote my thoughts and words so God can pour his grace, truth, love, forgiveness, and even my possessions through me to others. Disciplines help me make intentional commitments of obedience. They make my self available to God for his use.

EXAMPLES: Giving, Witnessing, Hospitality, Prayer

You will find a longer list of disciplines in Appendix 1

A congregation taking transformation seriously weaves these practices and habits into services, small groups and leadership development. Spiritual disciplines are the tools for living out the purposes of the church. Spiritual disciplines are how a Christ follower expresses love for God. Spiritual disciplines are the means for God to give his children hugs!

2. A relational 'tool box'

I am not sure we value unity as much as God does. I have found missionaries who are involved in church planting very motivated to get clarity on relational tools. After reading Pete Scazzero's painful account of struggle and failure in planting a multi-cultural church in New York City I started placing more of a priority on training leaders in what Pastor Pete calls "emotionally healthy spirituality".¹As Jesus prays for us in John 17 he pictures our unity as similar to the relationship between the Father and the Son; oneness. We tend to shrink unity down to whether we share compatible doctrinal statements. God sees unity as family. I grew up with a proverb, "You can choose your friends but you can't choose your family." The idea being that you have to love, as best you can, your family because you are stuck with them. They will always BE family.

Many of us do not come out of churches with that high view of unity. Instead we probably can tell stories of pastors and church leaders quietly joking in the back room about the “blessed subtractions” meaning a difficult person who finally moved on. We also have stories from the others side from people taking their hurt feelings, or their unmet expectations, packing their bags and going shopping for a better church home. How many church ‘plants’ were really the fruit of unresolved conflict and breaks in unity?

My point is that making disciples is really about making a family. It is about creating a culture of care and grace and truth. It is about being like the twelve were with Jesus. They often gave wrong answers to his questions, or even worse, they asked absolutely the worst questions. They made the dumbest requests, and Jesus did not throw them out.²

It seems that most of our ministry is really about forming, sustaining and protecting Jesus style unity among clusters of disciples. The Good News is our hearts have been telling us there must be something more—and our heart is right. Jesus sets us free to live. We are born into a new family where we experience that life. We grow up there.

So if a church could fill out God’s idea of unity what would it look like? I think the best summary is a series of commands God gives the church that are scattered through the New Testament letters written to the various congregations. I like to call them the “one another’s”. Some also call them reciprocal commands. These commands define biblical community which is the best apologetic to the truth of the Gospel. In Gerald Sittser’s very practical guide to living out the reciprocal commands he says,

The quality of relationships among Christians makes the church an effective witness for the gospel, for it creates the kind of community into which others are naturally drawn.³

Sittser groups the commands into eleven categories:

- | | |
|--|----------------------|
| 1. Welcome one another | Romans 15:7 |
| 2. Be subject to one another | Ephesians 5:21 |
| 3. Forbear one another | Ephesians 4:2 |
| 4. Forgive one another | Colossians 3:12-13 |
| 5. Confess sin to and pray for one another | James 5:13-16 |
| 6. Serve one another | Galatians 5:13-14 |
| 7. Encourage one another | 1 Thessalonians 5:11 |
| 8. Comfort one another | 2 Corinthians 1:3-4 |
| 9. Bear one another’s burdens | Galatians 6:2 |
| 10. Stir up one another | Hebrews 10:24-25 |
| 11. Admonish one another | Colossians 3:16 |

See Appendix 2 for a complete list of all 25 New Testament commands and passages.

Example: What it feels like to ‘comfort one another’.

Jim and Tracy Owen⁴ and their two children Allie and Davis were raising support to go to the mission field. They had been at a church mission’s conference for the weekend. They had shared lunch with the pastor and some friends at a Chinese restaurant. After lunch the Owen family loaded up in their small car to make the three hour drive back home.

Usually Tracy rode in the front and Jim drove. But on this Sunday Davis asked to ride up front so as they started out it was guys up front and girls in the back! I am not sure anyone knows exactly what happened at the Stop sign but after the accident Tracy and Allie had some broken bones and Jim had some minor cuts but the major impact of the accident was on Davis side and he was pronounced dead at the scene.

Instead of a commissioning service to launch them to the field I was helping them prepare for a funeral. Just a few weeks before Jim and I had stood together in the baptism pool while he had baptized his son. Now as we sat in my office making some last minute adjustments in the service Jim looked at me with tears in his eyes and asked me, "Is this stuff about heaven really true?"

I sat quietly for a moment. The weight of the question was settling on me as well. I had given my life to pastoral ministry because I believed in eternal life and death as THE issue every person faces. Jim was preparing to take his family more than half way around the world because he believed in the same good news that I held. But now – looking at the lifeless body of a young boy; a treasured gift had been pulled out of the parent's hands. Was IT really true?

I remember making eye contact with Jim and putting my hand on his shoulder. With everything in me I said, "Jim it is true. I know it is true. Your son is not lost to you. You will be with him." We then had a good cry and I think I prayed – but as I try to recall the moment I can't remember much after his question and our tears shared over my reply.

There are moments like these where God does something. He has made our hearts so that when they are open to each other and experience great deep sadness or warm happy celebration they become glued together. (see 2 Corinthians 6:11-12)

When I was younger I saw deaths, weddings, and many more life moments as interruptions to the work God had called me to carry out. Now I am beginning to see them AS the work. I am reading through a harmony of the Gospels with a few close friends as I write this chapter. It has stood out to me again that Jesus surely knew his overarching purpose and direction of his life was to go to Jerusalem and offer himself as the Lamb of God to take away the sins of the world. And yet his day to day life seems to be almost random acts of answering questions, responding to requests, teaching the crowds and then explaining what he had said to the twelve. He was attentive. He saw, really saw crowds of people and felt their lostness. (See Matthew 9:36-38) He gave himself to people in his life and he gave himself for people in his death. He gave himself to live in his people by the Spirit. Jesus lives a one-another life.

Summary of Disciplines and Reciprocal Commands

One of my favorite preachers, Ron Dunn, is now in heaven. I still find myself listening to his sermons and seeing God in fresh ways.⁵ My favorite series is, *God's Strange Ministers* and the messages are on encounters God engineers for us with failure, struggle, temptation, weakness, darkness and trouble. The big point underlying the series is that these circumstances come into our lives like an uninvited guest. No matter how many times we pray for God to show them out the door, or how much we see them as spiritual warfare and claim victory in Christ – sometimes God ignores our request and leaves them present with us.

With the strange ministers who have invaded my life or the people I know I see two major blessings in disguise among many:

1. **God uses them to work deeply in me.** He often moves me from seeking him for the blessing to just seeking HIM. Settling the truth that circumstances do not accurately reflect the goodness of God is a big issue in my heart. I will go all the way back to Adam and Eve and say that all temptation has two seeds at its core: God is not good (He does not have my best interest at heart). And God is not great (His power is not enough for what is happening around me). Remember the children's prayer that starts off, "God is great, God is good..." my heart in its state of unbelief does not really believe that declaration.
2. **I face with certainty that I cannot handle these difficulties by myself.** I need God and I need some safe trusted and tested friends. NO! What I mean is I really, really, really KNOW that I need God and some people with me. Don't I need to really pray about what I am facing all of the time? Certainly. Yet, to be honest when do I cry out to God more? The answer is not when everything is going along fine and I sense I have life figured out. His 'strange minister' shatter my resistant trusting in myself that displaces trust in God. (2 Corinthians 1:8-10)

We need the presence and grace of God and it is not just when we receive visits from 'strange ministers'. The disciplines and reciprocal commands are the way the hands of God is touching our hearts. When Christians report that the disciplines do not seem to be working and the reciprocal commands are practiced in only superficial manner the problem is not with these tools designed by God but with the lack of understanding and commitment to building a home where they can genuinely be experienced.

3. A Framework for a Healthy Church

Where we live determines the fruitfulness of the disciplines and one-another commands. WHERE? That can't be right. God would not restrict his presence and blessing to a place. That is so Old Testament temple. We are the temple; the dwelling place of God – right? Well that is right but many of the New Testament passages that we translate as an individual person 'you are the temple of God' are actually you in the plural sense (good Southern United States slang, "You all"). So the question becomes does the Bible provide direction for how our churches become places where the presence of God is experienced by his children?

It will help us to understand how we are made as individual so we see how God designed us to fit together in community. In God's original design He included two abilities that relate to the heart reforming into being a child of God's family and living as a good citizen in His kingdom.

These two abilities are:

1. **Our capacity to be habitual.** Habits are engrained patterns of choices that require less effort to perform than behavior that is not habitual. Remember the first time you attempted to tie your shoes or drive a manual transmission vehicle? The ability to perform complicated tasks with less mental focus is an incredible gift. But we also know that "speaking our mind without thinking first", a lingering lustful look, always saying, "Yes" to what my eye desires can become habits moving me away from God's life for me.
2. **Being able to focus on a goal and then marshal resources and exert effort to move toward that goal.** Intense focus is very helpful when following directions to arrive at a place on a map, or assemble a bicycle at midnight on Christmas Eve. It is not so good when going after the second dessert or searching on the internet for sexual stimulation. This God given capacity for selecting

and then pursuing a goal is the Greek word “epithumia” often translated as “lust” or “longing”. I will simply call it “desire”. It is a source of much productive work to have the ability to limit our focus. To “zero in” on an object (examples: goal, destination, or person) and bring to bear our energy (strength, will, thinking) in the pursuit of our object. This word is used in the New Testament in both a negative (lust of flesh) and a positive (Jesus longing to be with His disciples).

Many of our struggles with various sins, are fed from pride filled heart seeking to live independently of God and these choices become deeply tied to us as HABITS and DESIRES. I believe every person is a sinner. As sinners grows up they each customize their sinning with influence from one’s family and culture forming a set of habits and desires that we use to seek life apart from God. We often call them reactions (It is just who I am) or addictions (I feel powerless over the lure). Whether we seek to control others through angry explosions, or dull the pain of living in a fallen world with sexual stimulation, they are all attempts to be god or replace God. Our most difficult sin habits are coupled with strong motivation because we are latching on to them as substitutes for the life God gives through Christ. It is like holding a bottle of dirty water in a death grip because it is better than no water at all in a scorching desert.

The gifts of being able to desire or form habits are not the problem. But they become tools in the hands of a sinful rebel to attempt to make life work without God.

God works through these same two human capacities in bringing us into a life WITH and LIKE Christ. These are powerful aspects of shaping our person. Can you imagine going through one day without any of your lifetime of habits. Imagine every simple action like taking a shower, brushing your teeth, and tying your shoes, requiring concentrated conscious effort. Imagine the energy drain that carefully choosing and crafting each of a thousand different behaviors to accomplish just simple tasks would require. The reality is that is what a missionary often experiences. The cultural habits of daily life often have to be reworked when one lives in another culture. This creates the stress of constant and continual learning curve. The good news is habits can be modified or replaced. The bad news is that is not a pain free, stress free, process.

The goal in transformation is not to eliminate the capacity for being habitual and being motivated by strong desire but to change how these God designed abilities are used.

God wants to replace habits and give us new objects for desire that fit the ‘culture’ of God’s family and kingdom. But many of our habits and desires are rooted in lies of the enemy of our souls.

How does transformation occur at the level of my habits of how I will respond to the attack by an enemy, or how I will react to my spouse failing to meet my expectations, or my heart being deeply wounded in rejection by a rebellious child? Will there be habits, a maturing in my life, that will make a Christ like response occur more and more consistently and with less effort?

You should be connecting the ideas in this Learning Tasks now. Yes, the purposes of the church describe the ‘culture’ of God’s people – worshipping, growing, caring, serving, and witnessing. And the spiritual disciplines and reciprocal commands are the new habits and desires of these who are being restored into the likeness of Christ. So, what kind of community gives a context and foundation for these radical changes?

What is the framework for healthy community?

There are many clues in the Bible. Examples include:

1. Jesus with the crowds, the seventy, the twelve and the three. ***The smaller groups experienced higher levels of mutual commitment and shared deeper intimacy.***
2. In Acts we see various apostolic ***teams who went on mission together***, along with support delivered by those from a church to another city where there was a need on the team.
3. We know that the dominate meeting place for the first generation church was the home, even though it was not unusual for those to go beyond the local 'fire code occupancy laws'! (See Acts 20:7-16)
4. Many of the 25 reciprocal commands listed in Appendix 2 are commanded by God --- so ***he must have anticipated a community that could sustain this level of intimacy and correction.***
5. Throughout church history, preceding and in the wake of spiritual awakenings or church expansion, there have been prayer teams, triads, holy bands, holy clubs, cell churches, house churches, --- called many things but all including an authentic and deep commitment that framed the relationships and was the basis for their experience of community.
6. There is also a cultural movement for transformation of people away from destructive lifestyle. This parachurch network of small groups may be a helpful model for the church seeking to see people move from death producing destructive bondage in addictions to new life. Alcoholics Anonymous (AA), and its many related recovery groups use a common set of values and model to approach transformation.

Here are some of the beliefs and principles I deduce from reflecting on these six sources :

1. **Honest confession meets unconditional acceptance** - Little change occurs IN a person at the level of engrained patterns and objects of desire until they deeply want it. An open, hungry, thirsting honest heart is required! There is hope when a person stands and introduces them self saying, "Hello, my name is xxx and I am an alcoholic." And the group answer in unison, "Hello, xxx" which is a way of saying everyone is welcome here. Often people describe a turning point in their spiritual journey as, "I saw something in (name of person or group) that I did not have. I knew I needed what they had."
2. **Losing hope in self leads to finding healing hope** - People arrive at motivation strong enough for deep change through:
 - (1) A Confrontation performed by people whom the addict knows loves them and has their best interest at heart. In most cases confrontation by itself is not enough, though it may be a critical step in the journey to wanting deep change.
 - (2) A Compelling vision which is a story of someone else making the journey who demonstrates/resonates with the thirst in the heart of the addict.
 - (3) Crisis awareness that I must change or die.A combination of these experiences brings a person to a tipping point. Those in recovery call this "bottoming out". All denial and blame evaporate and a broken humility replaces escaping responsibility. The Christ follower must come to the place of knowing, "I cannot do this by myself---I am helpless" before deep changes in values, attitudes and reactions starts to occur. Paul describes this as godly sorrow or repentance in 2 Corinthians.
3. **Identifying with one another** - Once a person "wants it" and knows they cannot get there on their own they can begin to receive support, help, grace and truth from a community. In this community there is a sense that everyone in the room is on the same journey although at different points. There is no room for pride or judgmental spirit. We are all a room full of

drunks staying sober one day at a time. We are not all literally, 'drunks' but each person can tell a form of the parable of the loving father in Luke 15 and identify with either the rebel or prideful son. The relationship is never on the line. Everyone knows they accepted solely on the mercy and grace of God. Yet there is a high bar set to be learning, memorizing and absorbing the truth.

4. **Every person helped & helping** - The community is not just a group or crowd. There is a web of relationships whereby every person has a sponsor—usually one that has been in the journey a little longer than you have. EVERYONE has a vital relational support system; one or two people they could call at 3:00 a.m. and know they would come. They are held together by a commitment to always tell the truth and to be available 24 hours a day to come and help each other not to revert to old habits or move back to focus on old objects of desire. This is where the presence of God takes on flesh in the body of Christ, the church. There is an expectation that everyone is to be growing. Setbacks and old habits are graciously confronted, and there is learning that occurs, but unrepentant or apathetic attitudes are disciplined.
5. **Life is about living for others** - The goals of the people in the community are not to just stay sober or become godly. The goal is to give it away; to help others. I gain and continue in personal growth as I give away what has been given to me. The goal is not just to gain control over a destructive lifestyle but to see another open, giving, loving person redeemed from the trash heap.

If church planters build these values, practices and attitudes in the early days of the work a sustainable environment for growth begin to develop.

What would you add to this list as you reflect on how Jesus related to the twelve and how the first church in Jerusalem related to one another?

How do these principles apply in your ministry context.

Conclusion

In this study we presented three sets of tools the Bible presents as essential to a true experience of the family of God:

1. People are practicing spiritual disciplines to place the heart before God in humility so we can receive and then give to others the grace and truth of God.
2. People are practicing ways of being with one another that have been commanded by God because they are essential to expressing his type of unity in the darkness of this world
3. There is a basic understanding of what framework the human heart needs in order for the spiritual disciplines and reciprocal commands are bearing the intended fruit of a healthy church.

OWNING IT!

CREATE!

Read the chapters in Unit II of Robertson McQuilkin's *Five Smooth Stones* and then use some of the questions below to add to your Leadership Creation.

1. **Read the passages and then make notes on how these disciplines can be tools for you placing your heart before God. Look at these passages in their context. What changes are being described? What is the relationship of these disciplines to the former life outside of Christ?**

1. 2 Corinthians 8:7; 9:6-15
2. Colossians 3:15-17
3. Ephesians 5:18-21

2. Look at the list of Spiritual Disciplines in Appendix 1. Select one that you want to grow in over the next three months. How will you begin?
3. Think back over your spiritual journey. How did you learn about some of the disciplines? What motivated you to begin their practice? In what ways do you need to develop in using the disciplines to engage your heart?
4. How do you guard your heart against the spiritual disciplines being used to attempt to earn or deserve favor from God?
5. How do you guard against an attitude of spiritual superiority by those who practice or those who claim freedom and grace to not practice certain disciplines?
6. Look in Appendix 2 and select one reciprocal command that you can do with a brother or sister in Christ this week.
7. What is an example of a Christian relating to you in one of these “one-another” ways?
8. Recall a time when you went to a fellow believer in one of these “one-another” ways that was very difficult or fearful for you?
9. Write down how you felt and then responded when someone related to you in the opposite manner of the “one-another”.
10. So what is the unique shape to your sinfulness? How have you used your ability to desire an object person or emotional reward and forge habits that move your heart away from depending on God? Can you describe your ‘customized’ ways of sinning?

SHARE!

Discuss with your mentor how you can apply the three sets of tools in this Learning Task as you make disciples in your context. In your host culture what aspects will be the most challenging to apply? Why? And how do you go about it?

Resources for Lifelong Learning:

Gerald Sittser. *Love One Another: Becoming the Church Jesus Longs For* (2nd edition). Downers Grove: IVP, 2008. An excellent biblical study of the reciprocal commands that could be easily adapted for small group study. Includes a study guides of questions in the back.

Leighton Ford. *The Attentive Life: Discerning God’s Presence in All Things*. Downers Grove: IVP, 2008. A reflective work on the inner spiritual life from the perspective of an activist evangelist personality.

Pete Scazzero. *Emotionally Healthy Spirituality*. Nashville: Integrity, 2006. A guide for pastors seeking to see deep Christ like change in the people they serve.

Appendix 1
Called By Various Names: Spiritual Disciplines, Godly Habits, or Means of Grace

In redemptive communities of Christ followers Spiritual Disciplines or "Means of Grace" are formed and ingrained as the proper steps to pursuing godly desire. Our hunger for God and His life are fed and motivated through the spiritual disciplines.

Here are some examples of common means of grace. These are commanded by God for all Christians.

Thanksgiving	Col 3:17 Eph 4:4 Phil 4:6-7; 1 Thessalonians 5:18
Praise & Celebration	Eph 5:19 Phil 3:1 Heb 13:15
Intercession	Col 4:2 Eph 6:18-20; 1 Thessalonians 5:17; 1 Tim 2:1
Confession	James 5:13-16; 1 John 1:9
Singing	Col 3:16
Rest & Renewal	Heb 4:16 Heb 10:22-25
Giving	Matthew 6 & 2 Corinthians 8-9

Some spiritual disciplines motivate us to focus our desire on God and his promises. The call to “remember” is repeated by God to his people hundreds of time in the Bible. These disciplines help us *bring our heart to a place of remembering.*

Reading & Study the Bible	Col 3:16
Teaching to obey	Matthew 28:18-20; Eph 4:25; 1 Tim 6:3; 2 Tim 3:16-17
Meditation & Memorization	Phil 4:3

Some spiritual disciplines are ways to expose pride and express humility and dependence in surrender to God’s will as being the best for us. *They are “heart yielding” habits.*

Fasting	
Working	
Simplicity	I Thess 4:11-12 2 Thess 3:7-10 Mat 6:16-18; Gal 5:13-14 II Cor 8:7 Heb 13:16 I Tim 6:5-10, Gal 6:9-10 II Cor 9:6-8 I Tim 6:18-19
Hospitality	
Grieving, Mourning, Lamenting	
Solitude	
Silence	
Secrecy	Mat 6:1-4

Other spiritual disciplines move us in an outward direction for a life of giving to others. These habits engage us in:

Witness	
Missions	2 Cor 5:17-21, 2 Thess. 3:1-5, Philemon 6, Col 3:12, Eph 5:21, Eph 6:6-7 Phil 2:3 Col 3:18-25
Stand for Justice	
Guidance (correction)	I Thess. 5:14 I Tim 4:13-16 James 4:15-16
Giving	
Service	Matt 6, 2 Cor 8, 1 Cor 11-13
Submission & Humility	John 13:1-17, Hebrews 10, 12, Eph 4-6

Appendix 2
Reciprocal Commands

Committed to Each Other

Command	Biblical Reference	Explanation / Description / or Definition
Love one another	John 13:34	To love is to joyfully sacrifice in order to give what the beloved needs. (Also the basic idea occurs indirectly in: John 15:12, 17; Ro 12:9,10; 13:8; Gal 5:14; 1 Thessalonians 3:11,12; 4:9,10; Jas 2:8; 1 Pet 1:22, 3:8; 1 John 3:11,23; 4:7,11,12,21; 2 John 5)
Receive one another	Romans 15:7	Receiving one another is taking to ourselves our brothers or sisters in Christ, freely and without constraint and reserve, in full recognition of our equal and mutual fellowship in Christ. We reject all forms of prejudice and racism.
Greet one another	Romans 16:16	Greeting one another is an outward acknowledgment of our mutual life in Christ and our brotherly love for one another. (1 Co 16:20; 2 Co 13:12; 1 Peter 5:14)
Have the same care for one another	1 Cor 12:24, 25	Having the same care for one another is showing an impartial care for the welfare and ministry of every believer.
Submit to one another	Ephesians 5:18-21	Submitting to one another is inwardly considering oneself to be under the authority of fellow Christians and willingly complying with their decisions, instructions, or wishes.
Wait one for another	1 Cor 11:33	Wait one for another refers to waiting patiently for folks in order to partake together of a love feast (often associated with the Lord's Supper)
Forbear one another	Ephesians 4:1-3	Forbearing one another is graciously enduring and putting up with the displeasing, offensive, or sinful attitudes and actions in others. It includes the idea that rebuke, discipline, or correction be delayed as long as possible in hope that the offender recognizes his/her offense and takes steps to correct it. (Col 3:12-14).
Confess your sins to one another	James 5:16	Confessing sins to one another is acknowledging to fellow-believers one's sins as an outward sign of sorrow for the offense, intent to change, and desire for reconciliation. It presupposes a previous or simultaneous acknowledgment of the particular sin to God.
Forgive one another	Eph 4:31, 32	Forgiving one another is regarding a fellow-believer who has wronged or offended you, not with contempt or resentment but rather with compassion, not holding that one accountable for the wrong or its consequences

Protecting One Another

Just as the Scriptures tell Christians how to relate to one another, it points out and forbids several sins that are destructive to Christian fellowship.

Command	Biblical Reference	Explanation / Description / or Definition
Do not judge one another	Romans 14:13	Judging one another is reckoning one's own position on a disputed practice or doctrinal question as superior to others' positions and expressing criticism, condemnation, or displeasure at their disagreement.
Do not speak evil of one another	James 4:11	Speaking evil of one another is speaking of a fellow-believer in such a way as to discredit, dishonor, depreciate or belittle his/her character or actions.
Do not murmur against one another	James 5:9	Murmuring against one another is expressing discontent, impatience, or displeasure with one believer to other believers, usually in a secret or in a covert manner.
Do not bite and devour one another	Galatians 5:14, 15	Biting and devouring one another is showing hostility and ill-will to fellow-believers through attacks on their character, worth, motives, beliefs, or actions in order to establish one's own advantage or superiority.
Do not provoke one another	Galatians 5:25, 26	Provoking one another is challenging the work, reputation, position or belief of a fellow-believer by words or actions in an effort to assert oneself or gain recognition.
Do not envy one another	Galatians 5:25-26	Envyng one another is desiring for oneself the position, ability, achievement, or possessions of a fellow believer, usually with a sense of resentment that the other has the advantages one desires.
Do not lie to one another	Col 3:9, 10	Lying to one another is telling as true that which is known to be false, distorting the truth in any way, or conveying a false impression of oneself or something, with the intent to deceive another believer.

Sharing Responsibility for Helping Every Person Grow

Every Christian is committed to GIVING and RECEIVING help with other Christians. We come together to encourage one another to learn and to apply the Bible in our daily lives. Motivated by love we never say, "Well, her problem or concern is not mine."

Command	Biblical Reference	Explanation / Description / or Definition
Building up one another	Romans 14:19; 1 Thess 5:11	Building up one another is a process of interaction among believers by which they promote, by teaching or example, the development of Christ-like character and behavior in one another.
Teach one another	Colossians 3:16	Teaching one another is instructing, explaining, or exposing biblical truth to fellow believers in such a way that they may understand the truth and are enabled and encouraged to apply it in their own lives.
Exhort one another	1 Thess 5:11 Hebrews 3:12,13	Exhorting one another is a three-fold ministry in which believers urge each other to action in terms of applying scriptural truth, encourage each other generally with scriptural truth, and comfort each other through the application of scriptural truth to their needs.
Admonish one another	Romans 15:14; Colossians 3:16	Admonishing one another is a disciplinary ministry in which believers bring to each other's attention their sinful attitudes and practices or unmet

		obligations, and offer corrective instruction that will enable and encourage them to bring those areas of their lives into conformity with the Word of God.
Speak to one another in psalms, hymn, and spiritual songs	Ephesians 5:18-20; Colossians 13:16	Speaking to one another in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, or in singing to one another, is a means of teaching, exhorting or admonishing others, and joining others in praise to God, in words set to music.

Mutual Serving & Submitting in Humility

Pride is THE sin that blocks enjoying a love relationship with God or others. Pride isolates by encouraging me to be the judge of others rather than their servant. Humble people are easily identified by walking alongside not in judgment over others. THE unique character trait of Christ that attracted some, but was viewed by his enemies as weakness, was His servant lifestyle.

Command	Biblical Reference	Explanation / Description / or Definition
Be servants to one another	Gal 5:13-14	Being servants to one another through love is freely and voluntarily obligating oneself to undertake for fellow-believers any work or task which may be necessary, helpful, or advantageous to their spiritual, physical, or mental welfare.
Bear one another's burdens	Gal 6:2	Bearing one another's burden is taking upon oneself a fellow-believer's difficulty, problem, or oppressive circumstance as it if were our own and taking any possible action to alleviate it..
Use hospitality to one another	1 Peter 4:7	Using hospitality to one another is receiving into one's home fellow-Christians, especially strangers and those in distress, and providing for their physical and material needs as for one's own.
Be kind to one another	Eph 4:31-32	Being kind to one another is expressing love and benevolence to fellow-Christians in gestures of generosity, helpfulness, and thoughtfulness, without regard to circumstances and expecting nothing in return.
Pray for one another	Jam 5:16	Praying for one another is making known to God the sins, needs, or concerns of fellow-believers, asking Him to act on their behalf so that His will might be accomplished. ⁶



Roy King, 2010

This material has been created by [Dr. Roy King](#). If you use this in training leaders please send me a brief description of how it was used. If you translate it please send me a copy. Send e-mail to roy@royking.org

¹ Pete Scazzero. ***Emotionally Healthy Church***. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003 (chapters one through three relay the story of failure that almost ended church and marriage.)

² See John 13 and 14 and examine the disciples comments and questions. Also see them hiding from Jesus exposing their arguing over who would be the greatest in Mark 9.

³ Gerald Sittser. ***Love One Another: Becoming the Church Jesus Longs For***. Downers Grove: IVP, 2nd edition, 2008. Pg. 17.

⁴ A true story but not the real names and some details have been altered.

⁵ <http://www.rondunn.com>

⁶ This material can be found in expanded form in ***The Five Smooth Stones: Essential Principles for Biblical Ministry*** by Robertson McQuilkin. It is also based on Reciprocal Living by Sue Harville. Published in 1976 by the West Indies Mission of Coral Gables, Florida. This is now out of print as is her small groups' manual, ***Walking in Love***, which was used as a simplified 13-part study of the reciprocal commands.