

March, 2010

## How Do You Do the “One Anothers”?

The apostle Paul looked for three key qualities in a church. He looked for faith in Christ, hope in eternal life, and love for each other. Their faith was expressed by turning from other “gods”, idols and religions to faith alone in Jesus Christ. Their hope was expressed in their courage in the face of persecution. Their love for each other was expressed in their care of each other as Christians. Paul praised different churches for these qualities in his letters to them. These are qualities that we as a church want reflected in us.

In the New Testament there are 50 “one another” or “each other” commands. These describe the love Christians are to have for each other. Examples of these commands are that we encourage each other, help one another, forgive each other, and pray for one another.

Very few of these commands can be accomplished in our worship services. The focus of our worship services is on God, not on each other. The primary place, setting, event, that Christians accomplish the “one another”s are in small Bible study groups. It is here that we study God’s word together, share the struggles of our lives, learn from each other’s experiences with Christ, and pray for each other. I am a part of such a group in our church. I encourage you to become a part of this important aspect of church life and mission.

It is in these groups that we get to know one another. Here we learn how to live out our obedience to Christ. Often someone has an experience of living the Christian life that helps others do grow with Christ. Here we share personal prayer requests with each other and lift each other up to God in prayer. Here we are encouraged by other Christians who learn our spiritual struggles.

I urge you to be a part of a Bible study group. If you are one of our teachers of teens or children, this will mean a group that does not meet on Sunday mornings at 9:45. Not all groups need to meet then. We currently have a group for teens and adults on Sunday evenings at 6:45 p.m. You are welcome to join us. Let me, the pastor, know of your interest, so we can provide you with the materials the group is using.

If you are interested in helping to form a group that meets at some other time during the week, communicate that to the pastor. We can advertise for others in the church family who might also be interested in being part of such a group. Groups can meet at the church, in someone’s home, at a restaurant, etc. There are many materials to use beyond the Bible, some of which don’t require a “teacher” but simply a facilitator, one of a group of learners.

Let’s grow together in Christ. Let’s choose to love each other as Christ instructs us to.