

Sermon Series: The One Another Commands

Sermon Title: Be Devoted To and Honor One Another

Sermon Text: Romans 12:1-10

Sermon Presenter: Pastor Larry

Sermon Summary: This study looks at the one another commands of being devoted to and honoring one another, and what it takes Biblically to do these things! These one another commands are found in Romans 12:10 and the step to Integrating the One Another Commands of Devotion and Honor into our daily lives requires an understanding of the preceding 9 verses. Five steps are taken from those 9 verses to help us to be devoted to and honor one another.

Full Sermon Notes: “How deep the Father’s love for us, how vast beyond all, that He should give His only Son to make a wretch His treasure!” I am constantly amazed and awed at the level of God’s love for me. And to realize that the two most important things God wants me to do is first of all love Him with all my heart, soul and mind and to love my neighbor as myself, to realize that is life changing. And the best way I know to do that is to become more like Jesus! Because He did that! Let’s pray and ask God to teach us how our One Another commands for today can help us do just that! PRAY!

If we could learn to live by the One Another Commands, we would find ourselves becoming like Christ...

Like Christ in our thoughts. Like Christ in our attitudes. Like Christ in our actions.

And as I shared with you last week, to be Christian, is to be a Christ follower. It means to be like Christ. This series is all about teaching Christians to be Christian! Jesus started off our series with His command to love one another. Today we are going to look at two one another commands found in the 12th chapter of Paul's letter to the Romans. Chapter 12 of Romans is considered by many to be second only to the Sermon on the Mount when it comes to instructions on how to live a Christian life. This chapter contains several of the One Another Commands. This morning we're going to look at the first ten verses of Chapter 12. Nine of these verses give us great wisdom concerning the integration of the One Another Commands into our daily lives, and verse 10 gives us two very important One Another Commands. Get out your Bibles and let's begin with Romans 12:10.

Romans 12:10 Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honour one another above yourselves.

What is the meaning of the word devoted, and the word honor?

Devoted: very loving or loyal, given over to the display, study or discussion of, to give all or a large portion of one's time or resources to a person, activity or cause.

Honor: high respect or esteem, to fulfill an agreement or obligation.

What does it take to be devoted to one another? What does it take to honor one another? What does it take to integrate the one another commands of devotion and honor into our lives? What it takes is found in the preceding nine verses. Let's look at them.

The first step to Integrating the One Another Commands of Devotion and Honor into our daily lives requires...

Step One - Devotion and Honor to God

Romans 12:1 Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship.

Before we can talk about being devoted to one another we've got to talk about our devotion to God! If we're not devoted to God, we won't be devoted to one another! What do we need to do to get that right? The first thing we must do is consider God's mercy! Paul said...

Romans 12:1 Therefore, I urge you, brothers, *in view of God's mercy*...

Have you considered just how merciful God has been to you? Think about it. If we got what we deserved, we would all be in a mess! But it's sometimes a good thing when we don't get what we deserve! We deserve judgement, punishment, and rejection, but we get God's mercy when we cry out for it! God has loved us in spite of our sin and failures! God has forgiven us of our sin and failures! God has offered us His power to overcome our sins and failures! When I view God's mercy my heart yearns, out of gratitude, to be devoted to Him and to honor Him!!

Romans 12:1 Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices...

What does Paul mean by living sacrifices? This is one of the many things that separated Christianity from the pagan religions of Biblical days. God was not asking for sacrifices of death, but of life! God wants His children very much alive and living Christ-like lives.

Living sacrifices = Living a life devoted to God! A life that will honor God!

Paul goes on to say...

Romans 12:1 Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God...

Now you might say: "I'm out. How can I be holy and pleasing to God? My life's been anything but perfect!" As I said last week, it's not about what you've been, but what you can become through Jesus! It's not about you being perfect, but about accepting what Jesus did on your behalf to present you holy and blameless before God! Paul told the Colossian church...

Colossians 1:19 For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, (Jesus)
Colossians 1:20 and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.
Colossians 1:21 Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behaviour.
Colossians 1:22 But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation—

You see, we can be living sacrifices, because of Jesus' sacrificial death on the Cross. The last part of Romans 12:1 states...

Romans 12:1 Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship.

Isn't it so cool how God gives us practical applications for what He asks us to do? Being a living sacrifice, is our worship! Christ followers don't just worship on Sunday's, but with every breath they breathe 24/7. They live Christian. They live devoted. They live to honor God! Someone might question this kind of devotion and honor to God and might even go so far as to say it's fanatical! But how many people do you know that are devoted Saints fans, rain or shine, winning season, or not! And what kind of honor do fans give their teams when they bring home a championship? It's pretty amazing to watch the devotion and the honor that is given to athletes, so why would people question us or ridicule us when we are devoted to and honor the One who brought home the ultimate championship by winning the battle for our lives here on earth and for our eternal souls in heaven? And when you realize He did that for people who are imperfect, broken and stained, and when you realize if we're willing to call upon the Lord when we mess up and ask for forgiveness, God gives it! And when a forgiven one messes up they become more determined than ever to overcome and to live a victorious life in Christ! Why? Because we have devotion to, and honor for the One who loves us so much!

The second step to Integrating the One Another Commands of Devotion and Honor into our daily lives requires that we...

Step Two - Don't Follow the World's Patterns

Romans 12:2 Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

Many in the world no longer value devotion, honor, loyalty, respect, fulfillment of obligations or commitments. Unless of course, it's devotion, honor, loyalty, and respect for me, myself and I! You know, the unholy trinity! The world is all about SELF! Hey kids, have you ever found yourself shouting, "Me first, me first?" That's what selfish looks like! The world's philosophy is to be devoted to self, to honor self above all others. Please self, pamper self, after all you deserve it! You only go around once so make sure you "find yourself," and go for the gusto! At least

that's what we are told, but we must reject the world's patterns and begin to follow the patterns Jesus set forth. And when it comes to self, what did Jesus say?

Luke 9:23 Then he said to them all: "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.

Luke 9:24 For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will save it.

Luke 9:25 What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, and yet lose or forfeit his very self?

When it's all about devotion and honor for self, you end up losing yourself in a terrible way. Self, unrestrained, and uncontrolled will always resort to selfishness and that always destroys. But when you deny self and follow Christ, you'll find yourself being made into the image of Christ. You'll find self wanting to give devotion and honor to God and to others. Jesus didn't say hate yourself, He said deny self and it's destructive tendencies. Maybe a good practical step would be for us to develop a habit of asking this question: Am I being selfish or selfless? This is about as "practical application" as it gets! But a good practical question would be: how do I retrain my self to not be so selfish? Jesus just gave us a great tool...

Luke 9:23 Then he said to them all: "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.

How do I apply that verse to my life? We take up the cross as a reminder of the gruesome sacrifice that Jesus gave on the old rugged when He gave Himself on the cross to pay for our sin! And another reason to take up the cross daily is in order to crucify the old self and it's selfish ways and allow Jesus to be Lord of our decisions. This helps us to follow Paul's instructions...

Romans 12:2 Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

We begin embracing God's Holy Word which reveals God's patterns of behavior and principles for life! This transforms our minds and we begin to want God's best. God's will. God's ways! I love the way Peter put it in His letter to the church...

1 Peter 1:23 For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God.

1 Peter 1:24 For, "All men are like grass, and all their glory is like the flowers of the field; the grass withers and the flowers fall,

1 Peter 1:25 but the word of the Lord stands for ever." And this is the word that was preached to you.

1 Peter 2:1 Therefore, rid yourselves of all malice and all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and slander of every kind.

1 Peter 2:2 Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation,

1 Peter 2:3 now that you have tasted that the Lord is good.

So if we are going to be devoted to one another and honor one another we've got to be devoted to God and we've got to reject the patterns of the world. But there is more...

The third step to Integrating the One Another Commands of Devotion and Honor into our daily lives requires you to...

Step Three - Humble Yourself

Romans 12:3 For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you.

Paul begins the verse by mentioning God's grace to himself. None of us were good enough to deserve God's love. None of us. In fact Paul had previously stated it this way in Romans 3:22-24...

Romans 3:22 This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference,
Romans 3:23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,
Romans 3:24 and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.

Paul then tells us not to think too highly of ourselves...

Romans 12:3 For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you.

We have to be so careful here. It's easy for us to get prideful. Especially as we grow. Spiritual pride can be one of the most devastating forms of pride. Have you ever noticed how prone we are to compare ourselves to other people to make ourselves feel better about our shortcomings? "Well, I'm not as bad as that guy, you know the one who did that!" Or a kid saying, "but my brother gets in trouble way more than me!" And for us adults, it's amazing how quickly we can forget from whence we came, how lost we were, how wretched, how unworthy! And I betcha someone just thought, "are you trying to guilt trip me? Come on Pastor Larry, I not that bad! After all, I've never broken any of the big commandments." But trust me on this, compromise with sin starts small and grows big! You know what helps me in this department? I don't like remembering how I was before I met Jesus Christ, the wickedness, the lack of purpose, the hopelessness, but I dare not forget what God saved me from lest I deceive myself and somehow begin thinking I'm responsible for the good things that God has done in my life! You see, when a person becomes prideful, devotion to others and honoring others above

himself flies out the door. I don't ever want that to happen! Paul had some words of wisdom that can help sober us up when we get inebriated with spiritual pride...

1 Corinthians 1:26 Brothers, think of what you were when you were called. Not many of you were wise by human standards; not many were influential; not many were of noble birth.

1 Corinthians 1:27 But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong.

1 Corinthians 1:28 He chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things—and the things that are not—to nullify the things that are,

1 Corinthians 1:29 so that no-one may boast before him.

1 Corinthians 1:30 It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God—that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption.

1 Corinthians 1:31 Therefore, as it is written: “Let him who boasts boast in the Lord.”

In other words, none of us are too good to be devoted to one another and we have no excuse for not honoring one another above ourselves. And if we're going to brag on anybody, it should be Jesus! He deserves every bit of honor and glory we can bestow on Him and so our boasts should be in the Lord! Oh, and by the way, Paul reminds us that even our faith was a gift from God.

Romans 12:3 ... but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you.

God gives us our faith. We have a choice whether or not to exercise it. If faith comes easy to you, you may have the gift of faith. Thank God for that gift. You may have a boatload of faith, but don't think you're better than someone who has small faith. They may have a more difficult time stepping out on faith, but remember Jesus said it only takes a mustard seed of faith to do great things. Sometimes the person with a mustard seed does more because they are faithful with their mustard seed! When it comes to faith it's more about obedience than quantity! The Christian community has been plagued with abuse in this area. People have been made to feel like second class citizens because they didn't have "big faith." This kind of attitude does not honor one another. So if we're going to be devoted to one another and honor one another, we've got to be devoted to God, reject the patterns of this world, and humble ourselves. And let me give you a very practical example of what it looks like to be humble. When someone is talking to you are you really listening? Are you willing to make eye contact or are you scared that eye contact might obligate you to help them or cause you to really care about them? What kind of message are you sending if you are constantly looking at your watch or phone? And when someone is talking to you, are you really listening and considering what they are saying or are you just formulating your response so you can look like you've got all the answers? And are you willing to help and show someone something without pridefully acting like you know it all and they don't have a clue? Someone may have just said, “Okay, okay Pastor Larry can you stop with all of those practical applications. You're making me feel bad!” I'm not trying to do that, I just want us to think about these things because they are important. And the whole next point is practical...

The fourth step to Integrating the One Another Commands of Devotion and Honor into our daily lives requires that we...

Step Four - Realize God Made Us Different for a Reason

Romans 12:4 Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function,

Romans 12:5 so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.

It's so plain. The Church is supposed to be a team working in concert with one another to accomplish its purpose, its mission and its vision.

Northshore Church Purpose
(why we do)

"To see the One who gave His life for us exalted and the ones He gave His life for transformed!"

Northshore Church Mission
(what we do)

"Transforming worship, people and the world!"

Northshore Vision
(what we want to accomplish with what we do)

"To raise up a healthy church that will transform the North Shore and ultimately the world with the life changing message of Jesus Christ!"

So why does Paul tell us the obvious? Everybody knows the church is made of many members. Paul tells us because we are quick to forget one major thing...

Romans 12:4 Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function,

Satan loves for God's family to forget that we all have a different function. I've never known a church to fail because all the non-church people got together to shut it down. In fact, if you study history, you'll discover that persecution from without always makes the church stronger within! Here's the way Satan defeats us. It is from within. It goes something like this...

The person with vision thinks the person without vision is just blind.
The person with discernment thinks others just aren't that sharp.
The person with the gift of service thinks everyone else is just lazy.

The person with the gift of leadership is suspicious of others who have the gift of leadership.
The person who has the gift of evangelism thinks the person who has the gift of teaching doesn't care about the lost.

The person who has the gift of teaching thinks the evangelist is shallow.

This happens when we are not "devoted to one another and we are not honoring one another!" This is a major problem and keeps people from coming to Christ and keeps those who have come to Christ from growing in Christ. It keeps us Christians from being Christian, and it keeps the church from being effective in its mission to transform the world! So I just described to you what devotion and honor for one another does not look like.

What is the answer to this problem? Paul gives us a powerful answer in 1 Corinthians 12...

1 Corinthians 12:12 The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ.

1 Corinthians 12:13 For we were all baptised by one Spirit into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink.

So the answer is realizing we are one in Jesus and His Holy Spirit empowers us to work together!! Paul goes on to say...

1 Corinthians 12:21 The eye cannot say to the hand, "I don't need you!" And the head cannot say to the feet, "I don't need you!"

1 Corinthians 12:22 On the contrary, those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable,

1 Corinthians 12:23 and the parts that we think are less honourable we treat with special honour. And the parts that are unpresentable are treated with special modesty,

1 Corinthians 12:24 while our presentable parts need no special treatment. But God has combined the members of the body and has given greater honour to the parts that lacked it,

1 Corinthians 12:25 so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other.

Paul tells the Ephesian Church...

Ephesians 2:18 For through him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit.

Ephesians 2:19 Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow-citizens with God's people and members of God's household,

Ephesians 2:20 built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone.

Ephesians 2:21 In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord.

Ephesians 2:22 And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.

The final step to Integrating the One Another Commands of Devotion and Honor into our daily lives requires that you...

Step Five - Exercise your God-given gifts!

Romans 12:6 We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith.

Romans 12:7 If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach;

Romans 12:8 if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully.

Romans 12:9 Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good.

Romans 12:10 Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honour one another above yourselves.

Okay, we're supposed to be Christ-like. Did Jesus give us any examples of this being devoted to one another and honoring one another above our self?

John 13:1 It was just before the Passover Feast. Jesus knew that the time had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he now showed them the full extent of his love.

And what did He do to show them his love? He washed their feet! Jesus Christ the Son of God knelt and washed their feet! Jesus then asked them...

John 13:12 ... "Do you understand what I have done for you?" ...

John 13:13 "You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord', and rightly so, for that is what I am.

John 13:14 Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet.

John 13:15 I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you.

John 13:16 I tell you the truth, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him.

John 13:17 Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.

If Jesus, the Son of God wasn't all about self, maybe we should follow His example and be more concerned about our devotion to God, our family, our church family and those who don't yet know our Lord. But what does that look like in our world today? People might think it a little strange if you asked them to wash their feet. Being devoted to and honoring one another happens when we exercise our gifts like...

Teaching or helping in a child's class on Sundays!

Holding a little baby in the nursery!

Greeting someone when they enter church!

Leading a small group!

Helping with the administrative duties!

Serving on the worship team as a singer, instrumentalist, or technician.

Helping with the youth group!

Serving on our pastoral care team and checking on folks who are sick.

Serving on our prayer team praying for the needs that come in each week.

Taking a meal to someone who has gone through a tough time.

And there are things you can do to use your gifts outside the church, like checking on an elderly neighbor, helping someone at work when they are having a difficult time. Helping family members in need. Encouraging someone when they are down and out. Being a friend to someone everyone else has decided to ignore or treat as an outcast. Like sitting by someone in the lunch room that has no friends.

If you look at the life of Jesus, including His choice for disciples, you'll find that He was the one who reached out to the outcast and truly loved them. And ultimately He did way more than wash their feet. He allowed His feet to be nailed to an old rugged cross so they could be washed and cleansed all over, inside and out! Only the precious blood of Jesus can do that. This morning we're going to honor God and show our devotion to Him by remembering His sacrifice on our behalf! If you didn't get a Lord's Supper container when you came in and would like to participate in this time, you can step back to the table in the back and get one. And if you're wondering about the children, if they have made the decision to ask Christ into their hearts and lives and have been baptized then they are welcome to join in this time. If not, this could be a good conversation starter for you with your child about what it means to be a follower of Christ. If you will, open the top of your container and take out the piece of bread. Paul said these words...

1 Corinthians 11:23 For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread,

1 Corinthians 11:24 and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me."

As we eat this bread we remember our Lord's Body which was broken and torn in order that we might be healed of the dreaded disease of sin!

Paul continued...

1 Corinthians 11:25 In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."

1 Corinthians 11:26 For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

As we drink this cup we remember the precious life blood of Jesus that was shed in order to cleanse and wash away the stain of sin in our lives, our hearts and minds!

To God be the glory, Amen? Amen! The praise team will now lead us in this closing song and I'll be right over here if anyone would like to pray with me or one of our staff members! God Bless you!

Small Group Discussion Helps:

1. Have you ever been devoted to someone or something? In what way did that devotion affect your life?
2. If we are going to be devoted to others, and honor others, we must first be devoted to, and honor God. What does controlling self have to do with this statement?

Luke 9:23 Then he said to them all: "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.

Luke 9:24 For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will save it.

Luke 9:25 What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, and yet lose or forfeit his very self?

3. Talk a little bit about the difference between the Christian view and the world view on the subject of self.

Romans 12:2 Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is —his good, pleasing and perfect will.

(NIV)

4. God made us unique and different. Could our lack of understanding of those who are different from ourselves be one of the reasons we struggle with honoring one another above ourselves?

Romans 12:4 Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function,

(NIV)

Rom 12:6 We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith.

Rom 12:7 If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach;

Rom 12:8 if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully.

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