



ONE ANOTHER: WEEK 1

Recently we did a ladies retreat up in the mountains with the theme of **“ONE ANOTHER.”** I really loved it! I have been pondering and praying about the topic ever since and I couldn’t wait to write a study to do together. Living out the **ONE ANOTHERS** should characterize the Christian Church. It’s what Jesus followers do because it’s the way we honor Christ and His commands. In Matthew 22:37-39, Jesus said to love the Lord with all our heart, soul, and mind, and love our neighbors as ourselves. In John 13:35, Jesus also said “Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are My disciples.” (NLT) The majority of the **One Another**s are designed to be lived out among believers, but we are also called to treat the world in a same way, and as they see and experience that kind of love, they will be drawn to Christ. We display and demonstrate God’s love as we truly love one another ... we show them what His love looks like ... and then they will know we belong to Him.

We are called to magnify Christ. Magnify means “to make large.” We are to “make Jesus large” in our lives. John the Baptist had it right when he said, referring to Jesus, “He must increase, and I must decrease” (John 3:30). As we actively seek to increase Him and make Him large, we will then become less. Our simple desire is to be transformed by the Spirit of God (Romans 12:2) and be conformed to the image of Christ (Romans 8:29). Part of following in His footsteps (1 John 2:6), putting on the mind of Christ (Philippians 2:5), and looking like Him, is how we interact, live, and love each other through Christ. If we say we love God but hate our brother, the love of Christ is not in us (1 John 4:20). As others see us fulfill the Word and practice all the **One Another**s, they will be drawn to Him. **The**

One Anothers are nothing less than the life of Christ at work in the people of Christ for the glory of Christ.

1. How were you drawn to Christ? Who did God use to lead you to Him?
2. Do you think the Church always manifests the love of God to others in how they show love to one another? Explain your answer.
3. How does division, backbiting, and arguing effect Kingdom work within our communities and our world? What can be some of the consequences of that type of behavior toward one another within the Church?

Christ's unique plan was that non-Christians come to know of His love through Christians in proper relationship with one another. Though He was no longer going to be present, people could learn of His love through His followers who would continue to love one another as He did.

We know that we can't love others as we should if we don't love the Lord first with all our hearts. It's His love in us that enables and empowers us to love unselfishly and sacrificially. Our hearts have to be full of love for Him, committed to

Him, and surrendered to Him before anything else. There is no higher priority in life than loving God. John Bloom wrote, “Jesus didn’t command us to love relatively well -- but divinely well. He commanded them to love as He loved. Jesus, being God, is love (1 John 4:8). His love covers a multitude of sins (1 Peter 4:8). His love seeks to serve, rather than be served (Matthew 20:28). His love seeks to save the lost (Luke 19:10) and lavishes the returning prodigal with grace (Luke 15:11-32). His love is patient and kind; it’s not envious, boastful, arrogant, or rude. His love is not irritable or resentful, does not insist on its own selfish way, rejoices only in truth, and bears all things (1 Corinthians 13:4-7). The love of Christ transcends every other virtue; it is the most excellent way (1 Cor. 12:31, 13:13). And Jesus said this kind of love would be the distinguishing mark of His followers, the most remarkable thing about them (John 13:35). Because they loved like He loved, they would be His love ambassadors on earth (2 Corinthians 5:20).”

4. If you had to explain to someone what it means to love God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength, what would you say? Use Scriptures for your answer.

5. After reading your definition, would you say your life reflects that explanation?

There are over 50 **One Another**s in Scripture. **One Another** is two words in English, but only one word in Greek (Ah-lay-loan). It’s used 100 times in 94 New Testament verses, 47 of those are instructions to the Church, 60% come from the apostle Paul. All commentators seem to break them up differently. One says that 1/3 of them deal with the unity of the Church, 1/3 of them instruct believers to love one another, 15% stress an attitude of humility among believers, and then there is the “rest.” Many of them are taught from the pulpit but few are actually lived out among the Church community and the world.

6. Look up and list at least 10 “**One Another**” commands in Scripture. (Please list the verses as well.)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

7. On the list above, which is most familiar to you?
8. Which is least familiar to you? Which do you find hardest to practice?
9. Jesus modeled the **One Another**s to us as He walked through this life. How did Jesus “show and tell”? Can you give some examples?
10. The **One Another**s were distinguishing characteristics of the life of Jesus. Would you say that they are characteristics of your life as well?

11. If living out the **One Another**s involves other people in order to fulfill them, why, then, is Church community so important? Why should there be no such thing as a “lone” Christian?

If being made holy, called the sanctification process, was possible to do without involving other people, Jesus would have preached and promoted private piety alone on the path of holiness. But He doesn’t. Yes, personal piety and holiness is important, but the rubber meets the road when we interact with others. What’s in our heart and the true test of our faith comes out in our actions, as we read in the Book of James. We all could be holy ... if we lived alone. Ha!

12. Can we practice this kind of love in our own flesh? How are we able to do it?

The Father promises to give the Holy Spirit to those who ask (Luke 11:13). We are to approach the throne of God boldly (Hebrews 4:16) and persistently (Luke 11:5-8). The Holy Spirit transforms us into the image of Christ and enables us to love one another. 2 Corinthians 3:18 says, “And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord’s glory, are being transformed into His image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.” In Ephesians 5:18, Paul tells us not to be drunk with wine, which leads to sin, but instead, be filled with the Spirit. As the Holy Spirit transforms us, He also seeks to lead and fill us for His great and glorious purposes. The heart and power to practice the **One Another**s can accomplish His purpose by revealing Christ to our neighbors! We know we can’t do this in our flesh, but with God, all things are possible (Mark 10:27).

13. Read about Jesus feeding the four thousand in Mark 8:1-13. List any of the **One Another**s you see Jesus demonstrating in this story.

14. Read Acts 4:32-35. What **One Another**s were the early believers practicing?

15. Do you think it's possible to practice the **One Another**s in the flesh? Can a smile hide bitterness, or can we serve one another while harboring hatred? Thoughts?

16. Read the following verses and explain the mindset and the attitude with which we should serve and demonstrate the **One Another**s. Philippians 2:3, 5, and 1 Peter 5:5.

17. To close our week, let's pray for opportunities to practice God's Word and apply it in a way that brings hope and love to **One Another**. As we look at a different **One Another** each week, let's pray that the Spirit would cause us to examine our hearts and show us how to love others more like Jesus did. And still does! Lord, teach us to love One Another well.

Memory Verse of the Week:

"Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God."

1 John 4:7