



HOW TO GROW A LOVING CHURCH

August 24 & 25, 2024

Romans 12:1-21 (NLT)

And so, dear brothers and sisters, I plead with you to give your bodies to God because of all he has done for you. Let them be a living and holy sacrifice—the kind he will find acceptable. This is truly the way to worship him. Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.

Because of the privilege and authority God has given me, I give each of you this warning: Don't think you are better than you really are. Be honest in your evaluation of yourselves, measuring yourselves by the faith God has given us. Just as our bodies have many parts and each part has a special function, so it is with Christ's body. We are many parts of one body, and we all belong to each other.

In his grace, God has given us different gifts for doing certain things well. So if God has given you the ability to prophesy, speak out with as much faith as God has given you. If your gift is serving others, serve them well. If you are a teacher, teach well. If your gift is to encourage others, be encouraging. If it is giving, give generously. If God has given you leadership ability, take the responsibility seriously. And if you have a gift for showing kindness to others, do it gladly.

Don't just pretend to love others. Really love them. Hate what is wrong. Hold tightly to what is good. Love each other with genuine affection, and take delight in honoring each other. Never be lazy, but work hard and serve the Lord enthusiastically. Rejoice in our confident hope. Be patient in trouble, and keep on praying. When God's people are in need, be ready to help them. Always be eager to practice hospitality.

Bless those who persecute you. Don't curse them; pray that God will bless them. Be happy with those who are happy, and weep with those who weep. Live in harmony with each other. Don't be too proud to enjoy the company of ordinary people. And don't think you know it all!

Never pay back evil with more evil. Do things in such a way that everyone can see you are honorable. Do all that you can to live in peace with everyone. Dear friends, never take revenge. Leave that to the righteous anger of God. For the Scriptures say, "I will take revenge; I will pay them back," says the Lord. Instead, "If your enemies are hungry, feed them. If they are thirsty, give them something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals of shame on their heads." Don't let evil conquer you, but conquer evil by doing good.

12 Keys to Growing a Loving Church



L_____ holy, sacrificial, and humble lives as believers.

Romans 12:1-3 (MSG)

So here's what I want you to do, God helping you: Take your everyday, ordinary life—your sleeping, eating, going-to-work, and walking-around life—and place it before God as an offering. Embracing what God does for you is the best thing you can do for him. Don't become so well-adjusted to your culture that you fit into it without even thinking. Instead, fix your attention on God. You'll be changed from the inside out. Readily recognize what he wants from you, and quickly respond to it. Unlike the culture around you, always dragging you down to its level of immaturity, God brings the best out of you, develops well-formed maturity in you. I'm speaking to you out of deep gratitude for all that God has given me, and especially as I have responsibilities in relation to you. Living then, as every one of you does, in pure grace, it's important that you not misinterpret yourselves as people who are bringing this goodness to God. No, God brings it all to you. The only accurate way to understand ourselves is by what God is and by what he does for us, not by what we are and what we do for him.

3 Principles to Live This Way:

- _____ – *Offer your lives as a Holy sacrifice...*
- _____ – *Do not conform to the pattern of the world.*
- _____ – *...by the renewing of your mind.*



O_____ my spiritual gifts to serve the church.

Romans 12:5 (NLT)

...so it is with Christ's body. We are many parts of one body, and we all belong to each other.

1 Peter 4:10 (TPT)

Every believer has received grace gifts, so use them to serve one another as faithful stewards of the many-colored tapestry of God's grace.



V_____ everyone with genuine love and acceptance.

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Don't just pretend to love others. Really love them. Hate what is wrong. Hold tightly to what is good. Love each other with genuine affection, and take delight in honoring each other.



I_____ in serving others enthusiastically.

Romans 12:11 (NLT)

Never be lazy, but work hard and serve the Lord enthusiastically.

Colossians 3:23 (TPT)

Put your heart and soul into every activity you do, as though you are doing it for the Lord himself and not merely for others.

5 **N**_____ **my church with positivity, patience, and prayer.**

Romans 12:12 (NLT)

Rejoice in our confident hope. Be patient in trouble, and keep on praying.

Romans 5:3-5 (TPT)

But that's not all! Even in times of trouble we have a joyful confidence, knowing that our pressures will develop in us patient endurance. And patient endurance will refine our character, and proven character leads us back to hope. And this hope is not a disappointing fantasy, because we can now experience the endless love of God cascading into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who lives in us!

6 **G**_____ **to others by opening my heart and home.**

Romans 12:13 (TPT)

Take a constant interest in the needs of God's beloved people and respond by helping them. And eagerly welcome people as guests into your home.

Hebrews 13:2 (NLT)

Don't forget to show hospitality to strangers, for some who have done this have entertained angels without realizing it!

3 John 1:8 (NIV)

We ought therefore to show hospitality to such people so that we may work together for the truth.

7 **C**_____ **to never speak evil or negatively about another believer.**

Romans 12:14 (NLT)

Bless those who persecute you. Don't curse them; pray that God will bless them.

James 4:11 (NLT)

Don't speak evil against each other, dear brothers and sisters. If you criticize and judge each other, then you are criticizing and judging God's law. But your job is to obey the law, not to judge whether it applies to you.

8 **H**_____ **every hurting person with empathy and grace.**

Romans 12:15 (NLT)

Be happy with those who are happy, and weep with those who weep.

9**U** _____ my life from pride and partiality.**Romans 12:16 (NLT)**

Live in harmony with each other. Don't be too proud to enjoy the company of ordinary people. And don't think you know it all!

10**R** _____ revenge and remember **God is just.****Romans 12:17-20 (NLT)**

Never pay back evil with more evil. Do things in such a way that everyone can see you are honorable. Do all that you can to live in peace with everyone. Dear friends, never take revenge. Leave that to the righteous anger of God. For the Scriptures say, "I will take revenge; I will pay them back," says the Lord. Instead, "If your enemies are hungry, feed them. If they are thirsty, give them something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals of shame on their heads."

11**C** _____ evil with a loving passion to do good.**Romans 12:21 (NLT)**

Don't let evil conquer you, but conquer evil by doing good.

Remember:

- **We will never** _____ **others to do right.**
- **We will never** _____ **people into confession.**
- **We will never** _____ **people into Heaven.**

Luke 14:23 (ESV)

And the master said to the servant, "Go out to the highways and hedges and compel people to come in, that my house may be filled."

12**H** _____ the heart of our Savior in all we do.**Matthew 11:28-30 (NLT)**

Then Jesus said, "Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy to bear, and the burden I give you is light."

John 15:13 (NLT)

There is no greater love than to lay down one's life for one's friends.

12 Keys to Growing a Loving Church:**Live holy, sacrificial, humble lives****Offer my spiritual gifts****Validate everyone****Invest in serving others****Nurture my church****Give to others****Choose to never speak evil****Handle every person with grace.****Untangle my life****Resist revenge****Confront evil with good****Have the heart of our Savior**



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3 Principles to Live This Way:

- **Dedication** – *Offer your lives as a Holy sacrifice...*
- **Insulation** – *Do not conform to the pattern of the world.*
- **Transformation** – *...by the renewing of your mind.*

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...so it is with Christ's body. We are many parts of one body, and we all belong to each other.

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