

One Another Passages in the New Testament

Fifth Class: Feb. 20, 2022

Over the past few weeks, I have given you two challenges: See one another through God's eyes. And find some creative way to connect with others. This doesn't have to be every week. Pick one Sunday a month. Adjust timing as you see the need and as you feel led by the Spirit. **How are you doing with these two challenges?**

On another subject, Sue and I have been attending this church for a little more than a year. And last summer we became members. Before coming here, I was teaching an adult class at another church. I was with that class for about 25 years. So we got to know one another very well.

I began teaching primarily by lecture. By the end of the 25 years (We stopped because Covid closed down the church.), I was speaking about half the time and the class members were speaking about half. It is my intention to get to a similar position with this class. But I don't believe I have another 25 years to wait for that. So I'd like to speed up the process.

I really want more interaction with the class members. I'm going to start by asking for a volunteer from the class to open with prayer each class.

So, who will pray for us this morning? Barry Jacoshenk prayed.

Let me share that I was talking last week with one of the class members who really had more to say. But he expressed the concern that he not take over the class with his comments or even appear to do that. I can understand that. But don't be afraid to make comments. I can handle that.

But, taking off from that, there is one very important fact that I want to make clear. I haven't talked this over with Bud, but I think he would agree. This is not **my** class and it's not **Bud's** class. This is **your** class. Bud and I are here to facilitate and to learn together from what we have studied and what you contribute each week. So in our view, you are a critical part of this whole process. Don't be afraid to interact.

Excerpt from Thompson

I want to share a few more things from Thompson's book. In these cases, he is highlighting the sins and mistakes of men. I feel comfortable doing this because I

am a man. I don't feel comfortable talking the same way about women because, obviously I have never been one. So here it is.

"When I had married for only a few years, my wife made an interesting observation about my behavior whenever we visited my family. 'You know, Curt,' she said, 'every time we go there, this guy shows up. He looks like you, sounds like you, and even has your name. But I'm not really sure who he is, because he doesn't behave like the man I married.'

This transformation seemed to happen rather magically. When I would return home, I would begin to behave more tentatively and anxiously. In short, I related to my family more as I had when I was growing up—more like a young boy than an adult. And it took my wife pointing this out before I was even aware of it. Obviously, this behavior negatively affected our relationship. She thought she had married an adult, not an insecure teenager. (Fortunately, since she revealed this to me, I am now more likely to behave as if I'm nineteen rather than thirteen. I've grown a lot in the last twenty years."

Before we begin teaching today, I want to allow you to get to know a little about Bud as you did with me at the beginning of these sessions. So I am going to conduct an interview. And then open up to any questions you might have.

Interview with Bud Lindstrand (Unfortunately we did not record this.):

Briefly, how did you become a Christian?

Briefly, how did you become involved in church?

(At this point I interrupted and said that Bud and I have known each other for several years. In fact, when we first met, the Dead Sea was only sick. I asked the class if they knew where I got that. No one did; so I explained I got it from a Christian ventriloquist. I had to share one more of his lines: He said several people have asked him whether he has ever used his skills to play a prank on anyone. He said the temptation is often irresistible. Some times his actions were inappropriate. He said, "For example, I don't think I'll ever be asked to be a pall bearer again.")

Describe two or three of the most memorable events in your life and how they impacted your Christian growth.

What is your educational background, including Bible training?

What is the thing about you that you'd most like us to know?

What do you think is the most important thing you have learned that you'd like to share?

The next question could be intimidating. So I am going to give you my own answer first. Then you can comment or decide to answer something else.

Have you experienced some dry times spiritually? How did you handle them? I learned that God gives us relief when we are not getting the lesson. But He always returns at a later time with the same lesson. Every lesson I failed to complete, he has come back to. And he's still doing it. See Jn. 21:15 ff.

How did you hear about Bethany? And why did you decide to attend?

What was your first impression of the members here?

Why did you want to become a member here?

Any questions from the class?

This interview took about 25 minutes.

Discussion:

Let's break into small groups of three or four and define love. (The class gave several answers.) Let me read 1 Cor 13:4-8 (which I did from the NASB). Now let me read it in a different order. Notice the different categories I have broken these verses into.

I'm going to read these in a different order and refer to them in 4 categories.

Love **is** patient. Never offends no matter how long the count. Ready to move but never jumps the gun.

Love **is** kind. Implies gentleness.

Love **is not** jealous. Misplaced zeal. Difference envy and jealousy.

Love **is not** arrogant. Place yourself above others. Pharisee and Tax Gatherer.

Love **is not** provoked. (Irritated—they did not make me irritated. They provided me an opportunity for growth. I explained that you often see actors playing therapists ask questions like: How did that make you feel? No good therapist would frame questions that way. They would instead say: How did you feel when that happened? Now let's explore why you felt that way. After that, let's explore how you could respond differently when this happens again. The idea is to take responsibility for your own feelings and responses. You can't change part of yourself if you are always blaming someone else for your feelings or actions. I have a co-worker toward whom I occasionally feel irritated. After this study, I am beginning to ask myself at those times, why I felt irritated. There was something in me that caused my reaction. That's what I need to ask the Holy Spirit to work to change in my character.)

Love **rejoices** with the truth. Rejoice together with.

Love **bears** all things. To cover over. To contain oneself.

Love **believes** all things.

Love **hopes** all things.

Love **endures** all things.

Love **does not** brag. Does not blow its own horn. Again, the Pharisee.

Love **does not** act unbecomingly or dishonor others.

Love **does not** seek its own. It doesn't demand or feel entitled.

Love **does not** take into account a wrong suffered. What does take account mean? Keep records. That would make it easy to marinate in your own discontent.

Love **does not** rejoice in unrighteousness, whether mine or another's.

Love **does not** fail. It doesn't fall apart at the seams; doesn't come unglued. I used a spring loaded, string attached figure as a visual.

What are my categories?

- 1) What love is.
- 2) What love is not.
- 3) What love does.
- 4) What love does not do.

This has to do with (all three are basically the same):

Being and Doing

Essence and Action

Character and Behavior

The first of each pairing is about **who** you are. The second is about **what** you do.

Howard Hendricks tells the story of a woman who came to him for counseling. Her husband refused to come. Dr. Hendricks proposed that if you do loving things in your actions, you will become more loving in your character. He asked if there was anything she could make for her husband that he would like. She responded that he loved a particular "malodorous stew" that took all day to make and the smell penetrated the whole house. Dr. Hendricks gave her the assignment to make her husband some of that stew. The next week he asked her how she did. She said she started, but the smell got to her so she threw it out and freshened the air in the home. Dr. Hendricks said, "Next week, the same assignment."

The next week she came back with a different story. She made the stew. When her husband walked through the door, he exclaimed, "My God. What happened to that woman?" That was the break through that eventually led him to join her in therapy and positively working on their relationship.

Back to these two things: character and behavior. These two act **recursively**. That means that they are continuously affecting each other. If you do something that makes me a better person, that makes you a better person. That changes both of us and we continue to change for the better as we interact. I believe this is what is

meant by the Holy Spirit conforming us to the image of Christ. We become more like him in character (not nature) and we behave more like him.

This is the way God designed marriage so that we could help each other become more like Jesus. We have the greatest opportunity to make a significant impact on the life of another.

This is also the way he designed each church body to help one another become more like Jesus.

One final thought: If you get nothing else from this session, remember this. All the One Another passages are applications of “Love one another as I have loved you.”