

Devouring One Another

1Co 13:4 Charity (*Gk.26- love, that is, affection or benevolence*) suffereth long (*Gk.3114- to be long spirited, that is, forbearing or patient*), and is kind; charity envies (*Gk.2206- to be jealous over*) not; charity vaunteth (*Gk.4068- boast*) not itself, is not puffed up (*Gk.5448- to inflate, that is, make proud [haughty]*), 5 Doth not behave itself unseemly (*Gk.807- unbecoming*), seeketh not her own (*Gk.1438- self*), is not easily provoked, thinketh (*Gk.3049- to take inventory*)[*like the old S&H Green Stamps, taking inventory on evil is like collecting Brown Stamps, a.k.a., grudges and after accumulating a number of them, we cash them in*] no evil; 6 Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; 7 Beareth all things, believeth (*Gk.4100- to have faith: -commit [to trust], put in trust with*) all things, hopes all things, endureth all things.

With the understanding of what love truly is, those who love each other will not be those who devour each other. And bearing each other's burdens is not the same as being a burden. How we act toward each other reflects on the church but ultimately on how we have matured in our personal study of the word of God. My behavior reflects my commitment to the study of God's word. A mature Christian can be picked out of a crowd just as an immature one can.

Gal 5:14 For all the law is fulfilled in one word, *even* in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour (*Gk.4139- [adverb] close by; [noun] a neighbor, that is, fellow [as man, countryman, Christian or friend]*) as thyself.

Luk 10:25 And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted Him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? 26 He said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou? 27 And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; **and thy neighbour as thyself.** 28 And He said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live. 29 But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbour? (*Emp. added*)

My neighbor.

*Samaritans according to Smith's Bible Dictionary

About B.C. 409, a certain Manasseh, a man of priestly lineage, on being expelled from Jerusalem by Nehemiah for an unlawful marriage, obtained permission from the Persian king of his day, Darius Nothus, to build a temple on Mount Gerizim for the Samaritans, with whom he had found refuge.

Certain other Jewish renegades had, from time to time, taken refuge with the Samaritans; hence, by degrees, the Samaritans claimed to partake of Jewish blood, especially if doing so happened to suit their interest. Very far were the Jews from admitting this claim to consanguinity (*related by blood*) on the part of these people.

This definition of a Samaritan shows how Jesus took one of the most vile people to the Jews to show them the concept of being a neighbor to others, even when that other person was of a "lower class" than they were.

Luk 10:30 And Jesus answering said, A certain *man* went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded *him*, and departed,

leaving *him* half dead. 31 And by chance there came down a certain **priest** that way: and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. 32 And likewise a **Levite**, when he was at the place, came and looked *on him*, and passed by on the other side. 33 But a certain **Samaritan***, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion *on him*, 34 And went to *him*, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. 35 And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave *them* to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee. 36 Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves? 37 And he said, **He that shewed mercy** on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and **do thou likewise**. (*Emp. added*)

This should especially be so when it comes to each other in the church.

Mat 20:25 But Jesus called them *unto Him*, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. 26 But **it shall not be so among you**: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister (*Gk.1249- servant*); 27 And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant (*Gk.1401- a slave: -bondman*): 28 Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many. (*Emp. added*)

The Golden Rule.

Mat 7:12 Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the Law and the prophets.

Gal 5:15 **But** if ye bite (*Gk.1143- to bite, that is, [figuratively] thwart**) and devour (*Gk.2719- to eat down, that is, devour [literally or figuratively]*) one another, take heed that ye be not consumed (*Gk.355- to use up, that is, destroy*) one of another. (*Emp. added*)

*thwart- Webster: to obstruct, frustrate, or defeat (a person, plans, etc.)

Gal 5:16 This I say then, Walk (*Gk.4043- live*) in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. 17 For the flesh (*Gk.4561- human nature [with its frailties{physically or morally} and passions]*) lusteth (*Gk.1937- to set the heart upon, that is, long for [rightfully or otherwise]: -covet*) against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye **cannot do the things that ye would**. (*Emp. added*)

This is the battle within each of us that we war on an almost, if not always, daily basis.

Rom 7:22 For I delight in the **Law of God after the inward man**: 23 But I see another law in my members, warring against the **law of my mind**, and bringing me into captivity to the **law of sin which is in my members**. (*Emp. added*)

Gal 5:19 Now the works of the flesh (*human nature*) are manifest, which are *these*; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, 20 Idolatry, witchcraft, **hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies**, 21 **Envyings**, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told *you* in time past, **that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God**. (*Emp. added*)

- hatred- Gk.2189- *hostility*; by implication a reason for *opposition*. Any and all hostility expressed toward each other removes **any** chance at eternal life!

1Jn 3:14 We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not *his* brother abideth in death. 15 **Whosoever hateth** (*Gk.3404- to detest*) his brother **is a murderer**: and ye know that **no murderer hath eternal life** abiding in him. (*Emp. added*)

Mat 5:21 Ye have heard that it was said to them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment: 22 but I say unto you, that **everyone who is angry with his brother** shall be in danger of the judgment; ...(*Emp. added*) (*ASV*)

The KJV, along with others, adds the phrase “without cause” which is not in the original text where “lightly” is. This could be then translated that when we are angry with others over just about anything, we need to get over it because of the consequences that come if we don’t. And even the subtle desire for vengeance can inflame the war within us.

Rom 12:18 **If it be possible, as much as lieth in you**, live peaceably with all men. 19 Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but *rather* give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is Mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. 20 Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. (*Emp. added*)

“...the pain will result from shame, remorse of conscience, a conviction of the evil of his conduct, and an apprehension of divine displeasure that may lead to repentance.”

Albert Barnes

- variance- Gk.2054- a *quarrel*, that is, (by implication) *wrangling*: -contention, debate, strife. This is something that becomes public and would be an opportunity for Satan to do his work in destroying the body of God’s Son, His church.

Eph 4:26 Be angry without sinning. Don't go to bed angry. 27 Don't give the devil any opportunity to work. (*GW*)

- emulations- Gk.2205- properly heat, that is, (figuratively) “zeal”: - indignation, jealousy. Indignity, according to Webster, is “*an insult or affront to one’s dignity or self-respect*”. It’s a “*blowing out of another’s candle thinking their own will become brighter*”. The room only has less light and will ultimately result in darkness. There are “*good*” emulations (*such as in how we are to emulate Christ*) and “*bad*” ones as is in the context here. Whether spoken or not, indignation has no place in the Lord’s church. If our words or our actions do not result in edification, they should not be said or done in the first place.

Eph 4:29 Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good **to the use of edifying**, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. (*Emp. added*)

Let’s try something. Let’s see if we can go a whole week without saying something ill about another person. Let the only words that proceed from our mouths be to the edifying of another. How long do you think this would last?

- wrath- Gk.2372- passion (as if breathing hard): -fierceness, indignation. This would be taking that “*insult or affront to one’s dignity or self-respect*” to a turbulent level.

Eph 4:31 Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: 32 And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, **even as** God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you. (*Emp. added*)

- strife- Gk.2052- properly *intrigue*, that is (by implication) *faction*: -contention (-ious). Webster defines intrigue as “to plot secretly or underhandedly”.

Php 1:27 Only let your conversation (*Gk.4176- to behave as a citizen**) be as it **becometh the Gospel** of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may **hear of your affairs**, that ye **stand fast in one spirit**, with **one mind striving together** for the faith of the gospel; (**Are we not citizens of Heaven? –Heb 11:13, 16*) (*Emp. added*)

- seditions- Gk.1370- *disunion*: -division. No place should be given to “*cliques*” within the congregation. Any negativity between brethren will likely spill into the church and will, more than likely, disrupt the cohesion of the body. Word will get out about such contentions just as it did to Paul. He warned the Corinthian brethren of this.

1Co 1:10 Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all **speak the same thing**, and *that* there be **no divisions among you**; but *that* ye be **perfectly joined together** in the **same mind** and in the **same judgment**. 11 For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them *which are of the house of Chloe*, that there are contentions among you. (*Emp. added*)

- heresies- Gk.139- properly a *choice*, that is, (specifically) a *party* or (abstract) *disunion*: -sect.

According to John Gill’s Exposition heresies are “*bad principles and tenets, relating to doctrine, which are subversive of the fundamentals of the Gospel and the Christian religion; and are the produce of a man’s own invention, and the matter of his choice, without any foundation in the word of God; and these are works of the flesh, for they spring from a corrupt and carnal mind, and are propagated with carnal views, as popular applause, worldly advantage, and indulging the lusts of the flesh.*”

Diotrephes was a heretic because of his ambition to be first.

3Jn 1:9 I wrote unto the church: but Diotrephes, who loveth to have the **preeminence** among them, receiveth us not. 10 Wherefore, if I come, I will remember his deeds which he doeth, prating against (*Gk.5396- to be a babbler or trifler, that is, [by implication] to berate idly or mischievously*) us with malicious (*Gk.4190- hurtful*) words: and not content (*satisfied*) therewith, neither doth he himself receive the brethren, and forbiddeth them that would, and casteth *them* out of the church. 11 Beloved, follow not that which is evil, but that which is good. He that doeth good is of God: **but he that doeth evil** hath not seen (*Gk.3708- to discern clearly*) God. (*Emp. added*)

Paul told Timothy to be aware of such ambitions that would come into the church.

1Ti 4:1 Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall **depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils**;

1Ti 4:6 If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and **of good doctrine**, whereunto thou hast attained. (*Emp. added*)

- Envy- Gk.5355- *ill will* (as *detraction*), that is, *jealousy* (*spite*). John Gill calls this the “*grieving at the good of others, that any should be in an equal, or in a better condition than themselves*”. And even just a little envy is still wrong. Remember “*a little leaven leavens the whole lump*” (1 Cor 5:6). In order for Diotrephes to have the preeminence in the church he had to first have a certain level of jealousy and/or spite against anyone who was even remotely in authority. But this isn’t always the case to this degree. Jealousy can be found in so many situations, social or otherwise, and at differing levels. In the church there can exist ill will. Whether for someone who seems to get more attention or who is more popular or might be known for their accomplishments or position. A person who is jealous is a person who is at war within themselves because they don’t see their own self-worth and its potential to excel. Without seeing such within they are more likely to have ill will that is displayed without toward others.

1Th 5:11 Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and **edify** one another, even as also ye do. 12 And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; 13 And to **esteem them** very highly in love **for their work’s sake**. And **be at peace** among yourselves. (*Emp. added*)

In contrast...

Gal 5:22 But the fruit of the Spirit (*Gk.4151- Holy Spirit*) is love, joy, peace, **longsuffering, gentleness**, goodness, faith, 23 **Meekness, temperance**: against such there is no law (*Satan won’t tempt us with these things.*). 24 And they that are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. 25 If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk (*Gk.4748- to march in [military] rank [keep step], that is, [figuratively] to conform to virtue and piety**) in the Spirit. 26 Let us not be desirous of vain glory (*Gk.2755- self-conceit*), provoking (*Gk.4292- to call forth to oneself [challenge], that is, [by implication] to irritate*) one another, envying (*Gk.5354- to be jealous of*) one another.

*piety- Webster: 1. devotion to religious duties, etc. 2. devotion to parents, family, etc.

- longsuffering- Gk.3115- *forbearance*: -patience. In other words, we are to “*put up with*” each other. This is not to say we are to tolerate sin. That’s not the discussion here. And it doesn’t excuse anyone who takes advantage of this idea either. But we are to do so in love putting the other person first. It would be like attending a dinner where you stand in line knowing there’s only so much food to go around and patiently allowing others in line ahead of us. This goes along with gentleness.
- gentleness- Gk.5544- *usefulness*, that is, moral *excellence* (in character or demeanor): -kindness.

Rom 12:10 Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another; (*...allowing them to go ahead in line no matter how hungry we are...*)

- meekness- Gk.4236- *humility*. Even though Jesus is King of kings, He humbled Himself to do what He did. When He said “*learn of Me*” He was saying that we are to understand

how to become as “meek and lowly” as He was. Only then can we find rest from what’s bothering us from within.

Mat 11:29 Take My yoke upon you, and **learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart**: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. (*Emp. added*)

- temperance- Gk.1466- *self-control*. This is one aspect of “*self*” that seems to be the weakest place in our spiritual armor. It is this weakness that Satan masterfully manipulates in order to destroy the Lord’s church. Gaining self-control can be a lifelong endeavor for many of us, but can be achieved.

2Pe 1:4 Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be **partakers of the divine nature** (*God’s DNA- this is that good within that needs to be preeminent over our human nature*), having **escaped the corruption** that is in the world through lust. 5 And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your **faith virtue**; and to virtue **knowledge**; 6 And to knowledge **temperance**; and to temperance **patience**; and to patience **godliness**; 7 And to godliness **brotherly kindness**; and to brotherly kindness **charity**. 8 **For if** these things be in you, and abound, **they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge** of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 **But** he that **lacketh these things** is **blind**, and cannot see afar off, and **hath forgotten** that he was purged from his old sins. 10 Wherefore the rather, brethren, **give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall**: 11 For so an **entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ**. 12 Wherefore **I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things**, though ye know *them*, and be established in the present truth. (*Emp. added*)

1Pe 1:22 Seeing ye have purified your souls in ***obeying the truth** through the Spirit unto unfeigned (*Gk.505- sincere*) love of the brethren, *see that ye love one another with a pure (Gk.2513- clean) heart (Gk.2588- the thoughts or feelings [mind]) fervently (Gk.1619- intently*)*: 23 Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. (*Emp. added*)

*Webster: intently- firmly directed, purpose firmly fixed.

*obeying the truth...

Anyone who has become a New Testament child of God understands these steps.

Hear: Romans 10:17 ...“faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”

Believe: Heb 11:6 ...“for he that commeth to God must believe that He is”...

Repent: Lk 13:3 ...“except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.”

Confess: Mat 10:32 “Whosoever shall confess Me before men, him will I confess before My Father which is in Heaven.”

Be baptized: Acts 22:16 “And now why tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.”

Remain faithful: Rom 6:4 ...“even so we also should walk in newness of life.”

When we become Christians we are to live like we are Christians. Even the smallest of spats can, and will, cause division and will keep us from entering the kingdom of Heaven when this life is over. Remember...

Jas 4:14 ... ye know not what *shall be* on the morrow. For what *is* your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.

So whatever squabble there exists between any of us, is it worth losing our souls over?

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