



GROWING UP IN GOD
A JOURNEY THROUGH THE PSALMS OF ASCENT
Session 14 February 2012

Psalm 133 The Message
A Pilgrim Song of David

*¹⁻³ How wonderful, how beautiful, when brothers and sisters get along!
It's like costly anointing oil
flowing down head and beard,
Flowing down Aaron's beard,
flowing down the collar of his priestly robes.
It's like the dew on Mount Hermon
flowing down the slopes of Zion.
Yes, that's where God commands the blessing,
ordains eternal life.*

When we reach this stage on our journey we are beginning to lose ourselves and discover God – we are recognising, as the psalmists knows so well, that we have two relationships, vertical and horizontal and if the vertical relationship is not right, we cannot properly engage in the horizontal..

We are also discovering that without unity between brother and sister, there is no blessing – because it is in the unforced rhythms grace which produce the unity of the brethren, that God *commands* His blessing. We simply cannot say 'I love God' and hate our brother...

The unforced rhythms of grace.

Grace, the power to change - effected by the oil of the Holy Spirit within us, the unction for the function...

No easy task.

We can all 'talk the talk', but walking the walk is so different and difficult...

Something has to give; something has to die – for that Eternal Seed within us to come into fruition. No emotion here, just a hard-nosed decision, constantly, I am going to allow the Holy Spirit to kill off in me everything that doesn't look like Jesus, everything which prevents His fruit from being manifested in me and through me.

Outward show avails nothing.

Effort – forget it.

Whitewashed sepulchres...

Painting over the cracks.

Found out!

Grace is the answer, grace, grace and more grace...

'I am crucified with Christ – nevertheless, I live...yet not I BUT CHRIST.'

'Beloved, love one another'.

There's an old saying *'the God that's in me won't fight the God in you...'* but the 'me' in me just might!

That 'me' in me, just might want to be first, best and right...

It's called pride – Satan fell because of it...

'Take from me Father every form and manner of pride, however it manifests itself...'

(Pray that for a month and see the changes...or read 'Humility' by Andrew Murray)

The unity of the Spirit goes right against human nature – two cats in a bag...

Right against it; light and darkness.

The unity of the Spirit is not natural, it's **supernatural**, that's why so many of our efforts at unity fail so dismally – the flesh can never crucify the flesh, the devil can't cast out the devil – outward show avails nothing with God - though religious man might be satisfied with it...

Unity of the Spirit means that our natural ways, wanting to be heard, making a point, having an opinion, all of which are valid, must be subordinated to the willingness to lose something – our self life - to bow the knee, lose 'face', lose our reputation – whatever we think **that** might be - keep quiet even when we *know* we are right, and even be wrong or thought to be wrong without defending ourselves or vindicating ourselves...zipping the lip...

This means foregoing our 'right' to ourselves...picking up that cross which is tailor made for us...

We are not compromising our beliefs; what we are seeing is that there is little or no value in the triumph of being 'right' if that means a broken relationship...it's a hollow victory, loss of fellowship, loss of unity, worst of all, we lose our connection with the Head.

God gives grace to the humble...

James 4:6 NKJV

⁶ But He gives more grace. Therefore He says: "God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble."

Beloved, if you are living without understanding grace, I have a prophecy for you – you aren't going to make it to the end!!

Grace - the empowering Presence of God *within*, to cause inner sanctification...as a man thinks in his heart – so is he...

And, except a grain of wheat falls to the ground and die, it abides alone...

Our opinion is not as important as peace – blessed are the peacemakers...

Then there is forgiveness – total forgiveness – that means not only do you 'forgive and forget', but that you *release* the person into your blessing – choosing not to hold anything against them ever again...and every time they come to mind, you bless them – no resentment, no bitterness...blessing. Without forgiveness, there will be no forgiveness...forgive then, as the Lord forgave you...and -

Prefer one another.

When Billy Graham first visited this country a very well known British evangelist, who regularly filled the Albert Hall with his meetings, saw God's favour upon the man and used his own influence to push Billy's cause in place of his own, with the result that Billy Graham took over the Albert Hall attracting a full house.

Preferring one another may mean 'your' ministry given to another and you slipping into obscurity...

Then there's the rival spirit.

King David knew better than most what it was like to live with a rival spirit...Saul had sought his life for many, many years, but David responded in the *opposite* spirit continually showing himself a man after God's own heart, blessing when he was cursed...

Fundamental stuff, but somehow it gets buried in the rough and tumble of life.

Are you ready for the truth?

Then listen to the Message -

Luke 6: 27 - 30 The Message

²⁷⁻³⁰ "To you who are ready for the truth, I say this: Love your enemies. Let them bring out the best in you, not the worst. When someone gives you a hard time, respond with the energies of prayer for that person. If someone slaps you in the face, stand there and take it. If someone grabs your shirt, giftwrap your best coat and make a present of it. If someone takes unfair advantage of you, use the occasion to practice the servant life. No more tit-for-tat stuff. Live generously."

'No more tit-for-tat stuff' – no more upstaging, having the last word, being seen to be right, wanting to be first, best and right...no more of it beloved...

Paul said it a different way –

Ephesians 4:1 – 6 NASB

Unity of the Spirit

¹Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, ² with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing tolerance for one another in love, ³ being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. ⁴ There is one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling; ⁵ one Lord, one faith, one baptism, ⁶ one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all.'

We were all baptised into the one Spirit, the Holy Spirit, it is **His** unity with the Father and the Son which we need to learn to preserve by allowing His life to flow unencumbered through us – whatever the cost.

And it will.

Cost, that is...

'If your Christianity has cost you nothing', someone once was heard to say, *'I question your Christianity.'*

Coming into the maturity of the blessing of Psalm 133 is going to cost us right where we live – Jesus Himself said *'if any man come after Me, let him pick up his cross...'*

We don't pick up our cross, we wear it around our necks – doesn't kill us off hanging there...

I can't pick up yours, you can't carry mine; each of us dying daily, to *our* wants, *our* desires, me, me, me, my, my, my, that **He** may become all in all – because when the unity the Spirit of Christ is manifested in us and through us and it **commands** a blessing from God Himself...

*'Yes, that's where GOD **commands** the blessing'* He can't keep away where there is unity among the brethren...

There is a joy in seeing that this is **past tense**, this all happened 2,000+ years ago – we are already dead in Him, so our business is simply to be **alive** to God and let the Christ life within come forth...

We are growing up and going on - and unity comes as we recognise the 'anointing' to be of primary importance – the anointing is the **Presence** of God by the Holy Spirit – when the anointing becomes imperative, we will do anything, pay any price, to preserve the sweet preciousness of His Presence with us...He is altogether lovely...

So, in the cold light of day, where are you planning to live in 2012; in your old nature and its habits or in the brand new DNA given you at the moment of rebirth?

Selah – pause and think about that for a moment...

If we are to come into the unity which is spoken of in Psalm 133, we must make that choice and continue to make the choice, to live in the new and make the most of -

G.R.A.C.E.

He has **oceans** of grace available for you; more grace than you could ever need...grace, the empowering Presence of God to change us into the likeness of His Son, grace - the Patronage of God, and the protection of God whilst He changes us – as we work through the issues of righteousness and Christ likeness...

Take full advantage of the grace of God beloved...

He sees you as the Beloved, in the Beloved; positionally, you are already there – so what are you waiting for?

Time to grow up time; time to put away childish things.

Time to get serious with God, to match His intentionality with our own.

One of the things we have to do when we become adults is to take on board the **whole** counsel of God, not just the bits we like the sound of – not rules and regulations, this is a heart issue; God knows when we come into His presence, what is lurking in our hearts – look at Psalm 15 -

¹ LORD, who may abide in Your tabernacle?

Who may dwell in Your holy hill?

² He who walks uprightly,

And works righteousness,

And speaks the truth in his heart;

³ He who does not backbite with his tongue,

Nor does evil to his neighbour,

Nor does he take up a reproach against his friend;

⁴ In whose eyes a vile person is despised,

But he honours those who fear the LORD;

He who swears to his own hurt and does not change;

⁵ He who does not put out his money at usury,

Nor does he take a bribe against the innocent.

He who does these things shall never be moved.

Can't get away from it, there's a code of behaviour to be observed if we are to live in the Presence of the King.

Maturity requires that this become reality – time to grow up into all things – in Christ.

Indifferent behaviour falls into four categories – firstly we insist on being right, thus making others wrong. Secondly, we control others for our own purposes; we either possess them or oppose them. Thirdly, we blame others - conveniently deleting the memory of our own behaviour and distorting

the words and behaviours of others in order to make ourselves look good and attempt to get ourselves off the hook.....finally, we justify our own behaviour because 'everybody else does it...'

If we cannot behave ourselves with our brothers and sisters here on the earth, are we fit for the courts of heaven?

Heaven is about loving relationships...

The Godhead practices relationships...the Father loves the Son, the Son loves the Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit loves the Father...all in one accord, a Divine Community with no shadow...

1 John 1:5 – 10 The Message

'God is light, pure light; there's not a trace of darkness in him. ⁶⁻⁷If we claim that we experience a shared life with him and continue to stumble around in the dark, we're obviously lying through our teeth—we're not living what we claim. But if we walk in the light, God himself being the light, we also experience a shared life with one another, as the sacrificed blood of Jesus, God's Son, purges all our sin. ⁸⁻¹⁰If we claim that we're free of sin, we're only fooling ourselves. A claim like that is errant nonsense. On the other hand, if we admit our sins—make a clean breast of them—he won't let us down; he'll be true to himself. He'll forgive our sins and purge us of all wrongdoing. If we claim that we've never sinned, we out-and-out contradict God—make a liar out of him. A claim like that only shows off our ignorance of God.'

Indifferent and uncommitted behaviour is like scratching an itch – it feels good at the time, which is sweet, we get to prove they were wrong...the 'feel good' factor...but it's a hollow victory and it carries a high price tag because the enemy gets us both ways - our poor behaviour prevents us living in unity with others **and** denies us our opportunity to realize our own destiny...without knowing we are facing in two directions at once – double minded, the Bible calls it...

Uncommitted behaviour has a price tag which goes both vertically and horizontally – you can't be in fellowship with God and out with your brother or sister...

Blessing when we are cursed and reviled; not repaying evil with evil but with blessing...keeping no record of wrong; loving the brotherhood...praying for all people, whether you agree with them or not, especially for those in authority over us – there's an issue right there - for there is no government except that appointed by God, therefore – 'be subject' -

Romans 13:1 – 10 NASB

Be Subject to Government

¹Every person is to be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God. ² Therefore whoever resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God; and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves. ³ For rulers are not a cause of fear for good behaviour, but for evil. Do you want to have no fear of authority? Do what is good and you will have praise from the same; ⁴ for it is a minister of God to you for good. But if you do what is evil, be afraid; for it does not bear the sword for nothing;

for it is a minister of God, an avenger who brings wrath on the one who practices evil. ⁵ Therefore it is necessary to be in subjection, not only because of wrath, but also for conscience' sake. ⁶ For because of this you also pay taxes, for rulers are servants of God, devoting themselves to this very thing. ⁷ Render to all what is due them: tax to whom tax is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour.

⁸ *Owe nothing to anyone except to love one another; for he who loves his neighbour has fulfilled the law. ⁹ For this, "YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT ADULTERY, YOU SHALL NOT MURDER, YOU SHALL NOT STEAL, YOU SHALL NOT COVET," and if there is any other commandment, it is summed up in this saying, "YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF."* ¹⁰ *Love does no wrong to a neighbour; therefore love is the fulfilment of the law.*

¹¹ *Do this, knowing the time, that it is already the hour for you to awaken from sleep; for now salvation is nearer to us than when we believed. ¹² The night is almost gone, and the day is near. Therefore let us lay aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armour of light. ¹³ Let us behave properly as in the day, not in carousing and drunkenness, not in sexual promiscuity and sensuality, not in strife and jealousy. ¹⁴ But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts.'*

'Owe nothing to anyone except to love one another'.

(May I suggest at this point you scroll down and read Amy Carmichael's poem '**if**' before you pray the prayer at the end? And later you may wish to follow on and read the 'one another' scriptures which are attached for your convenience...)

Counter culture, going against the flow, both of the church and the world – but we are ready for it now aren't we so we say from our hearts -

'Father,

I ask that you kill off every form and manner of pride in me, however it manifests itself. I ask that humility, gentleness and meekness of spirit may be birthed in me. That throughout the body I may walk in harmony of mind and purpose; that I do nothing and speak nothing from contentiousness, strife or selfishness; that I do nothing for unworthy ends, nothing that is prompted by conceit or arrogance I pray that I might show forth a true spirit of lowliness of mind, esteeming others more highly than myself. That I may be concerned for their interests, for the very best for them; that the mind of Christ might be in me and He might be my example. In His name and for His sake let it be so. Amen.'

That should do it.

¹ 'Humility' by Andrew Murray available from www.Amazon.co.uk.

'If'

Amy Carmichael

If I belittle those whom I am called to serve, talk of their weak points in contrast perhaps with what I think of as my strong points; if I adopt a superior attitude, forgetting "Who made thee to differ? And what hast thou that thou hast not received?" then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If I find myself taking lapses for granted, "Oh, that's what they always do," "Oh, of course she talks like that, he acts like that," then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If I can enjoy a joke at the expense of another; if I can in any way slight another in conversation, or even in thought, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If I can write an unkind letter, speak an unkind word; think an unkind thought without grief and shame, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If I do not feel far more for the grieved Saviour than for my worried self when troublesome things occur, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If I can rebuke without a pang, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If my attitude be one of fear, not faith, about one who has disappointed me; if I say, "Just what I expected" if a fall occurs, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If I am afraid to speak the truth, lest I lose affection, or lest the one concerned should say, "You do not understand," or because I fear to lose my reputation for kindness; if I put my own good name before the other's highest good, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If I am content to heal a hurt slightly, saying "Peace, peace," where there is no peace; if I forget the poignant word "Let love be without dissimulation" and blunt the edge of truth, speaking not right things but smooth things, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If I hold on to choices of any kind, just because they are my choice, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If I am soft to myself and slide comfortably into self-pity and self-sympathy; if I do not by the grace of God practice fortitude, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If I myself dominate myself, if my thoughts revolve round myself, if I am so occupied with myself I rarely have "a heart at leisure from itself," then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If, the moment I am conscious of the shadow of self crossing my threshold, I do not shut the door, and keep that door shut, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If I cannot in honest happiness take the second place (or the twentieth); if I cannot take the first without making a fuss about my unworthiness, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If I take offense easily, if I am content to continue in a cool unfriendliness, though friendship be possible, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If I feel injured when another lays to my charge things that I know not, forgetting that my sinless Saviour trod this path to the end, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If I feel bitter toward those who condemn me, as it seems to me, unjustly, forgetting that if they knew me as I know myself they would condemn me much more, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If souls can suffer alongside, and I hardly know it, because the spirit of discernment is not in me, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If the praise of others elates me and their blame depresses me; if I cannot rest under misunderstanding without defending myself; if I love to be loved more than to love, to be served more than to serve, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If I crave hungrily to be used to show the way of liberty to a soul in bondage, instead of caring only that it be delivered; if I nurse my disappointment when I fail, instead of asking that to another the word of release may be given, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If I do not forget about such a trifle as personal success, so that it never crosses my mind, or if it does, is never given room there; if the cup of flattery tastes sweet to me, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If in the fellowship of service I seek to attach a friend to myself, so that others are caused to feel unwanted; if my friendships do not draw others deeper in, but are ungenerous (to myself, for myself), then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If I refuse to allow one who is dear to me to suffer for the sake of Christ, if I do not see such suffering as the greatest honour that can be offered to any follower of the Crucified, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If I slip into the place that can be filled by Christ alone, making myself the first necessity to a soul instead of leading it to fasten upon Him, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If my interest in the work of others is cool; if I think in terms of my own special work; if the burdens of others are not my burdens too, and their joys mine, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If I wonder why something trying is allowed, and press for prayer that it may be removed; if I cannot be trusted with any disappointment, and cannot go on in peace under any mystery, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If the ultimate, the hardest, cannot be asked of me; if my fellows hesitate to ask it and turn to someone else, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If I covet any place on earth but the dust at the foot of the Cross, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

“That which I know not, teach Thou me, O Lord, my God.”

Fellowship with God:

- The knowledge of his will: Job 22:21; *‘Acquaint yourself now with Him (agree with God and show yourself to be conformed to His will) and be at peace: by that (you shall prosper and great good shall come to you.’* John 17:3) *‘And this is eternal life (it means) to know (to perceive, recognize, become acquainted with, and understand) You, the only true and real God, and (likewise) to know Him, Jesus (as the) Christ (the Anointed One, the Messiah) Whom You have sent.’*
- Agreement with his purposes. Amos 3:3 *‘Do two walk together except they make an appointment and have agreed?’*
- Mutual affection. Rom. 8:38, 39 *‘For I am persuaded beyond doubt (am sure) that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities, nor things impending and threatening nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.’*
- Enjoyment of his presence. Ps. 27:4 *‘One thing have I asked of the Lord, that will I seek, inquire for and (insistently) require: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord (in His presence) all the days of my life, to behold and gaze upon the beauty (the sweet attractiveness and the delightful loveliness) of the Lord and to meditate, consider and inquire in His temple.’*
- Conformity to his image. 1 John 2:6 *‘Whoever says he abides in Him ought (as a personal debt) to walk and conduct himself in the same way in which He walked and conducted Himself.’*
- Participation in his happiness. John 17:13 *‘And now I am coming to You: I say these things while I am still in the world, so that My joy may be made full and complete and perfect in them (that they may experience My delight fulfilled in them, that My enjoyment may be perfected in their own souls, that they may have My gladness within them, filling their hearts.*

- 1 John 1:3,4 *'What we have seen and (ourselves) heard, we are also telling you, so that you too may realize and enjoy fellowship as partners and partakers with us. And (this) fellowship that we have (which is a distinguishing mark of Christians) is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ (the Messiah). And we are now writing these things to you so that our joy (in seeing you included) may be full (and your joy may be complete).'*

Fellowship of the saints with 'one another', all scriptures taken from the Amplified Bible:

John 13:14 *'If I then, your Lord and Teacher (Master) have washed your feet, you ought (it is your duty, you are under obligation, you owe it) to wash one another's feet.'*

John 13:34 *'I give you a new commandment: that you should love one another. Just as I have loved you, so you too should love one another.'*

John 15:12, 17 *'This is My commandment: that you love one another (just) as I have loved you. (17) This is what I command you: that you love one another.'*

Romans 12:5,10,16 *'So we, numerous as we are, are one body in Christ (the Messiah) and individually we are parts one of another (mutually dependent on one another). (10) Love one another with brotherly affection (as members of one family) giving precedence and showing honour to one another. (16) Live in harmony with one another: do not be haughty (snobbish, high minded, exclusive) but readily adjust yourself to (people, things) and give yourselves to humble tasks. Never overestimate yourself or be wise in your own conceits.'*

Rom. 13:8; *'Keep out of debt and owe no man anything, except to love one another: for he who loves his neighbour (who practices loving others) has fulfilled the Law (relating to one's fellow men, meeting all its requirements.)*

Romans 14:13,19 *'Then let us no more criticize and blame and pass judgment on one another, but rather decide and endeavour never to put a stumbling block or an obstacle or hindrance in the way of a brother. (19) So let us then definitely aim for and eagerly pursue what makes for harmony and for mutual up building (edification and development) of one another.'*

Romans 15:5-7,14 *'Now may the God Who gives the power of patient endurance, (steadfastness), Who supplies encouragement, grant you to live in such mutual harmony and such full sympathy with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus, that together you may (unanimously) with united hearts and one voice, praise and glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ (the Messiah). Welcome and receive (to your hearts) one another, then, even as Christ has welcomed and received you, for the glory of God (14) Personally I am satisfied about you, my brethren, that you yourselves are rich in goodness, amply filled with all (spiritual) knowledge and competent to admonish and counsel and instruct one another also.'*

Romans 16:16 *'Greet one another with a holy (consecrated) kiss. All the churches of Christ (the Messiah) wish to be remembered to you.'*

1 Corinthians 11:33 *'So then, my brothers, when you gather together to eat (the Lord's supper) wait for one another.'*

1 Corinthians 12:25 *'So that there should be no division or discord or lack of adaptation (of the parts of the body to each other) but the members all alike should have a mutual interest and care for one another.'*

Galatians 5:13,15,26 *'For you brethren were (indeed) called to freedom only (do not let your) freedom be an incentive to your flesh and an opportunity or excuse for selfishness but through love you should serve one another. (15) But if you bite and devour one another (in partisan strife) be careful that you (and your whole fellowship) are not consumed by one another. (26) Let us not become vainglorious and self-conceited, competitive and challenging and provoking and irritating to one another, envying and being jealous of one another.'*

Galatians 6:2 *'Bear (endure, carry) one another's burdens and troublesome moral faults and in this way fulfill and observe perfectly and law of Christ (the Messiah) and complete what is lacking (in your obedience to it).'*

Ephesians 4:2,25,32 *'Living as becomes you, with complete lowliness of mind (humility) and meekness (unselfishness, gentleness, mildness) with patience, bearing with one another and making allowances because you love one another. (25) Therefore, rejecting all falsity and being done now with it, let everyone express the truth with his neighbour, for we are all parts of one body and members of one another. (32) And become useful and helpful and kind to one another, tender hearted (compassionate, understanding, loving hearted) forgiving one another readily and freely.'*

Ephesians 5:21 *'Be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ.'*

Philippians 2:3 *'Do nothing from factional motives (through contentiousness, strife, selfishness, or for unworthy ends) or prompted by conceit and empty arrogance. Instead, in the true spirit of humility (lowliness of mind) let each regard the other as better than and superior to himself (thinking more highly of one another than you do of yourselves).'*

Colossians 3:9, 13 *'Do not lie to one another, for you have stripped off the old (unregenerate) self with its evil practices. (13) Be gentle and forbearing with one another and, if one has a difference (a grievance or complaint) against another, readily pardoning each other; even as the Lord has (freely) forgiven you, so must you also (forgive).'*

1 Thessalonians 3:12 *'And may the Lord make you to increase and excel and overflow in love for one another and for all people, just as we also do for you.'*

1 Thessalonians 4:9,18 *'But concerning brotherly love (for all other Christians) you have no need to have anyone write you, for you yourselves have been (personally) taught by God to love one another. (18) Therefore comfort and encourage one another with these words.'*

1 Thessalonians 5:11,15 *'Therefore encourage (admonish, exhort) one another and edify (strengthen and build up) one another, just as you are doing. (15) See that none of you repays another with evil for evil but always aim to show kindness and seek to do good to one another and to everybody.'*

Titus 3:3 *'For we also were once thoughtless and senseless, obstinate and disobedient, deluded and misled (we too were once slaves to all sorts of cravings and pleasures, wasting our days in malice and jealousy and envy, hateful (hated and detestable) and hating one another.'*

Hebrews 10:24, 25 *'And let us consider and give attentive, continuous care to watching over one another, studying how we may stir up (stimulate and incite) to love and helpful deeds and noble activities (25) not forsaking or neglecting to assemble together (as believers) as is the habit of some people, but admonishing (warning urging and encouraging) one another, and all the more faithfully as you see the day approaching.'*

James 4:11 *'My brethren, do not speak evil about or accuse one another. He that maligns a brother or judges his brother is maligning and criticizing the Law and judging the Law. But if you judge the Law, you are not a practicer of the Law, but a censor and judge of it.'*

James 5:9,16 *'Do not complain brethren, against one another so that you (yourselves) may not be judged. Look! The Judge is (already) standing at the very door. (16) Confess to one another therefore your faults (your slips, your false steps, your offences, your sins) and pray (also) for one another, that you may be healed and restored (to a spiritual tone of mind and heart). The earnest, (heartfelt, continued) prayer of a righteous man makes tremendous power available (dynamic in its working).'*

1 Peter 1:22 *'Since by your obedience to the Truth through the (Holy) Spirit you have purified your hearts for the sincere affection of the brethren (see that you) love one another fervently from a pure heart.'*

1 Peter 4:9 *'Practice hospitality to one another (those of the household of faith). (Be hospitable, be a lover of strangers, with brotherly affection for the unknown guests, the foreigners, the poor, and all others who come your way who are of Christ's body.) And (in each instance) do it ungrudgingly (cordially and graciously, without complaining, but as representing Him).'*

1 Peter 5:5,14 *'Likewise, you who are younger and of lesser rank, be subject to the elders (the ministers and spiritual guides of the church) – (giving them due respect and yielding to their counsel). Clothe (apron) yourselves, all of you, with humility (as the garb of a servant, so that its covering cannot be stripped from you, with freedom from pride and arrogance) toward one another. For God sets Himself against the proud (the insolent, the overbearing, the disdainful, the presumptuous, the boastful) – (and He opposes, frustrates and defeats them) but gives grace (favour blessing) to the humble. (14) Salute one another with a kiss of love (the symbol of mutual affection).'*

1 John 1:7 *'But if we (really) are living and walking in the light, as He (Himself is in the light we have (true, unbroken) fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses (removes) us from all sin and guilt (keeps us cleansed from sin in all its forms and manifestations).'*

1 John 3:11,23 *'For this is the message (the announcement) which you have heard from the first, that we should love one another (23) And this is His order (His command, His injunction): that we should believe in (put our faith and trust in and adhere to and rely on) the name of His Son, Jesus Christ (the Messiah) and that we should love one another just as He has commanded us.'*

1 John 4:7,11,12 *'Beloved, let us love one another, for love is (springs) from God; and he who loves (his fellowmen) is begotten (born) of God and is coming (progressively) to know and understand God (to perceive and recognize and get a better and clearer knowledge of Him) (11) Beloved, if God loved us so (very much), we also ought to love one another (12) No man has at any time (yet) seen God. But if we love one another, God abides (lives and remains) in us and His love (that love which is essentially His) is brought to completion (to its full maturity, runs its full course, is perfected) in us!'*

2 John 5 *'And now, I beg you, lady (Cyria) not as if I were issuing a new charge (injunction or command), but (simply recalling to your mind) the one we have had from the beginning, that we love one another.'*

Conscience:

Job 27:6;

Acts 23:1;

Acts 24:16;

Romans 2:14, 15;

Romans 9:1;

Romans 13:5

1 Corinthians 8:7, 9–13;

1 Corinthians 10:27–32;

2 Corinthians 1:12;

2 Corinthians 4:2;

2 Corinthians 5:11;

1 Timothy 1:5, 19;

1 Timothy 3:9;

1 Timothy 4:2

2 Timothy 1:3

Hebrews 9:14;

Hebrews 10:22;

Hebrews 13:18;

1 Peter 2:19;

1 Peter 3:16, 21;

Bishops, Overseers and Deacons

Definition of a Bishop: episkopos = overseer, Presbuteros, an elder is another term for the same person as bishop or overseer. The term 'elder' indicates the mature spiritual experience and understanding of those described in Acts 20: 28. *'Take care and be on guard for yourselves and the whole flock over which the Holy Spirit has appointed you bishops and guardians, to shepherd (tend and feed and guide) the church of the Lord, which He obtained for Himself (buying it and saving it*

for Himself) with His own blood'. They oversee the work of God, under God Himself and are directly responsible to Him for the care of the sheep.

Definition of a deacon: Diakonos (Greek) primarily denotes a servant, whether as doing servile work or as an attendant rendering service. Ordained by the apostles, Acts 6:1–6. Qualifications of shown in 1 Tim. 3:8–13. The Greek word translated deacon signifies **servant**, and is so translated in Matt. 23:11; John 12:2. Also translated minister, Mark 10:43; 1 Cor. 3:5; 1 Thess. 3:2.

To see Paul's instructions regarding the qualities of bishops, overseers and deacons, please read 1 and 2 Timothy.