



Maintaining True Community: The Greatest is Love

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Why Is Community So Important to God?

“So, Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, ¹² to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up ¹³ until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.¹⁴ Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming. ¹⁵ Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. ¹⁶ From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.” Eph. 4:11-16

1. God’s goal is to transform us into His likeness.
2. God is love.
3. Loving each other is the proof that we know God and are like God.

1 Corinthians 13 – The Love Chapter

Love is: agape – actively others centered; takes pleasure in; delights in

“And now I will show you the most excellent way. If I speak in the tongues of men or of angels, but do not have love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. ² If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. ³ If I give all I possess to the poor and give over my body to the flames, but do not have love, I gain nothing.” 1 Cor. 12:30 - 13:3

1. The nature of God matters more than the gifts of God.

“For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son...” Rom. 8:29

2. Obedience to God matters more than sacrificing for God.

“Does the LORD delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as much as in obeying the LORD? To obey is better than sacrifice...” 1 Sam. 15:22

3. If you have the nature of God, the gifts of God will follow.

“I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.” Jn. 15:5

4. The nature of God and the gifts of God can only function in love.

Without love: I make a lot of noise, my gifts mean nothing, and I gain nothing. 1 Cor. 13:1-3

“Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be courageous; be strong. Do everything in love.” 1 Cor. 16:13-14