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Bear with One Another

Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

Col 3:12-14

Getting on the Same Page

Jesus said, "As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all [people] will know that you are my disciples" (John 13:34-35). And then one more than fifty occasions, the Biblical authors seek to explain what that looks like and how to live it out, including:

- "Live in harmony with one another" (Romans 12:16).
- "Stop passing judgment on one another" (Romans 14:13).
- "Serve one another in love" (Galatians 5:13).
- "Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love" (Ephesians 4:2).
- "Be kind and compassionate to one another" (Ephesians 4:32).
- "Encourage one another and build each other up" (1 Thessalonians 5:11).
- "Spur one another on toward love and good deeds" (Hebrews 10:24).
- "Do not slander one another" (James 4:11).
- "Offer hospitality to one another" (1 Peter 4:9).

When we live out these “one anothers” it makes us better at doing life, our relationships healthier, our workplaces more productive, our influence deeper, and the gospel more attractive. Jesus wanted us to be known for how we love one another. However, we struggle to live this out and the consequences are far greater than we realize. Over the next several weeks we will consider six of the “one anothers” in Scripture and consider the wide-reaching implications for learning how to live them out.

Discussion Guide

Getting Started

- How does the reputation of Christians in our culture contrast with what Jesus said He wanted us to be famous for?
- Talk about your own experiences with Christian community, either from growing up in the church or from an outsider’s perspective (i.e. what you perceived the church was all about). Be honest about any hurts and fears as a result of these experiences.

Study Read Eph 4:1-6 & Col 3:12-14 Together

- How would you explain Paul’s intent behind “live a life worthy of the calling you have received”?
- What are the implications of Paul saying that the primary way that we “live a life worthy of the calling you have received” is to be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love?
- Think of a time when you experienced (or are experiencing) the deliberate sin/offense/wound of a believer.
- In some capacity, did you respond with direct or indirect retaliation? How did that affect the situation?
- How could you have responded more biblically?
- Why is it so hard to bless your enemies?
- Why is "biblical retaliation" (forgiveness of others) a redemptive gift more than a moral goal?

Respond

- *We’re using more words than ever before, and we’re thinking less about them than ever before. That’s cause for concern because our words can either build someone up or tear them down.*
- *We hold grudges for days, months, or sometimes years. And the longer we hold a grudge, the more it has a hold on us.*
- *Darkness can’t drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate. Only love can do that. —Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.*

Apply

- In what areas have your “one another muscles” atrophied over last few years: mouth, hook, boxes, scale, or spur?
- What priorities do you need to change to better bear with others right now?
- Who needs your forbearance right now?