

Sunday, September 30, 2018—Body Building: Preferring One Another

### Introduction/Review

- Two weeks ago, we began our new series of studies titled Body Building.
- I Timothy 4:7-8—this series is going to be about a particular kind of exercise, spiritual exercise. Spiritual exercise that is designed to build a spiritual body not a physical one. Our goal is to learn how to flex our spiritual muscles with the goal of building up the body of Christ.
- Philippians 2:12—this type of exercise is going to require working out and spiritual discipline. Our goal is to take the life of Christ that is in us and work it out through us or manifest it in our mortal flesh.
- Romans 8:5-6—success in Body Building is going to be largely dependent on what we choose to mind and focus our mental attention upon.
- I Timothy 4:15—meditation and mindfulness have received a bad reputation among believers but the Apostle Paul instructs the body of Christ to be mindful and meditate upon God’s word.
- Romans 12:5—I introduced you, two weeks ago, to a concept that I am calling the one-anothering principle. The phrase “one of another” is a translation of a plural pronoun which means: “reciprocally” or “mutually.”
  - Reciprocal—“Mutual; done by each to the other” (Webster’s 1828)
  - Reciprocally—“Mutually; interchangeably; in such a manner that each affects the other and is equally affected by it.” (Webster’s 1828)
- Romans 12:10—the one-anothering principle established in verse 5 shows up first in the admonition to “be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love.” Based upon our investigation into the meaning of the words “kindly” and “affectioned” we concluded that the expression “kindly affectioned” means:
  - the disposition of heart whose goal is to make others happy and to treat them favorably and with good will.
- *One to another*—according to verse 10, this “kindly affectioned” disposition of heart has a target that it is to be aimed at, other believers. This disposition of heart is supposed to be a reciprocated action on the part of saints “one to another.”
- Ephesians 4:31-32—in these verses we see the vices of the flesh and the Holy Spirit’s antidote for Body Building.

- Fleshly Vices—things to put away (Ep. 4:22-25)
  - *Bitterness*—unwillingness to forgive; resentment
  - *Wrath*—fierceness, hyper ventilating
  - *Anger*—violent passion, hostile; (sinful anger opposite of Eph. 4:26)
  - *Clamour*—loud outcries of anger; shouting down at others
  - *Evil speaking*—slander, railing against someone
  - *Malice*—to be mean; wishing evil or bad for others; vicious character
- Ephesians 4:32—the first thing we are instructed “to be” (imperative mood) is “kind one to another.” Note once again the reciprocating nature of this statement “one to another.” Kindness is the opposite of virtually everything in verse 31.

### **Preferring One Another**

- Romans 12:10—the kindly affectioned disposition of heart that we studied last week is to be demonstrated “in honour preferring one another.”
- *Honour*—there are many definitions of the English word honor that encompass a host of concepts. Simply stated, honor is dealing with “esteeming” someone or something highly for positive reasons.
- *Preferring*—the underlying word that is translated “preferring” occurs only one time in the New Testament. The root word “prefer” carries the following meanings in English:
  - “Literally, to bear or carry in advance, in the mind, affections or choice; hence, to regard more than another; to honor or esteem above another.” (*Webster’s 1828*)
- I Timothy 5:21—here we see the word used in a negative sense, “without preferring one before another.” Paul instructs Timothy to not show favoritism when dealing with matters of church discipline.
- Romans 12:10—notice once again that there is a target ascribed to the matter of “preferring.” Who or what are we to be “preferring?” One another. This means that we are be valuing and esteeming other members of the body of Christ as greater than ourselves.
- Romans 12:3

- Proverbs 13:10—pride causes believers to over value themselves which in turn leads to contention.
- II Corinthians 12:20—these things don't come about by believers “preferring one another.” They come about by people thinking of themselves more highly than they ought.
- Galatians 5:15, 26—this behavior is the opposite of “preferring one another”
- Philippians 2:1-4
  - Romans 14:19—the goal here is to follow a course of mutual edification.
  - I Corinthians 10:23-24, 32-33—“preferring one another” means to follow a course of maximum benefit to other members of the body of Christ.
    - Just because all things are lawful does not mean that they are “expedient.”
    - Noah Webster records the following meanings for the English word “expedient.”
      - Literally, hastening; urging forward. Hence, tending to promote the object proposed; fit or suitable for the purpose; proper under the circumstances. Many things may be lawful, which are not *expedient*.
      - Useful; profitable.
    - Likewise, the dictionary defines “expedience” as:
      - Fitness or suitability to affect some good end or the purpose intended; propriety under the particular circumstances of a case. The practicability of a measure is often obvious, when the *expedience* of it is questionable.
    - The question of expediency is really a question of profitability. The same Greek word translated “expedient” is also translated “profitable” in other places throughout the New Testament.
      - Matthew 5:29-30
      - Acts 20:20
      - I Corinthians 10:23, 33
    - I Corinthians 6:12—just because the law has been taken out of the way and “all things are lawful” does not mean that all things are expedient or profitable.

- I Corinthians 10:23—just because something is lawful does not mean that it is good for your edification.
- Noah Webster’s *American Dictionary of the English Language* defines the verb “edify” as the following:
  - To build, in a literal sense. [Not now used.]
  - To instruct and improve the mind in knowledge generally, and particularly in moral and religious knowledge, in faith and holiness.
  - Edify one another (I Thess. 5:11)
  - To teach or persuade. [Not used.]
- Just because something is “lawful” does not mean that it builds up spiritually speaking.
  - Romans 15:2—“edification” = “A building up, in a moral and religious sense; instruction; improvement and progress of the mind, in knowledge, in morals, or in faith and holiness.” (*Webster’s 1828*) (I Cor. 14:3)
  - Ephesians 4:12, 16, 29—“edifying” = “Building up in Christian knowledge; instructing; improving the mind.” (*Webster’s 1828*)
- I Corinthians 10:23—there may not be any law against idolatry for believers living during the dispensation of grace, but it is certainly not expedient/profitable and it certainly does not edify.
- I Corinthians 6:12—as believers we need to get past the question of is something lawful or permissible and deal with the following questions instead:
  - Is it expedient? Is it profitable? To myself and/or other believers.
  - Does it edify? Myself and/or other believers.
  - Am I allowing it to have power over me?
- Philippians 2:5-8—once again Christ is our example for this mindset in action.
  - Romans 5:8—when we were the enemies of God, the Lord Jesus Christ preferred us to the point that he died for our sins.