

Edifying and Expressing Love Before and After Church: 12/4/20 Leadership Group Study

Hebrews 10:24–25 (NASB) *and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds,²⁵ not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another...*

1 Cor 8:1, 14:26 (NASB) *“Love edifies ... When you assemble ... Let all things be done for edification.”*

Eph 4:16 (NASB) *“...the whole body, being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.”*

1 Thess 5 (NASB) *“build up one another ... appreciate those who diligently labor among you ... encourage the fainthearted, help the weak ... always seek after that which is good for one another ... Greet all the brethren...”*

Welcoming others in church is a command rooted in the gospel of Christ and His glory:

Paul writes to the church in Rome (Romans 1:7) *“Therefore welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.”* (Romans 15:7, clearly in the context of worship in v. 6)

Welcoming people at God's house is a privilege: (Ps 84:10) *'a day in your courts is better than a thousand elsewhere. I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of God...'* (rest of citations ESV unless sotherwise)

Showing love to strangers [literal meaning of hospitality] is commanded of all Christians:

Romans 12:13 *“... seek to show hospitality.”* 1 Peter 4:9 *“Show hospitality to one another ...”*

Welcoming strangers is a mark of those who have experienced the gospel's saving work:

Matthew 25:34 *Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.³⁵ For I was ... a stranger and you welcomed me ...⁴⁰... as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me. ...⁴⁵ ... as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.’*

Christ Himself is welcomed when children are welcomed as well as adults in His name:

Matthew 18:5 (NIV) *“And whoever welcomes a little child like this in my name welcomes me.”*

The NT commands us to greet Christians and churches warmly and affectionately: Romans 16:3 *Greet Prisca and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus ...⁵ Greet also the church in their house. Greet my beloved Epaphroditus ...⁶ Greet Mary, who has worked hard for you.⁷ Greet Andronicus and Junia ...⁸ Greet Ampliatus, my beloved in the Lord.⁹ Greet Urbanus, our fellow worker in Christ, and my beloved Stachys ...¹² Greet those workers in the Lord, Tryphaena and Tryphosa. Greet the beloved Persis, who has worked hard in the Lord.¹³ Greet Rufus, chosen in the Lord; also his mother, who has been a mother to me as well.¹⁴ Greet Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas, and the brothers who are with them.¹⁵ Greet Philologus, Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints who are with them.¹⁶ Greet one another ...*

Greeting others flows out of love and hospitality: Hebrews 13:1 *“Let brotherly love continue.² Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers ...²⁴ Greet all your leaders and all the saints.”*

As NT letters were read/taught in church services, they conclude with commands to greet others:

Colossians 4:15–16 (NASB) *“Greet the brethren who are in Laodicea and also Nympha and the church...When this letter is read among you, have it also read in the church of the Laodiceans...”* 1 Thessalonians 5:26 *“Greet all the brothers ...²⁷ I put you under oath before the Lord to have this letter read to all the brothers...”*

We shouldn't just greet those closest to us, or most like us:

Matthew 5:47 (NIV) *“And if you greet only your brothers, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that?”* Philippians 4:21 *“Greet every saint in Christ Jesus.”* Hebrews 13:24 *“Greet ... all the saints.”*

How can you pursue these commands Sunday in formal or informal greeting / welcoming / hospitality?