

I. Introduction and review.

II. Love serves. v. 11

- A. Beware of lethargy. Pr. 18:9 6:6,9 26:13-16 Mt. 25:26f Gal. 6:9 Rev. 3:15-16
1. Some are tempted to complacency.
 2. Some who have been faithful in the past lose momentum. Rev. 2:4 Gal. 6:9
 3. Life is too short to waste time. 13:11 Ps. 90:12
 4. Laziness is destructive to the church body. Pr. 18:9
- B. Be fervent in Spirit. Acts 18:25 Mark 8:34-35 I Co. 9:25-27
1. Are you an enthusiast?
 2. Jesus demands and deserves complete commitment. Mark 8:34-35.
- C. Serve the Lord. II Co. 5:14 Ps. 116:12 I Co. 10:31
1. This motive will keep you from complacency and stir up your zeal.
 2. Are you eager to serve wherever you are needed?
 3. Serve Him wholeheartedly in every sphere. Col. 3:22-23 Eph. 6:5-8 Acts 20:19
- D. God richly rewards those who faithfully serve Him. Gal. 6:9 Heb. 6:10

III. Love gives. v. 13a I John 3:17

- A. Sacrificial generosity to those in need was a hallmark of the early church. 15:26-27
II Co. 8-9 Acts 2:44-45 4:32 I Ti. 6:17-18 Phil. 1:5 4:15 Mt. 25:34-40 Ga. 6:6
- B. Bear one another's burdens. Gal. 6:2,10
1. Meet material needs. I John 3:17 4:20 Js. 2:14f
 2. Also meet emotional and spiritual needs.
 3. Give wisely. I Ti. 5:4,8 Gal. 6:10 II Th. 3:10-12 Pr. 16:26 I Th. 4:11
- C. Are you sharing in the needs of your brethren?

IV. Love welcomes. v. 13b Heb. 13:2 I Pe. 4:9 III Jo. 1:5-8 II Ti. 1:16 Lu. 14:12-14

- A. Hospitality involves more than having your friends over for a occasional meal.
1. Hospitality literally means the *love of strangers*. Luke 14:12-14
 2. Hospitality has varied expressions.
 - a. Offering table fellowship. Acts 2:46 20:11 Jude 12
 - b. Providing a place for visitors to stay. 16:23 III Jo. 5-8 Phile. 22 Acts 16:15 21:8
 - c. Opening your home for meetings. 16:5 Acts 5:42 I Co. 16:19 Co. 4:15 Phile. 5
 3. Hospitality is not merely sharing a meal, but sharing your home and your life.
 4. Showing concern for strangers has Old Testament roots. Ge. 18:2f 19:1f Dt. 10:19
Ex. 22:21 23:9
 5. Hospitality was an important characteristic of the early church.
 - a. A necessary qualification for church leaders. I Tim. 3:3 Titus 1:8
 - b. Table fellowship was part of their regular gathering. Acts 2:42 I Co. 11:20f
 - c. The early church met in homes. 16:5 Acts 5:42 I Co. 16:19 Co. 4:15 Phile. 5
 - d. Those under discipline were excluded from table fellowship. I Co. 5:11
 6. Should you welcome every stranger into your home? 16:1-2 II Th. 3:6f II Jo 10-11

- B. Why is hospitality so important?**
1. Hospitality meets practical needs. Job 31:32
 2. Hospitality builds love and unity in the church family. Heb. 13:1-2
 3. Hospitality can be an effective means of evangelism.
- C. Hospitality is not merely to be practiced, it is to be pursued.**
1. Diligently pursue one another.
 2. Eagerly pursue visitors.
 3. Faithfully pursue the lost.
- D. What hinders us from pursuing hospitality? I Pet. 4:9**
1. Pride.
 2. Fear.
 3. Selfishness. Lu. 10:40-41
 4. Prejudice (favoritism). v. 16b Js. 2:1f
 5. An unwillingness to welcome outsiders.
- E. Do you have vision for pursuing hospitality?**
- F. Hospitality is not just an action. It involves an attitude.**
1. Treat others with interest, love, and acceptance.
 2. We need to learn how to relate to and love the lost.
- G. Hospitality has great benefits.**
1. The church family is built up.
 2. Outsiders are won to faith.
 3. It is a blessing and a privilege to serve the Lord.
 4. The Lord rewards those who are hospitable. Mt. 25:35,40 10:11 Heb. 13:1-2 6:10

V. Concluding applications.

- A. Love serves, gives, and welcomes.**
- B. Love in action is exemplified in Christ.**
1. He served us wholeheartedly. v. 11 Isa. 53 Mt. 20:28 John 13:5f Phil. 2:5f
 2. He has given us the greatest gift. v. 13a II Co. 8:9 John 3:16
 3. He loved and welcomed us, even when we were alienated from Him. v. 13b 5:8 Mt. 11:19 Isa. 25:6

Discussion questions

1. What are some causes of spiritual lethargy? v. 11a
2. How can you grow in spiritual fervency? v. 11b
3. How are you presently serving the Lord? v. 11c
4. What was the giving in the early church like? v. 13a
5. What kinds of needs should you be seeking to meet in the church family? v. 13a
6. What does “hospitality” mean? v. 13b
7. What are some expressions of hospitality? v. 13b
8. Why is hospitality important? v. 13b
9. Who do you know who excels in hospitality? v. 13b
10. What do you plan to do to “pursue” hospitality? v. 13b