

No. 10 Love One Another, Just as Jesus Loved You (Branch representative)

Note to speaker:

Discuss in a kind and clear manner how we fulfill the law of Christ *in the congregation*. Choose examples that the audience can easily relate to. Focus on the real needs in the congregation. Help the brothers understand that our having privileges in the congregation and in the organization provides us with opportunities to help our brothers. Emphasize how showing humility and loving our brothers and sisters are essential

SATAN'S WORLD IS DIVIDED (4 min.)

Many consider it acceptable to classify people as belonging to certain social groups, classes, or castes

These classifications may be determined by race, ethnicity, religion, or kinship

Others categorize people based on their wealth, occupation, or political affiliations

Such distinctions can be made worse by preconceived ideas about the characteristics of people from different backgrounds; this opens the door to discrimination leading to social unrest (Ec 8:9)

Prejudice and discrimination ran rampant in Jesus' day

'Jews had no dealings with Samaritans' (Joh 4:9)

Religious leaders looked down with scorn on the common people (Joh 7:49)

"Tax collectors and sinners" were viewed with contempt (Mt 9:11)

JESUS TAUGHT A BETTER WAY (7 min.)

Jesus viewed matters in an entirely different light

His disdain for the Pharisees' self-righteousness is seen in his illustration recorded at Luke 18:9-14

Jesus helped the disadvantaged, and he felt pity for the lowly ones (Mt 9:13, 36)

Christ knew that the congregation would be made up of "all sorts of" people, and he welcomed them (Joh 12:32; Ro 15:7)

Jesus taught his followers to go out of their way to show love for people who may be very different from them (Lu 10:25-37; 14:12-14)

He did not want his followers to copy the attitude of the Pharisees (Mt 23:4-12)

Jesus taught his disciples to conduct themselves as lesser ones and to serve others (Mt 20:21, 24-28)

He stressed that they were under obligation to love one another and that they should be known for this

[Read John 13:34, 35]

Although Jesus' disciples irritated one another at times, we can only imagine the joy and satisfaction that they experienced during the short time they were privileged to be with Jesus

Reflecting on Jesus' teachings and example, they no doubt put forth great effort to show love

THE FIRST-CENTURY CONGREGATION OVERCAME DIFFERENCES (10 min.)

Jesus' disciples brought the good news to the most distant parts of the earth

As a result, the congregation was made up of people from different nations and backgrounds (1Ti 4:10; Tit 2:11)

Jews, Samaritans, Greeks, and Romans; those circumcised and those uncircumcised; slaves and masters; doctors and fishermen; those with little education and those with much; the rich and the poor; former Jewish priests, practitioners of magic, army officers, and tax collectors

These included people who had formerly been sexually immoral, idolaters, adulterers, homosexuals, thieves, drunkards, violent, and greedy (1Co 6:9-11)

True, sometimes difficulties arose between Christians of differing backgrounds (Ac 6:1; 11:1-3; 15:1, 2)

Thus, it became necessary to provide guidance on how the members of the congregations could strengthen the bonds of love

There was a need to learn impartiality (Ac 10:34, 35; Ga 3:28)

Early congregations succeeded because the brothers and sisters realized that they needed to make a break from "human wisdom," to be "taught by the spirit," and to have "the mind of Christ" (1Co 2:13-16; 3:19)

The apostle Paul was adaptable so that he could "gain as many people as possible" for Christ (1Co 9:19-23)

Former sinners and those weak in faith were welcomed into the congregation

As a result, members of the early congregations grew close to one another in a bond of love

But there was a need to keep free of those former attitudes of partiality, prejudice, and contempt

THE CHRISTIAN CONGREGATION TODAY CULTIVATES UNITY AND IMPARTIALITY (5 min.)

Jehovah's people continue to come from every tribe, nation, tongue, and people (Re 7:9, 10)

We do not rank ourselves based on secular education, wealth, and so forth (Jas 2:1-4)

Experiencing equality and brotherly love may be unfamiliar for many new disciples

We may need to help them adapt to this unique environment of love and impartiality

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Rather than being suspicious, new ones learn to trust that fellow believers love Jehovah and want to do what is good (1Co 13:4, 7)

Because “love never fails,” the Christian congregation succeeds where others who attempt to unite society fail (1Co 13:8)

We strive to apply the same counsel given to first-century congregations (1Co 12:25, 26; Eph 4:14-16)

Imagine a householder saying: “I don’t go to church anymore. I got fed up with the gossip, backstabbing, grudges, jealousy, and greed”

But how would we feel if he came to the Kingdom Hall and saw such things?

We must make sure that our love is genuine

THE ROLE OF HUMILITY (10 min.)

We put others ahead of ourselves; we are happy to serve our brothers (Ro 12:10; Php 2:2-4)

We have been taught vital qualities that help us thrive in the congregation [**Read Luke 9:48b**]

It is not difficult to ‘conduct oneself as a lesser one’ in relation to those with more responsibility

A problem may arise when it comes to those whom we view as our equals, our peers

The 12 apostles eagerly submitted to their Master, Jesus; yet, at times no one wanted to conduct himself as a lesser one among the apostles themselves (Lu 9:46)

Paul and Barnabas, two highly respected appointed men, once had a similar problem (Ac 15:36-39)

Euodia and Syntyche, two Christian sisters, at one time failed to cultivate peace (Php 4:2, 3)

Likewise today, rivalry might surface between those who have similar positions or abilities

For example, ministerial servants usually have no difficulty in conducting themselves as lesser ones in relation to the elders, elders in relation to the circuit overseer, and so forth

But are ministerial servants willing to conduct themselves as lesser ones in relation to other ministerial servants, elders in relation to other elders, and so on?

Satan shows himself to be the opposite of humble

He had the audacity to ask Jesus to bow down and worship him (Mt 4:9)

We do not want to imitate Satan’s attitude; we shun pride (w15 5/15 15-16 ¶7-9)

We recognize the God-appointed headship arrangement (1Co 11:3)

OUR ROLE WITHIN THE CONGREGATION (21 min.)

The inspired direction to the Galatians can help us to go on fulfilling the law of Christ

[**Read Galatians 6:1**] *Help those who take a false step*

Jesus, though perfect, did not try to dominate others; he corrected his disciples with patience

Those who submit to God’s will do not try to dominate others but are mild-tempered (Ps 37:11)

Elders have the primary responsibility to readjust fellow believers, but other mature ones can also help

“Keep an eye on yourself”

When assisting others spiritually, we need to be alert to our own limitations (2Co 1:24)

We should keep in mind how God has dealt with us

This will help us not to reprimand harshly but, instead, to readjust with mildness (w03 4/1 24-25 ¶16)

Mildness will accomplish much good (w13 11/15 28-29 ¶11-12)

[**Read Galatians 6:2**] *“Go on carrying the burdens of one another”*

Jesus carried the burdens of others in a special way; he bore the sins of mankind (Isa 53:4, 5)

In contrast, the Pharisees added to the burdens of the people

We can help our brothers to carry their burdens, in part, by forgiving them when they err or offend us

“In this way you will fulfill the law of the Christ”

Apply this principle by taking practical, compassionate action in behalf of congregation members (w16.03 25; w08 8/15 18-19 ¶7-12; w07 12/15 6-7)

We do not fulfill the law of Christ simply by teaching others about him

We must also live and behave as Jesus did (c/ 292-297)

[*Optional interview:* (2 min.) Interview a brother or a sister who serves Jehovah despite challenging circumstances, such as advancing age or the loss of a mate. Ask: How have others shown love to you and helped you to carry your burdens? How does this make you feel? What has been the effect on your service to God?]

[**Read Galatians 6:3**] *Remain humble*

Jesus set the pattern of humility for us

He refused to accept “good” as a title or seek equality with God (Mr 10:17, 18; Php 2:5, 6)

He would not assign a position in the Kingdom to James and John (Mt 20:20-23)

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[Read Galatians 6:4] *Find joy in what you can do*

All of us can make progress in fulfilling the law of Christ

We need to maintain a proper estimate of ourselves, not comparing ourselves with others

Unhealthy comparisons lead to envy, resentment, competition, and antagonism

Jesus found joy in the thought that his disciples would do works greater than his (Joh 14:12)

We measure a child's growth, not by comparing him with others of varying ages, but by comparing him with his own growth, such as previous measurements marked on a wall

Comparing ourselves with ourselves will give us reason to rejoice when we discern the progress we have made

[Read Galatians 6:5] *“Each one will carry his own load”*

Paul distinguished between a “burden” (vs. 2) and a “load” (vs. 5) (*it-1* 376 ¶17)

Jesus ‘carried his own load’ by remaining faithful to the end of his human life

[Read Galatians 6:10] *“Work what is good toward all, but especially toward those related to us in the faith”*

Everyone in the congregation can do this—brothers and sisters, young and old

In simple yet important ways, we can give to others—a letter, a phone call, an e-mail or a text message, a gift, a helping hand, a word of encouragement

Are there elderly, sick, or housebound ones needing help and encouragement? (*w06* 6/15 23 ¶14)

CONCLUSION (3 min.)

We benefit immensely when we follow “the perfect law that belongs to freedom” (Jas 1:25)

The more we come to love Jehovah and Jesus, the better we are able to cultivate right desires

[Highlight a few encouraging points made during the day]

Review question: How can we love others, just as Jesus loved us?

Answer: Galatians 6:1-5, 10; like Jesus, welcome and love all people in the congregation regardless of their race or background. Humbly reach out to your brothers and sisters when they are in need of encouragement, correction, or any form of assistance

We yearn for the time when all faithful Christians will experience freedom from Satan and his demons and freedom from sin; then, all will enjoy “the glorious freedom of the children of God” (Ro 8:19-21)

In the meantime, may we not give up in fulfilling the law of Christ!

(Speaker does not need to read or comment on every cited text or discuss every subpoint)