

I. O. U's.

(Romans 13:8)

- Introduction:
1. There is one thing that we are to owe each other as Christians - Love.
 2. We are to love the brotherhood (I Peter 2:17).
 3. But what does *"loving one another"* encompass?
 4. In this lesson we will examine four areas that love encompasses.

I. Love Demands That We Be Tolerant Of Each Other

- A. (Ephesians 4:32) *"Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ also forgave you."*
- B. How many church problems are caused by petty grievances?
- C. Before you get angry with someone, ask the following three questions?
 1. Was the action taken or the word spoken done to intentionally hurt you?
 2. Was the action taken or the word spoken while attempting to accomplish good?
 3. Did the action taken or the word spoken make God angry?
- D. Please be patient, longsuffering, and tolerant with one another.

II. Love Demands That We Mutually Confess Our Own Weaknesses

- A. (James 5:16) *"Confess your trespasses to one another and pray for one another..."*
- B. Confession needs to be carefully balanced between two extremes.
 1. A *"holier than thou"* attitude.
 2. One who confesses all the gory details of his sordid past (almost bragging).
- C. We owe it to each other to make clear our own weaknesses and that we do understand the weaknesses we see in others.

III. Love Demands That We Don't Doubt The Genuineness Of Each Other

- A. What makes us doubt the genuineness of each other?
 1. The rapidity of a sin (Luke 17:3; I Corinthians 13:5).
 2. The more outrageous the sin - the more doubt (Luke 15).
 3. Lack of personal commitment to the sinner (I Peter 4:8).
- B. The real reason we doubt another's genuineness is because of our human limitations.
 1. (I Corinthians 2:11).
 2. We cannot see into the heart to see what motivates another person's actions, so we foolishly make one's outward behavior the whole criterion for judgment.
 3. (Matthew 7:1-4).

IV. Love Demands That We Avoid Indiscriminate Denunciations Of Sin

- A. To make no distinction between a struggling Christian and a defiant and rebellious Christ rejecter is not only nonsense, but it is unbiblical.
- B. (John 19:11).
- C. Condemn sin; don't minimize the guilt of the sinner; but don't fail to make distinction.

- Conclusion:
1. Let us be a community, a fellowship, a brotherhood, a body of disciples who are seeking to become more and more Christ like.
 2. And in our personal search for Christ-likeness, let us help each other to attain to that same goal.