

THE TREATMENT OF BRETHREN

Lesson four

INTRODUCTION:

1. The deeds of LOVE -- I John 3:18

I. WE SHOULD FOREBEAR TO BE LONGSUFFERING ONE TO ANOTHER.

1. Col. 3:13; Eph. 4:2
2. "Longsuffering is that quality of self-restraint in the face of provocation which does not hastily retaliate or promptly punish; it is the opposite of anger, and is associated with mercy."
3. God has forbearance and longsuffering toward us -- Rom. 2:4

II. WE SHOULD FOLLOW PEACE WITH ALL MEN

1. Heb. 12: 14; 2 Cor. 13:11; Rom. 12:18; Rom. 14:19; I Thess. 5:13; Eph. 4:3
2. "*It is an honor for a man to cease from strife; but every fool will be meddling*" -- Prov. 20:3
3. Peter said a Christian was to "*Seek peace, and ensue it*" -- I Pet. 3:11
4. Some are like the man who said, "I'm going home and if my wife does not have a good meal cooked, I'm going to raise the roof; and if she does, I'm not going to eat a bite."
5. Some people are against everything.

III. WE SHOULD BE EASILY ENTREATED, NOT STUBBORN OR SELF-WILLED.

1. James 3:17
2. This is a qualification for an elder -- Tit. 1:7

IV. WE SHOULD TREAT ONE ANOTHER WITH FAIRNESS

1. The golden rule demands it -- Matt. 7:12
2. Some people have one rule for you and another for their friends and themselves.
3. Paul said, "*Doing nothing by partiality*" -- I Tim. 5:20
4. Unselfishness is essential to fairness -- Phil. 2:4

V. WE SHOULD NOT BE MOTE-HUNTING

1. Matt. 7: 1 - 5
2. Jesus is talking about the rash, censorious and uncharitable judgments which condemn, upon surmise without examination of the charges.
3. Forgetful that we also need mercy -- James 2:13
4. Rom. 2:1
5. The condition of the fault-finder; he tries to get a tiny speck out of his brother's eyes when he has the whole log protruding from his eye -- Matt. 7:4
6. Jesus said his behavior is hypocritical -- Matt. 7:5

7. We are hypocritical for a number of reasons

- (1) We are nothing like as good as we think or pretend.
- (2) Self-righteous eyes have blinded us to our own faults.
- (3) We see our brother's mistakes at a distance much better than we see our own at close range.
- (4) This was the sin of the Pharisee who went up to the temple to pray -- Luke 18: 10 - 14

8. The fault-finder's action is motivated by the selfish and hypocritical desire to build himself up by tearing another down.

9. The fault-finder is often motivated by ENVY -- James 3:16.

10. When we are fault-finders we have very few friends and these friendships are short-lived -- we pick our friends to pieces, then mark them off our list and they are glad to get off.

V. FORGIVENESS IS A BIG THING

1. It demands bigness of heart, bigness that is akin to divinity.

- (1) To err is human, to forgive is divine.

2. God and Christ freely forgive; they are big in heart.

3. Forgiveness is too big for little people.

- (1) That is why churches of the Lord are filled with people "OUT" with one another.
- (2) They are not big enough to forgive -- Matt. 6:12
- (3) Instead of carrying tolerance and forgiveness in their hearts, they carry their feelings on their shoulders and revenge in their hand.
- (4) So long as people live in the flesh they are going to sin -- I John 1:10.
- (5) Just that long they are going to need forgiveness.

4. Forgiveness demands forbearance.

- (1) The two go together -- Col. 3:13

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