



Our Church, A Family  
Sunday April 17, 2005

**Section 3 : Family Practices**

Review (last week):

Here are some important things we practice as a church family:

A) Brotherly love

B) Keeping the unity of the Spirit

C) Maintaining the fellowship of the Spirit

Today (Continuation):

D) Respect Leaders Appointed in the house

1 Thessalonians 5:12, 13

Hebrews 13:7

We are to respect our spiritual leaders. At the same time, we are not to blindly follow them. Rather we are to evaluate the "outcome of their conduct" – their life, their testimony, their fruit – and then if things are right, follow their faith.

Hebrews 13:17

1 Timothy 4:12

Instructions to each on as members of the church family:

(A) Do not look down upon a leader just because she/he may be younger to you in age. A leader's character, spiritual maturity, wisdom and ability to carry spiritual responsibility is more important than just their physical age (i.e. number of calendar years).

(B) Understand that **you cannot have a "buddy, buddy" relationship with your leader** – simply because this would compromise his relationship with you as your leader, and with the rest – to treat each one without personal preference and without partiality. You can be great friends, while still respecting the leadership she/he has over your life.

(C) Your leader's decision is final. You are free to express your ideas and opinions, but in the end, you have to go with what your leader says. The Church is to be led, not by popular opinion, or by majority vote – but by the Spirit of God. It is the leader's responsibility to ensure that they are listening to the Spirit of God. So long as your leader is not contradicting God's Word, the Holy Spirit and sound judgment, follow. The leader will have to give an account for himself/herself and for you (Heb 13:17).

Instruction to each one as leaders in the household of God:

(A) Leaders must earn the right to lead. Set an example by the life you live and the fruit you bear, that would make people want to follow you.



(B) Know that you cannot become “buddy, buddy” with those you lead. You can be good friends, while at the same time maintaining a “healthy distance”.

(C) Leaders must set the standard, set an example for others to follow. It is important to maintain a good reputation (Proverbs 22:1).

(D) Don't brag about your office or calling. When people ask you about your calling, just tell them that you are serving the Lord in whatever assignment that has been currently given to you. Let people see the fruit of your life and ministry and let them determine what your calling is! It is better for people to see the fruit of your life and ministry and then determine what your calling is, rather than you going around giving yourself titles and labels, and not having the fruit to prove your calling!

#### E) Everyone works

1 Thessalonians 4:11,12

11 And that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you;

12 That ye may walk honestly toward them that are without, and that ye may have lack of nothing.

Galatians 6:4,5

4 But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another.

5 For every man shall bear his own burden.

Burden = task, service, responsibility.

Work is a God-ordained activity.

Don't go into ministry just because you cannot “find a job”. You must know that you are called and show proof of your calling!

Even those who are in “full time” ministry must have good work habits.

#### F) Do good to those of the household of faith

Galatians 6:10 As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.

#### G) Support the weak

Romans 15:1,2

1 We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves.

2 Let every one of us please his neighbour for his good to edification.

Galatians 6:2 Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.

Burdens = weight, load, grief, misery



## H) Restore the fallen

Galatians 6:1

1 Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.

Reach out with love and fellowship to some one who has fallen, rather than shooting them down. However, if they still reject our reaching out, there is nothing more we can do.

Continual sin needs discipline.

## Family Roles & Relationships : Fathers & Mothers, Sons & Daughters

1 John 2:1,12,13

In a family there are usually people in different stages of growth and maturity – fathers/mothers, young men/women and little children.

As long as one is a child, ones privileges and responsibilities differ from that of a mature son/daughter. For example, in a natural family, the privileges given to a 3 year old would differ from that a 10 year old would have.

Galatians 4:1-2

Children are to remain under the tutorship and leadership of spiritual elders until they grow into being sons & daughters.

Some people come to church expecting a perfect situation, where every one is a mature father/mother. But that can never be. In any local church family that is growing, there will always be little children, young sons and daughters and mature fathers and mothers.

Don't get upset with people if they don't always behave in a spiritually mature way. Understand that we are all in a process of spiritual growth.