Change to become a better brother or sister in Christ! — with people who go to church with you

Intro:

- **Song:** Blest Be The Tie, verse 1
  - Beth and I, married July 20, 1985 — song, Bless Be The Tie
  - *vs. 1:* Blest be the tie that binds, Our hearts in Christian love. The fellowship of kindred minds, Is like to that above.
  - Christians have a common bond — Jesus

- **This lesson:**
  - **Title:** Change to become a better brother or sister in Christ! — with people who go to church with you
  - **Purpose:** talk about the basic principles of being a brother in Christ, make practical application
    - make the bond of Christ tighter, more effectual
#1 We love one another, as Christ loves each of us!

- **Read - Jn. 13:34-35** (Jesus, after inst. LS and predicting Judas’ betrayal) love one another, as Jesus loved them, world know they are disciples — *agape* — cf. Judas — evangelistic impact

- **Read - Jn. 15:12-14** How has Jesus loved you?

- **PP - 1 Jn. 3:16-19** How should we love one another? What is known (of truth, cf. Jn. 14:6)?

- **Read - Rom. 12:9-16** love brethren: love without hypocrisy, be devoted, brotherly love, weep / rejoice, same mind, not haughty, associate with lowly
  - love (vs. 9) = *agape*: mental commitment to do what is right
  - brotherly love (vs. 10) = *philadelphia*: affectionate relationship we have with brethren
    - used in secular Greek of those who were blood related, kin — physical family love
    - in NT, used of spiritual kinship — spiritual family love

  **secular illus.:** love, brotherly love — as men, we know what it is to love others, be committed
  - William Manchester, returned to his unit on Okinawa after receiving a wound that earned him a Purple Heart, describes the psychology of commitment in his book *Goodbye Darkness*:
    - I understand, at last, why I jumped hospital that Sunday 35 years ago, and, in violation of orders, returned to the front and almost certain death. It was an act of love. Those men on the line were my family, my home….They had never let me down, and I couldn't do it to them. **I had to be with them rather than to let them die and me live with the knowledge that I might have saved them.** Men, I now knew, do not fight for flag or country, for the Marine Corps or glory or any other abstraction. They **fight for one another.** (Citation: Jim Collins, “The Power of Catalytic Mechanisms,” Harvard Business Review, July-August 1999)

  - Application: Christians, Lord’s army, should fight for one another and the Lord

  **spiritual illus.:** God’s love for us
  - **PP - Jn. 3:16** God’s love, commitment to us
    - we should have the same commitment to one another, that God has toward us — love
  - **rf - 1 Jn. 4:7-11** God loves us, we should love each other

  **What’s this mean to you?**
  - God wants you to **treat your brethren, the way He treats you** — love
  - God gave Jesus / Jesus gave Himself — God wants you to **give** — love brethren
#2 We serve one another in the spirit of love, as Christ serves us in heaven!

- **Story - Jn. 13:5-11** Jesus wash apostles feet, water in basin, wash feet and wipe with towel with which he was girded — “What I do you do not realize now, but you will understand hereafter”
- **Read - Jn. 13:12-17** example, service, fig. wash each other’s feet, slave not greater than master, blessed if you do these
  - **washing feet one of the most humble acts** of service
    - e.g., preacher, meeting, sent to see man, finds working outside
    - q: you people don’t wash feet
    - a: do your feet need washed?
    - man converted and become a gospel preacher
    - e.g., woman t-ville, had gone to church where washed feet, Beth asked if she wanted her feet washed, she washed them in our living room (not as a religious doctrine)
- **Application:** Jesus came you serve you, now he wants you to serve others
- **Read - Rom. 15:1-3, 8** Christ a servant: context Rom. 14, illustrating teaching (cf. Rom. 15:7)
- **PP - Gal. 5:13** Christians serve through love

**Serving others (godly) is an acquired trait — must be learned**

- **Read - Eph. 4:11-16** equipping for service (vs. 12), grow (vs. 15), every joint supplies (vs. 16), working of each part (vs. 16), love (vs. 16)
  - **illus.: doctor**
    - **doc:** go to school to learn, continuing education to improve
  - **Christians:** learn to serve others, continuing education, never stop learning, improving

**One of the hardest lessons to learn (service): putting others first — rf. wash feet**

- **Read - Eph. 5:15-21** context, vs. 21 be subject to one another
  - **rf - Eph. 5:22ff** service, subjection, relationships
  - **rf - Phil. 2:1-4** unity, same mind and love, united — vs. 5ff have attitude of Christ, humble, service
  - **vs. 3** not selfish: not employing factious methods to meet his personal desires
  - **vs. 3** not empty conceit: literal meaning is vainglory, not employing factious methods to meet one’s personal desires, motivated by bringing glory upon himself
  - **vs. 4** look out for interest of others, not just self: do what is best for the congregation
  - **greatest in the kingdom, is servant of all:**
    - **PP - Matt. 23:11** (Jesus) greatest is a servant

**What’s this mean to you? — Practical Advice, Suggestions, Application:**

- **Thought question:** What are some things you can start doing, to serve your brethren, that you’ve not been doing?
- **Thought question:** Will you train and discipline yourself, to do them?
#3 Application: What are some things we can do, to serve our brethren in love? — suggestions, not new

- Note: not the same for each person, station in life, abilities and opportunities
  - use these thoughts to think about yourself - What can you do to improve?

➤ Be the best Bible student you can be!
  - the stronger Christian you become, the more you can help your brethren

  ➤ teacher:
    - PP - Heb. 5:11-12a grow to be a teacher — formal and informal (actions and manner of life, verbal instructor of God’s word)

  ➤ counselor and friend:
    - PP - 1 Th. 2:13 can use the word to help your brethren with their problems and trials
    - encourage with God’s word
    - give godly advise from God’s word (cf. Job’s friends, ungodly advise)
    - instruct with God’s word

➤ Attend the assemblies and Bible classes with an attitude of love and service!
  - be at church every time it’s possible (here, out of town) — this is where you can do the most for your local brethren, brethren elsewhere when you visit
  - understand how important your presence is to everyone else
    - PP - Heb. 10:24-25 stimulate, Greet — everyone here can lift everyone else up with their greeting
    - young, middle age, old
    - esp. those who have the most difficult time getting there
      - e.g., Mamie in Thomasville, wanted to come for long time, wheel chair
      - encouragement to see younger people, present and active
      - e.g., youth and vitality into the atmosphere
    - understand that everything you do while at church, encourages or discourages others
      - every word spoken, even the manner spoken
      - every act: way sit, way walk, what do when sitting in pew, what do during prayers, participation in singing
    - participate whole heartedly in the worship and work
    - Jesus: more blessed to give than receive — will get more out of assemblies, than you put in
    - set a goal to never miss, unless its absolutely impossible to be there - sever illness, death
    - never let something you can choose not to do (recreation), interfere with assembling with the saints
    - e.g., bedridden: if can’t go to church one day, don’t have regrets - missed when could have gone there
Sick brethren: have an attitude of love and service toward sick brethren (esp. shut in)!

- What do we do? — visit, send cards, take over meals
  - illus.: Allan, 15, broke collar bone, hospital, Gene and Sandy Taylor (preacher, blue jeans) visit in hospital, one thing remember most about my spiritual life at that time
  - illus.: Dawn born, put in children’s hospital, women in Leesburg congregation brought meals that week
  - call to encourage those who can’t get out
  - illus.: grandmother, Dad’s side, lady from church called everyday (lunch from work?), made her day
  - run errands, take to the doctor, do house work
  - things they can’t do for themselves
  - joke: if anyone has a little extra time this week, I feel a cold coming on
  - pray: how much is prayer for your brethren part of your life? — what happened to prayer meetings?
  - PP - 1 Th. 5:17-18 pray all the time, thanks, God’s will for us
  - illus.: Polycarp, pray for his brethren before being burnt alive
    - martyred Feb. 23, 155
    - Roman police found Polycarp hiding in a farm house, where he gave himself up
    - Polycarp offered them as much food as they could eat, if they would allow him an hour to pray undisturbed
    - they agreed
    - Polycarp prayed for not one, but two hours: remembering all, high and low, who at any time had come in his way, and the Church throughout the world
    - Polycarp was taken to the stadium, was given numerous chances to deny Christ, and live
    - Polycarp replied, "I have served him eighty-six years and in no way has he dealt unjustly with me; so how can I blaspheme my king who saved me?"
    - burnt alive at the stake, since he refused to deny Christ
    - Application: If you were about to suffer a horrific death because you refused to deny Christ, would you be thinking about others, to pray for them?

During week, not at church: have an attitude of love and service for local brethren

- outside assembly: take personal responsibility to encourage every person here, as many as you can
  - talk to, spend time with, have into your home, visit
  - be concerned for the souls of your brethren
    - talk about spiritual things with each other
    - develop close relationship with others so they can seek counsel from you, and you can seek council from them
  - know who needs some extra encouragement
    - younger, older, those alone, young couples, those young in the faith
  - be compassionate to the less fortunate, financially (esp. the poor)
    - illus.: Tabitha
      - Jesus: always have the poor with us
  - be benevolent to make someone else’s life a little better
    - poor
    - young person trying to get a start in life
    - young family that’s struggling
    - the elderly
  - What do brethren need most? your time
    - time management: without it, we will fail to do the Lord’s work
    - saying: there is one thing you can give that no one else can give, your time
What’s this mean to you? — Practical Advice, Suggestions, Application:

- **set a goal:** encourage at least one brother or sister in this congregation, you would not have encouraged otherwise
- **think of someone** today, you can encourage and life up
- **saying:** If you won’t do it for others, don’t expect others to do it for you. — what ever it is
- **Jesus:** "Blessed are the **merciful**, for they shall **receive mercy**” (Matt. 5:7)"

Conclusion:

> **Summary:**

- **Song:** Blest Be The Tie (#711, T-ville)
  - **vs. 1:** Blest be the tie that binds, Our hearts in Christian love. The fellowship of kindred minds, Is like to that above.
  - **Christ:** special relationship we have - special obligation we have for one another
- **Song:** There is room in the kingdom, there is work we all can do — serve Christ / brethren

> **Just be like Jesus:**

- **Jesus** “but emptied Himself, **taking the form of a bond-servant,** . . .” (Phil. 2:7a) — be like your Lord Jesus, make yourself into a servant - serve your brethren

> **Inv.:**

- What has Jesus asked you to do?
  - Jn. 8:24; Lk. 13:3, 5; Matt. 10:32-33; Mk. 16:16; Rev. 2:10

Audio sermon notes:

- ➤ denotes where to proceed to the next slide PowerPoint slide.
- All Scriptures are NASB, unless otherwise noted.