

BROTHERLY

KINDNESS

RELATIONSHIP PROBLEMS

- The New Testament never conveniently paints the early church as filled with perfect people. In fact, brotherly kindness was a frequent challenge for some of them (Galatians 5:14-15, James 4:1, Romans 14:13ff, 16:17-18).
- James describes a scenario in which a man with expensive clothes is given preferential treatment in the worship assembly, while a bedraggled poor man is conveniently shooed into a corner (James 2:1ff).
- First Century Jews and Gentiles were expected to overcome their hurdles to church unity and building relationships (Galatians 3:28, 2:11ff, Romans 15:7). The church in Corinth faced an uphill battle because of their tendency to divide into camps (1 Cor. 1:10ff) and take each other to court (1 Cor. 6).

**"We know love by this, that He laid down His
life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives
for the brethren"**

1 JOHN 3:16

"By this all men will know that you
are My disciples, if you have love
for one another."

JOHN 13:35



CLIQUEES

Some groups just give off a bad vibe

MY KIND OF PEOPLE

- If I don't know somebody in a meaningful way, how am I able to lay down my life for him (1 John 3:16), restore him in a time of spiritual failure (Galatians 6:1), or assist him with physical needs (James 2:15-16)?
- Even though it is tempting (and not necessarily a bad thing) to gravitate toward people who are similar to me, I have to leave my comfort zone and focus on the one thing that all Christians share: a bond of unity in Christ (Colossians 3:14-15).

SPIRITUAL STAGNATION

GETTING LEFT BEHIND

SECURITY BLANKET

A BYPRODUCT OF OBEDIENCE

- Our relationships are not merely social, and neither are they optional! They are a natural byproduct of the things we are already commanded to do.
- Visiting widows, for example, is framed as a command (1 Timothy 5:3ff, James 1:27), and so is encouraging weaker members (1 Thessalonians 5:14, Galatians 6:1). Not only am I obeying God, but I am also building friendships, relating to people, and establishing and displaying love for people I might otherwise have never even known.

ROMANS 12:3-16

WEEPING AND LAUGHING TOGETHER