

# ***Loving Each Other in the Body of Christ***

*Romans 12:9-21*

**Introduction:** It would be nice if our relationships in the body of Christ were always harmonious with zero conflict. However, reality is that people are different, and unity takes work. The overarching principle is this: In the countercultural community of faith, when we strive for unity in the midst of diversity, we advance ministry.

1. ***DEALING WITH EXPECTATIONS.***
  - A. Statement: “Let love be without hypocrisy.”
  - B. Problem: Expectations are always an issue in the body of Christ.
  - C. Reality: This takes hard work.
2. ***DEALING WITH OUR FRIENDS. Romans 12:9-13***
  - A. The command: What it does not mean. 12:9
  - B. The general meaning.
  - C. Lifting others up. 12:10
  - D. Engaging in proactive acts of service. 12:11-13
  - E. Unity doesn’t happen in an environment of passivity.
3. ***DEALING WITH OUR ENEMIES – Principle: Overcome evil with good. Romans 12:14; 17a-21***
  - A. The overarching principle – Overcome evil with good. 12:21
  - B. The principle of our words – Issue blessing not cursing. 12:14
  - C. The principle of our actions – Leave revenge to God. 12:17a; 18—20
  - D. The ethical question.
4. ***DEALING WITH THOSE WHO ARE DIFFERENT – Principle: Let humility produce the common ground that leads to harmony. Romans 12:15-16; 17b***
  - A. We’re going to be around people with different emotions; adjust to their moods. 21:15
  - B. We’re going to be around people of different socioeconomic backgrounds; seek humility. 12:16
  - C. We need to respect what is right in the sight of all people, including people very different. 12:17b