



LOVE PEOPLE BUILD OTHERS

Spiritual Outcome Defined:

Balances grace and truth in one's approach to others, knowing when to exhort and when to encourage, allowing others to be in process while guarding against enabling.

Spiritual Outcome Described:

Profound truths often come at the intersection of two or more important truths that seem to hold each other in tension or to refine each other. Dealing with other people's shortcomings, failures, and sin is no exception. On the one hand, we hear Christ say, "Do not judge, or you too will be judged" (Matthew 7:1). On the other hand, James tells us, "Whoever turns a sinner from the error of their way will save them from death and cover over a multitude of sins" (James 5:20). With these two passages in mind, consider John's description of Jesus. Very briefly, he tells us Jesus was filled with "grace and truth" (John 1:14). We all know the pain of being corrected. It's not at all pleasant, and yet Proverbs tell us that if we "rebuke the wise... they will love you" (Proverbs 9:8). If we are to authentically love people, we must carefully consider how we build others up. Building others up will at times involve helping them see a faulty foundation so there is something firm upon which to build. But foundation work is both sensitive and invasive. Relationally speaking, the process is both spiritual and pragmatic. It takes prayer, and it takes thoughtfulness. We must be careful of our own perspective and motives, and we must carefully consider the perspective of our friends. To neglect their well being by doing nothing is often unloving, but to neglect their well being by being careless or overly aggressive is unloving as well, and often destructive. Scripture speaks broadly to how we build each other up. Careful thought to the topic will empower us to both authentically and productively love those we truly do love.

"Courage is what it takes to stand up and speak. Courage is also what it takes to sit down and listen."
-- Winston Churchill

Evidence of this Spiritual Outcome in a Person's Life:

- Can name an encouraging comment made about another person to that person in the past 24 hours.
- Can recall a time in the past six months where they graciously exhorted a person and did so with both grace and truth.
- Can recall a time in the past month where they saw an opportunity to correct another person but opted not to do so for good reasons and not for reasons of timidity.
- Knows and can name one's own tendencies that might dangerously sour their ability to bring healthy exhortation (competitiveness, arrogance, self-righteousness, etc.).

Guidance

Read each passage multiple times. Then write your observations about the passage and any thoughts you have from the discernment question. What do you notice in the passage, and what does this reveal about your life?

1 Samuel 12:23-25

Observations:

Discernment Question: Who are you burdened for? Who do you talk with God about? Who do you feel responsible or called to help?

Proverbs 9:8, 15:12, 15:31

Observations:

Discernment Question: How well do you receive instruction and correction from others?



Proverbs 26:4-5

Observations:

Discernment Question: How well do you discern a person's readiness to hear your input? Do you consider their disposition? Do you over-consider it?

Matthew 7:1-6

Observations:

Discernment Question: When you seek to help others, do you do so out of experience or out of textbook knowledge?



Ephesians 6:4

Observations:

Discernment Question: In what relationships might you be overbearing and saying too much?

1 Thessalonians 5:14

Observations:

Discernment Question: Are you more of an exhorter or an encourager? What about this is good? What about this is challenging?



1 Peter 3:15

Observations:

Discernment Question: How well are you able to explain your hope in Christ? How well do you do so with gentleness and respect? Are you so respectful that you rarely talk about your hope in Christ? Or, are you more overbearing with your faith and need to cultivate a listening ear?

James 5:19-20

Observations:

Discernment Question: What good could you currently do in the lives of those you are currently in relationship with?



Next Steps

What are practical next steps you will do from what you have discovered in this survey of Scripture on building others? Include insights offered from others in your Life Group that could be applied in your own life as well.



Memorize Scripture:

Hebrews 10:24-25 NIV

And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

James 5:19-20 NIV

My brothers and sisters, if one of you should wander from the truth and someone should bring that person back, remember this: Whoever turns a sinner from the error of their way will save them from death and cover over a multitude of sins.

Scriptures taken from the Holy Bible, New International Version®, NIV®. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.™ Used by permission of Zondervan. All rights reserved worldwide. www.zondervan.com The “NIV” and “New International Version” are trademarks registered in the United States Patent and Trademark Office by Biblica, Inc.™ Copyright © 2013, Gateway Community Church

