

"In the beginning  
was the Word,  
and the Word was  
with God, and the  
Word was God."  
~John 1:1

The Lord's Flock  
**Growth**  
DIGEST  
PASTORAL GROWTH SERIES



*"Bear One Another's Burden"*

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***"I give you a new commandment: love one another. As I have loved you, so you also should love one another."*** (John 13:34)

**Our identity will be measured by the way we relate to others.** We can be tested in our relationship with others in The Lord's Flock. Through our own imperfection, we can be perfected in our community.

**In the community, people are unaware that as we gather together, there are certain things that we give to one another.** We give a part of ourselves: our time, our attention, our empathy, our concern, and our accountability. Most of us are able to get out of our comfort zones without really knowing it. We give both spiritual and material offerings for the sake of one another because we belong to the family of God. Slowly, we develop the signs of true discipleship. According to St. Paul, this is the law of Christ.

***"Since you have purified yourselves by obedience to the truth for sincere mutual love, love one another intensely from a [pure] heart."*** (1 Peter 1:22).

***"Brothers, even if a person is caught in some transgression, you who are spiritual should correct that one in a gentle spirit, looking to yourself, so that you also may not be tempted."*** (Galatians 6:1).

***"Bear one another's burdens, and so you will fulfill the law of Christ."*** (Galatians 6:2).

**St. Paul is referring to all of us who live in the flesh.** Being holy should be our goal, our direction. As we go through our spiritual life and as we struggle, we should reach our goal.

**When some members of our community have transgressed, we should not criticize them.** We should not embarrass them; we should not spread rumors about them; we should also not slander them. When people sin, they are cut off from the source of life.

**Christians are expected to show love and concern for one another.** Our Elder, Sis. Techie Rodriguez, wrote in her "Manna":

**"A person in the community who becomes difficult to handle is like a broken bone that needs to be restored.** The community bears the pain of that person. That person can immobilize or slow down the work of the community. The dislocation is like cutting off the communications with the source of authority. His tendency is to be deaf to all advices. In the community, no one must be kept away. The broken bone needs care and attention. The person must be administered with care and love. It is

everybody's responsibility as a Christian to minister spiritually to every struggling person because his pain is shared by every member and not just by the leaders. Restoration of the person should be by reconnecting him back to the community."

**How do we approach a fallen brother or sister?** These people should be made to feel that they are welcome back in the community. We must remember that brothers or sisters who go out of the community may be harboring some ill-feelings, or sensitive, or embarrassed to go back. We need to know their condition first. In many cases, some have felt that they have damaged the image of the church and have therefore hurt Christ; they feel remorse and are ashamed to go back.

**Restoration is a process that we need to learn.** We need to learn to approach this matter right depending on the person. There is no general formula or principle that can be applied to everyone. If we fail in the process, the fallen brother or sister may be lost forever. What is important is that we should persevere in what we are doing spiritually; we should be aware that we are parts of one another.

**How can we love a person that we hate?** If we do not like a person, let us look at ourselves first. Have we not done something wrong ourselves? All of us have splinters in our eyes too. The Lord has commanded us to love our neighbors as ourselves. We should start purifying ourselves and avoid condemning others. Then we can start loving our neighbors as ourselves. Let us love one another and bear another's burden.

**Let us continue growing and maturing spiritually. We should all *be holy* as our Lord is *holy*. (1 Peter 1:16). We should all be *the light of the world*. (Matthew 5:14).**

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