

# Forbear One Another

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As members of the body of Christ we share a special relationship with one another (I Cor. 12:12). We have a responsibility to love and care for one another (I John 4:7) and we have a responsibility to forbear one another. “I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” (Ephesians 4:1-3).

Forbearing is translated as “put up with”, bear with, tolerate, endure, and forbear. Forbearance includes having patience with the shortcomings of others and any wrong they may cause us. Forbearance will be motivated by humility, meekness, and love. It does not mean seeking retaliation or revenge, but being ready and willing to forgive.

Our Christian responsibility to forbear one another should never be viewed as a weakness or even a toleration of sin. Forbearing with someone does not mean that sin is being overlooked or ignored, but it may be part of the process to gently restore someone. “Brethren if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted.” (Galatians 6:1).

In Romans 2:4 Paul writes, “or do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance and longsuffering, not knowing that goodness of God leads you to repentance?”

God’s way is best. His great example of forbearance of man should inspire us to endure patiently with members of the body of Christ. Without humility and patience, how will our brothers and sisters know how much we love them and care about them, and how much we desire for them to be in Heaven?

For the elders,  
Terry Clark