

^Better Together^ *Bear With One Another*

The phrase “bear with” means “to endure patiently, to put up with.”

Colossians 3:12-13 – *“Put on then, as God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.”*

Main idea: Because Jesus bears with us, we can bear with one another.

Romans 15:1-6 – *“We who are strong have an obligation to bear with the failings of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, to build him up. For Christ did not please himself, but as it is written, ‘The reproaches of those who reproached you fell on me.’ For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope. May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus, that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.”*

Let’s discover six ways to bear with those who bug us.

1. Put Up

Romans 15:1 – *“We who are strong have an obligation to bear with the failings of the weak, and not to please ourselves.”*

When Paul uses the word “obligation,” he’s saying we’re bound by Christ to bear with others.

We’re challenged to restrain our natural reaction towards odd or difficult people by just letting them be themselves, without thinking they need to become just like us.

2. Build Up

Romans 15:2 – *“Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, to build him up.”*

God is committed to building people up and is greatly grieved when we demolish what He has designed.

Isaiah 57:14 – *“Build up, build up, prepare the way, remove every obstruction from my people’s way.”*

1 Thessalonians 5:11 – *“Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing.”*

Part of building others up is recognizing how we might irritate others. If you know you’re rubbing people the wrong way with something you’re doing, then maybe you should change.

3. Look Up

Romans 15:3 – *“For Christ did not please Himself, but as it is written, ‘The reproaches of those who reproached you fell on me.’”*

If you find yourself getting irritated and annoyed all the time, it’s probably because you’re not looking up enough.

Matthew 17:8 – *“And when they lifted up their eyes, they saw no one but Jesus only.”*

When you lift your eyes and only see Jesus, you’ll be less prone to see the problems in other people.

4. Grow Up

Romans 15:4 – *“For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.”*

It is impossible to grow as a Christian if you are not allowing God’s Word to enter your life.

1 Peter 2:2 – *“Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up into salvation.”*

5. Stand Up

Romans 15:5 – *“May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus.”*

God's heart is for the church to be united and to **stand together**.

Acts 4:32 – *“Now the full number of those who believed were of one heart and soul...”*

Zephaniah 3:9 – *“For at that time I will change the speech of the peoples to a pure speech, that all of them may call upon the name of the LORD and serve him with one accord.”*

6. Speak Up

Romans 15:6 – *“That together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.”*

The phrase **“one voice”** means **“with one accord”** and is only possible when there is no contention or strife.

Nehemiah 9:5 – *“Stand up and bless the LORD your God from everlasting to everlasting.”*

Actions Steps

1. Make a list of the people who bug you.
2. Pray for the list of problem people for two weeks.
3. Ask God to change you.
4. Let go of grudges and forgive faults.
5. Restore a broken relationship.
6. Perform an act of service.

Discussion Questions

1. What does it mean to “bear with” someone?
2. Read Ephesians 4:2. How does our pride get in the way of bearing with someone?
3. How does understanding we are all in process help us to bear with one another?
4. How does loving someone help us to tolerate him or her better?
5. Read Colossians 3:12-13. What is this passage telling us to do? Why is this important?
6. Would you consider yourself to be a strong believer or a weak one? Why?
7. Why is it okay for people to be different from us? Why do we want everyone to be like us?
8. Read 1 Corinthians 9:12. Why is it important for us to be considerate of others and to refrain from doing something that may cause them to stumble?
9. Read Romans 15:2, Isaiah 57:14, and 1 Thessalonians 5:11. What do all these verses tell us to do? How can we build others up? How are you at building others up?
10. Read Mark 10:45. According to this verse, why did Jesus come to earth? If we are to follow His example, what are we supposed to do?
11. Do you find yourself getting irritated or annoyed all the time? What is causing your irritation? What can you do to be less irritated or annoyed?
12. How often are you reading and soaking in God’s Word?
13. How can we serve God together even if we are very different from each other?
14. Which of the Action Steps have you taken? Have you seen a difference in your relationships from doing so?
15. What do we need to be pouring our time and energy into instead of fighting with one another?