



# **ANCHORED TOGETHER IN JESUS!**

*And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.*

Hebrews 10:25

*Above all, keep loving one another earnestly, since love covers a multitude of sins. Show hospitality to one another without grumbling. As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another as good stewards of God's varied grace:* 1 Peter 4:8-10

## **Visual: Anchor**

Let's start with an Anchor as our theme this weekend is Anchored Together in Jesus.

**Reflection:** In Hebrews we are told not to neglect meeting together but to encourage one another! We come together with our brothers and sisters in Christ to hear God's Word, receive the Sacraments, pray, and sing. As we do those things we are encouraged to continue on in the Faith. We are charged to consider how to stir up one another to love and good works. (Hebrews 10:24)

During this time, we are going to focus on how we can love, show hospitality, and serve one another. As we have all received various gifts from God and use those to serve our neighbors, we are serving Christ!

**Prayer:** Heavenly Father, I ask that you open my heart and mind to ways that I can serve others and in doing so, serve you. As we gather as Sisters in Christ may we learn ways to serve and to be reminded that we are Anchored Together in Jesus! Help us to forgive wrong doings and hurts as you have forgiven us so that we can be anchored together in you.

In Jesus' name, Amen.





**Gifts** are great – both to receive and to give. We have all been given gifts by God, but those gifts are not for us. They are to be used to serve those around us. Think about it. When you truly began to see how God has blessed you, and begin to trust Him with those giftings and place value on them – no matter how they compare to the gifts or talents of others, you begin to grow in your faith and service.

As women, we do struggle with comparison and that leads us to sin. It is especially hard when we see so many truly faithful and inspiring women around us!

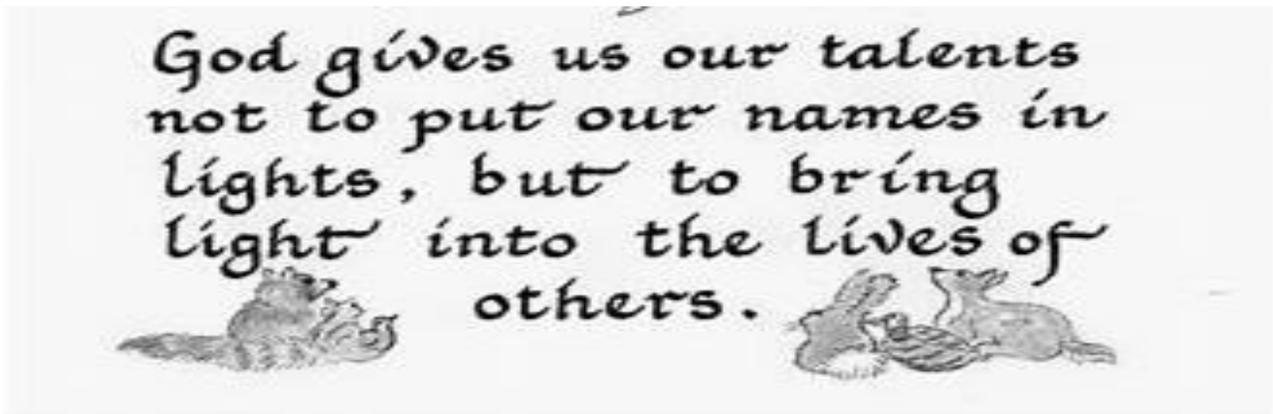
However, if you consider that God didn't just hand you those gifts, He gave you those gifts to use for Him! Those are for you to serve those around you. Your thinking will certainly change and shift. You will begin to see how God has blessed you, and then began to trust Him with those giftings and value them – no matter how they compare to the gifts or talents of others.

*“As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace ... ”* (1 Peter 4:10).

God calls you to use those gifts to serve others. Fight the lie that your talents are not as good as others. Fight the lie that someone else is better. Fight the lie that God can't use your talents for His Kingdom. Consider all the things God has given you to serve others. That gifting you love – it's meant to serve others. That gifting that you aren't sure is good enough – it is. God gave it to you to share. Serve others with gladness and give away what you have received.

If you choose to wait for the “perfect moment” or level of ability to develop before you even do anything with your gifts, you'll probably never get started. Don't waste time – it's time for you to start making the most of the divine gifts that God gave you.

Prayer: Lord, I thank You for placing my gifts in my life. Those gifts were given by You. Forgive me for the time I've wasted waiting for the perfect moment before I get started using those gifts. Help me now as I step out in faith to start using them in ways that will benefit those around me. Help me to touch the lives of others. Help me to willfully recognize the gifts You have placed inside me and that I make the choice to use them for Your Work. In Christ's name, Amen.



## God is LOVE

In Matthew 22:36-40, Jesus is asked which commandment is the greatest. He responds, “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.”

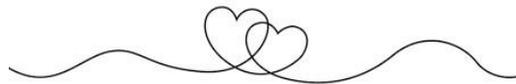


These verses encapsulate the essence of Christian life: loving God and loving others. This love is not just a feeling but an active, intentional practice of humility, kindness, and service. To truly love our neighbors as ourselves, we must adopt an attitude of humility, putting others' needs above our own and recognizing the inherent worth in every person. This humility allows us to serve others selflessly, mirroring Jesus' example of servant leadership.

Loving others also involves being kind. Kindness is a tangible expression of love, whether through words of encouragement, acts of generosity, or simple gestures of support. By practicing kindness, we reflect God's love to those around us, creating a ripple effect that can transform communities.

Moreover, one of the greatest acts of love we can offer is sharing the gospel. When we share the good news of Jesus Christ, we provide others with the opportunity to experience God's love, grace, and salvation. This act of sharing is not just about words but about living a life that exemplifies the teachings of Christ, thereby drawing others to Him through our example.

In essence, loving God and loving others are intertwined. Our love for God is demonstrated through our actions towards others, and our love for others reflects our devotion to God. By being humble, kind, and serving others, we embody the greatest commandments and fulfill our calling as followers of Christ.



# HOSPITALITY



I want to welcome you, and give you something to do. Here is a picture for you to color. I want you to color it in 5 minutes but I want a neat and colorful picture. Neat and in the lines. How is that showing good hospitality?

What was your first thought – no way I can do it. She thinks it can be done. How often do we do a good job at hospitality? If we are going to have friends over, do we start to grumble about what needs to be done, clean the house, straighten up, make sure we get the good China and silver out. Everything has to be correct.

What about the people that come into our home? Do we know them, who they are, what kind of people they are? Do we really know what they like? Neatness? Love? Are they comfortable in the home? Are we showing good hospitability to them? What about the new person you meet at church?

How would you feel if God would not show good hospitality to you? Just think where you would be if God did not show us any hospitability? Our lives would be empty and lost. We need to be good hostesses with a smile on our faces and not grumble. *“Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling.”* 1 Peter 4:9

The Bible describes hospitality as welcoming people into our home, sharing one’s home and food with others. The word hospitality can be found in the ESV Bible four times (Romans 12:13; 1 Timothy 5:10; Hebrews 13:2; and 1 Peter 4:9). To summarize, these verses show that hospitality is both action and affection, receiving and loving a stranger. To be open is to be without barriers, readily accessible to welcome anyone at any time.

Prayer: Please Lord, give me the strength to do better in being a good hostess and to do it without grumbling. Thank you for being with me each day, and giving me the strength. In your name I pray. Amen.





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**Visual: Infinity/Love**

We conclude with this symbol as a reminder that God's love is boundless and eternal.

**Reflection:** *But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by His grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.* Titus 3:4-7

We spent time reflecting on ways to love and serve others, using the gifts God gave us through the Holy Spirit but it is important to take time to remember that although we are called to do many different things in this life, none of them will save us. Thanks be to God! When we fall short in showing love, Christ loves us. When we aren't as welcoming to someone as we ought to be, Christ welcomes us. Even when we don't serve our neighbor as we should, Christ serves us. Christ has done it all for us!

**Prayer:** Good and gracious Lord, thank you for sending Jesus to die for me. I know I fail to keep your commandments and daily need your forgiveness. Help me to live my life in a way pleasing to you. Show me my strengths so I can serve others and you but also show me my weakness so I can change and grow. I praise and thank you for your eternal love and mercy you show to me. In Jesus' name, Amen.

