

Love One Another

Ready:

"I give you a new commandment: love one another. Just as I have loved you, you must also love one another. By this all people will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another." - John 13:34-35

Set Growing up and well into my adult years, I was a dancer. I'm sure some of you are thinking, "This is the Fellowship of Christian ATHLETES, not dancers." But let me assure you, as a dancer, you have to be an athlete. We had to practice, commit to conditioning, eat right, get enough sleep, and compete. Dancing definitely took hard work, diligence and teamwork. Nearly every day of the week, I would head to the dance studio, but it never occurred to me that the dance studio itself was an incredible gift. It was a safe place—a place where we came together and had one purpose: dance. When we walked through those doors, we left outside the kind of cars we drove, clothes we wore, our financial status, if we were cheerleaders or in the choir, if our parents were married or divorced—all of the things the outside world used to measure our success. There, with our dance bags and bleeding feet, we didn't care about who had what, and we built some incredible friendships. Late into my teen years, I was searching spiritually, trying to find where I belonged. As I took that journey by giving my life to Christ, I realized how I had already been given a glimpse of Christ's love toward others through dance. At the dance studio, we didn't discuss faith much, but we did love and welcome each other with open arms. It was a great picture of what I was called to do as a follower of Christ. Loving one another is what Jesus calls us all to do—to love others without casting judgment and to show His grace, truth and love through our actions. While we don't have to accept or endorse the sin in each other's lives, we can and should love each other in spite of them. I wish I had been aware of just how lucky we were when we spent every day together at the dance studio, but I am grateful that those friendships still continue today. Years later, we still love each other unconditionally, faults and all. Today, I say thank you to my teachers and my dancers for creating the kind of environment in which I could learn about love. And to all the coaches, athletes and teachers out there, I ask you to examine the kind of atmosphere you are creating in your team. Is it one that reflects the unconditional love of Christ? Take time to answer that question and then embrace the opportunity to show your team the love and grace of Jesus.

Go 1. How does the world's view of love differ from the love of Christ? 2. How can you welcome someone new or different to your school, team, neighborhood, etc.? 3. Have you accepted God's gift of unconditional love for yourself?

Workout Matthew 20:25-28 Luke 22:24-27 John 15:9-17 1 John 3:16-20 1 John 4:7-12

Bible Reference:

1 John 4



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