

## THE IMPORTANCE OF RELATIONSHIPS

(Romans)

1. Describe a time when you experienced a strong sense of safety and trust or danger and mistrust from a group of people.

2. What was it about the group, setting, or circumstances that made you feel this way?

3. The book of Romans contains a special set of instructions for building community. Because they all contain a phrase that means *one another of the same kind*, we know they address the way members of the faith community are to treat each other. Read the list. How might these look when put into practice? What kind of community might be created if these instructions were carried out?

- “Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves.” (Rom 12:10)
- “Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited.” (Rom 12:16)
- “Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for he who loves his fellowman has fulfilled the law.” (Rom 13:8)

- “Therefore, let us stop passing judgment on one another. Instead, make up your mind not to put any stumbling block or obstacle in your brother’s way.” (Rom 14:13)
- “Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God.” (Rom 15:7)
- “Greet one another with a holy kiss.” (Rom 16:16)

4. Which principles are most important to help you experience safety and trust?

5. What will you do this week—as an individual and a small group—to help produce an environment of safety and trust in our faith community?

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*Spiritual community is at once the safest place on earth  
and the place of greatest danger.*

- Larry Crabb, *The Safest Place on Earth*