

Eternity Daily Bible Study

The Importance Of Love

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Verses: 1 Peter 1:22

Topic: What Is Brotherly Love?

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Some cults talk about "the brotherhood of man and the fatherhood of God" and teach that every person on earth is "our brother and sister". This view has penetrated the church, politics and much popular spirituality. However this is not a biblical view at all! It leads to a mushy, sentimental gospel with no urgency for evangelism or missions.

"Brotherly love" has thus come to mean a sort of vague, chummy, affable, benevolence toward humanity in general and no one in particular. The sort of thing you display at Washington fundraisers for worthy causes while dressed in a dinner suit!

Quite contrary to this sentimental version of reality, the Scriptures speak in a plain and straightforward way of a vast separation between Christians and the unsaved. The Bible refers to a "kingdom of darkness" and a "kingdom of light" (Colossians 1:13, Ephesians 5:8, 1 Peter 2:9), of a clear need for fleeing from the world and its lusts (Titus 2:12, 2 Peter 1:4, 1 John 2:15-17) and even of children of the Devil and children of God!

1 John 3:10 *In this the **children of God** are revealed, and the **children of the Devil**: everyone not practicing righteousness is not of God, also he who does not love his brother.*

John 6:70 *Jesus answered them, Have I not chosen you, the Twelve? And **one of you is a devil?***

So who are the "brothers" and what is true biblical "brotherly love"? The brothers are those who are saved of God. They are children of God. Those who have truly been "born-again" into the family and household of God.

If someone is not "born-again" they are not our brother or sister in a spiritual sense! The disciples of Jesus are His family! Those who are born-again do the will of God!

Matthew 12:46-50 *But while He yet talked with the people, behold, His mother and His brothers stood outside, desiring to speak with Him. (47) Then one said to Him, Behold, Your mother and Your brothers stand outside, desiring to speak with You. (48) And He answered and said to him who told Him, Who is My mother? And who are My brothers? (49) And He stretched out His hand toward His disciples and said, Behold, My mother and My brothers! (50) For **whoever shall do the will of My Father in Heaven**, the same is My brother and sister and mother.*

Thus is it is not just "church-attenders" or nominal Christians but obedient, bible-believing, born-again Christians who long to do the will of God that are "brethren".

Also holiness makes us brothers and sisters of Jesus Christ for "He who sanctifies and those who are sanctified are one...."

Hebrews 2:11-12 *For both He who sanctifies and they who are sanctified are all of One, for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brothers, (12) saying, "I will declare Your name to My brothers; in the midst of the assembly I will sing praise to You."*

So Christians who are holy (set apart for God) by being born-again and obedient unto God are called brothers of Jesus Christ! What an awesome privilege. Indeed we are called children of God, and are distinct from the world!

1 John 3:1-3 *Behold what manner of love the Father has given us, that we should be called children of God. Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. (2) Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be. But we know that when He shall be revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. (3) And everyone who has this hope on him purifies himself, even as that One is pure.*

So we can see clearly now who the "brothers and sisters" are – the disciples of Jesus, those doing the will of God, those born of God and made children of God and sanctified by the blood of the Lamb Himself!

So brotherly love is that deep spiritual love that flows among those who are in God's family. It is the flow of sacrificial love within God's holy and heavenly community. It is intense, it is deep, and it is eternal!

1. Brotherly love occurs within a rejoicing holy, community of grace:

2 Corinthians 13:11-14 *Finally, brothers, rejoice. Perfect yourselves; encourage yourselves; mind the same thing; be at peace. And the God of love and peace will be with you. (12) Greet one another with a holy kiss. (13) All the saints greet you. (14) May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen.*

1 Peter 1:22 *Purifying your souls in the obedience of the truth through the Spirit to unfeigned love of the brothers, love one another fervently out of a pure heart,*

2. Our brothers (and sisters) are those who sincerely love God:

Ephesians 6:23-24 *Peace to the brothers, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. (24) Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen.*

1 John 4:20,21 *If anyone says, I love God, and hates his brother, he is a liar. For if he does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen? And we have this commandment from Him, that he who loves God should love his brother also.*

3. The brothers and sisters are those chosen by God for salvation and sanctification:

1 Thessalonians 1:4 *knowing, beloved brothers, your election of God.*

2 Thessalonians 2:13 *But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brothers beloved of the Lord, because God has from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth,*

4. These are known as the "household of faith":

(Galatians 6:10) *So then as we have time, let us work good toward all, especially toward those of the household of faith.*

(Ephesians 2:19) *Now therefore you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God, and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, in whom every building having been fitly framed together, grows into a holy sanctuary in the Lord; in whom you also are built together for a dwelling place of God through the Spirit.*

5. Brotherly love is an essential part of being saved, and brotherly love is not displayed by the unsaved:

1 John 3:10 *In this the children of God are revealed, and the children of the Devil: everyone not practicing righteousness is not of God, also he who does not love his brother.*

1 John 3:14 *We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brothers. He who does not love his brother abides in death.*

So brotherly love is a special spiritual love that is so unique that only people who are truly saved display it. Thus it is qualitatively different from normal family love, affection, romantic love or many other kinds of love that can be, and still are, displayed by those who are "in the world".

It is love that flows from God Himself to us and through the living, breathing, body of Christ with all its gifts, functions and hierarchy. Brotherly love actually constitutes the true Church. The true Church is the community that exists within the Beloved. It is those who dwell in grace and who show grace. Those who have brotherly love are the true Church. Those who do not display love of the brethren are not part of God's true Church.

1 Corinthians 13 (positioned as it is between the gifts chapters 12 and 14) makes it clear that love gives meaning and direction to the gifts and is their true context of operation. Without brotherly love the gifts are just "so much noise".

So brotherly love is extremely important and we will explore it more as we go through this series.

Blessings,

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