

**BOOK OF 2 PETER
MATURING IN CHRIST
ADD CHARITY TO BROTHERLY LOVE
2 PETER 1:1-10**

Introduction

We need to realize that sometimes all that is needed to get some people's attention and to begin the process of pointing them to God **is for us to be involved in acts of selfless love, unsolicited kindness, and undeserved help.**

Far too many Churches are not reaching people because they are more concerned about **themselves** than they are about **others**.

We all tend to be more **self-centered** rather than we are **people-centered**.

We've seen how the Holy Spirit used Peter to instruct us to "*add to our faith.*"

Last week we learned how we are to add "*brotherly kindness*" to our faith.

Tonight we have come to the final item on the list of things that we need to be building into our lives—to *brotherly kindness we are to add "charity."*

What is "*charity?*"

The word translated "*charity*" in our King James Bible comes from the Greek word, "*agape.*"

Agape love is the kind of love that the Lord loves us with. *Charity* (or "*agape*") is *desiring the highest good for others.*

(Look at John 3:16; Romans 5:8; 1 John 4:9-11)

It is the love that Paul defines and expounds upon in 1 Corinthians 13. An exposition of 1 Corinthians 13 is a whole another study in itself.

As we saw last week, "*brotherly kindness*" focuses on our relationships within the family of God. We are to love each other!

However, we are also to love the unsaved also!

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"*Charity*" or "*Agape love*" is to be shown to both saved and the lost. Tonight, I want to just concentrate on our agape love or "*charity*" for those who are lost, because that is where Jesus first focused His love.

How can we show the unsaved, the Love of Christ?

I. WE SHOW THE LOVE OF CHRIST BY BUILDING BRIDGES OF FRIENDSHIP WITH THOSE WHO ARE LOST.

Jesus is our example here.

Jesus was known as "*a friend of publicans and sinners!*"

His love and concern for the sinner was evident.

Jesus had a heart for the lost! It did not matter to Him what a person's background or status might be.

Jesus loved them and was friendly to them.

Just think of the different types of individuals we have record of Jesus reaching out to. They include:

- 1) A demon possessed man.
- 2) The Woman at the Well... a woman who was living immorally.
- 3) Zaacheaus... a crooked, thieving tax collector.
- 4) Nicodemus... a well respected teacher of the Law.

And we could go on . . .

Just like Jesus, we need to be trying to establish friendships with those who are lost.

Now understand, that we are not to wallow with them in their sin, but neither are we to isolate ourselves from them.

If we isolate ourselves from those who need Jesus, how will we ever win them to the Saviour?

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Sometimes all it takes is a hearing ear and an understanding heart.

WE SHOW THE LOVE OF CHRIST BY BUILDING BRIDGES OF FRIENDSHIP WITH THOSE WHO ARE LOST.

II. WE SHOW THE LOVE OF CHRIST BY REGULARLY PRAYING FOR THE LOST. (PSALM 126:5-6)

A huge factor in evangelism is prayer.

Every Christian needs to understand their responsibility to pray for the salvation of the lost.

How much time do we spend praying for the lost?

When was the last time that we have called any specific unsaved persons name before the Lord?

A. To Effectively Pray For The Lost We Must Have A Proper Belief.

Do we really believe that Jesus meant it when he said that in order to enter the kingdom of God, a person, "*..must be born again.*" (John 3:3-7)

Do we really believe that Jesus was speaking the truth when He said, "*I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.*" (John 14:6)

I recently read that when W.C. Fields was on his deathbed, a friend of his dropped by and found him reading the Bible. Surprised to see Fields actually reading the Bible, he couldn't help but ask what he was up to.

Fields said he was , "*Looking for loopholes, my friend. Looking for loopholes.*"

But there aren't any loopholes for our friends and family members nor for anyone else who has not received Jesus Christ.

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What Jesus has said is true!

To Effectively Pray For The Lost We Must Have A Proper Belief!

B. To Effectively Pray For The Lost We Must Have A Proper Burden!

Indifference is one of the greatest hinderances to prayer.

It is so easy to let our hearts get cold about the eternal destiny of others.

There are too many believers who let everything in the world keep them so busy that they neglect to spend time in prayer for the lost to be saved!

Paul had a burden for the lost. In Romans 9:2 he described the deep desire he had to see his kinsmen saved by saying that he had a "*...great heaviness and continual sorrow...*" in his heart.

In Romans 10:1 Paul went on to say, "*...my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved.*"

We need to love the lost! We need to love them enough to pray for them!

1. We Should Pray That They Will Be Exposed To A Clear Presentation Of The Gospel. (Romans 10:13-14:17)

2. We Should Pray For The Lord To Use The Holy Spirit To Convict Them. (John 16:7-8)

3. We Should Pray For Those Who Minister The Word. (2 Thessalonians 3:1)

Paul asked the Thessalonians to "*...pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified...*"

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4. **We Should Pray For The Lord To Give Us Opportunities To Spread The Gospel.**
(Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15; Acts 1:8)

5. **We Should Pray That We Might Make The Most Out Of The Opportunities That We Do Have To Share The Gospel.**

That brings me to the final thing I want to say.

III. WE SHOW THE LOVE OF CHRIST BY TELLING THE LOST HOW TO KNOW JESUS CHRIST AS THEIR SAVIOUR.

It is not enough for us to befriend the lost. It is not enough to pray for the lost. We need to be ready, willing and able to speak to them about Jesus Christ.

In the Gospel of Mark we have a story that I mentioned earlier of the conversion of the Demon Possessed Man.

Note **MARK 5:18-20.**

We see a similar result in **JOHN 4:28-30. 39-42.**

Let's tell those around us who need Jesus what great things He has done for us!

Conclusion

How is your love for those who are lost?

Are you seeking the highest good for yourself or for others?

The highest good that you can ever seek for someone who is lost is for them to be saved!

Are you building bridges with those who are lost?

Are you praying for the lost?

Are you telling anyone about Jesus?