

BOOK OF 2 PETER
KEYS TO SPIRITUAL GROWTH
ADD BROTHERLY KINDNESS TO GODLINESS
2 PETER 1:5-7

Introduction

We've been seeing in our text here as to what it takes to **MATURE** as **BELIEVERS** and to become effective in our **WALK** with the **LORD!**

One problem prevalent among too many of **GOD'S PEOPLE** today is that they are **SPIRITUALLY IMMATURE**. There are too many **BELIEVERS** who should have grown up by now, but they haven't. And let me add that there are too many **BELIEVERS** who think they are grown up, but are still **WALKING** in **IMMATURITY!**

Thus far we've seen that we:

- 1) We Must First **HAVE A FIRM FOUNDATION** Of **SAVING FAITH** To **BUILD** Upon!
- 2) We Must Be **SPIRITUALLY DILIGENT** About **ADDING TO OUR FAITH** Or **GROWING SPIRITUALLY!**
- 3) We Must **ADD VIRTUE TO OUR FAITH!**
(The Desire To Do What Is Right)
- 4) We Must **ADD KNOWLEDGE OF WHAT IS RIGHT** To That **VIRTUE!**
- 5) Then We Must **ADD TEMPERANCE TO THAT KNOWLEDGE!**
(The SELF-DISCIPLINE Or The DETERMINATION To Do What Is Right.)
- 6) Then We Must **ADD PATIENCE TO THAT TEMPERANCE!**
(The SPIRITUAL ENDURANCE To Keep On Doing What Is Right When We Are Challenged Or Opposed!)
- 7) And Last Week We Saw That We Must **ADD GODLINESS TO THAT TEMPERANCE!** *(A DEVOTION TO GOD Which Results In A Life That Is Pleasing To Him.)*

Next we see that to **GODLINESS** we must add **BROTHERLY KINDNESS!**

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The first **five ADDITIONS** to our **FAITH** pertain to the **BELIEVER'S INNER LIFE** and **RELATIONSHIP TO GOD.**

These last two that we will look at this week and, **LORD** willing, next week **relate to OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER PEOPLE!**

What is BROTHERLY KINDNESS?

BROTHERLY KINDNESS is translated from the Greek word "*philadelphia*" which is translated elsewhere in the Scripture as "*brotherly love*" and means "*a practical caring for others as you would for a family member.*"

Hebrews 13:1—"Let brotherly love continue."

Sadly, we live in a world that is largely cold and impersonal where **those who take time to CARE FOR OTHERS** are, **more often than not, the EXCEPTION** rather than the **RULE!**

But within the **LOCAL CHURCH** things should be different! **CARING FOR OTHERS, especially our BROTHERS and SISTERS IN CHRIST, should be the RULE** and **NOT** the **EXCEPTION!**

When we received the LORD JESUS as our **SAVIOUR**, we not only entered into **A RELATIONSHIP WITH HIM**, but into **A RELATIONSHIP WITH EVERY OTHER BELIEVER!**

If we are going to be serious about our **SPIRITUAL GROWTH** then we must demonstrate "**BROTHERLY KINDNESS**". How do we accomplish that? By making sure that our **CARE FOR ONE ANOTHER** is marked by **three things:**

- I. **OUR LOVE FOR ONE ANOTHER SHOULD BE MARKED BY HONESTY!**
 - A. **Honest Love Is An Authentic Love!** *(1 Peter 1:22a)*

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Here **PETER** reminds us as **BELIEVERS** that our **SALVATION** resulted in us being able to have an *"unfeigned love of the brethren"*.

Underline that word *"unfeigned"*. **To feign something is to pretend.** **PETER** uses a term here that literally means *"without hypocrisy."*

We could say that this **LOVE OF THE BRETHREN** is to be **GENUINE or AUTHENTIC!** Real **LOVE** involves **SELFLESS GIVING.** (We'll see this next week!)

A **SELF-CENTERED** person can't truly **LOVE** as they should! **GOD'S LOVE** and **FORGIVENESS** frees us to take our eyes off of ourselves and to **HELP MEET THE NEEDS OF OTHERS!**

Look at *Romans 12:9-10!*

- B. Honest Love Is An Active Love! (1 John 3:17-18)**
To **LOVE IN DEED and IN TRUTH** means that **our LOVE and CARING FOR ONE ANOTHER must be both ACTIVE and AUTHENTIC!**

By **ACTIVE** we mean that it is **SHOWN** by what we **DO!**

We all like being **CARED FOR** don't we? I dare say that most people who are searching for a **CHURCH** have that as at least one of the criteria they are looking for!

Every **CHURCH** should be a **CARING CHURCH** because the **CHURCH** is **CHRIST'S BODY** on the earth and we know that **JESUS CARED** when **HE** was here in **BODY!**
Now that **CHRIST HAS ASCENDED ON HIGH** we are **HIS**

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BODY that **HE WORKS THROUGH** on this earth!

CARING CHURCHES of necessity are made up of **CARING INDIVIDUALS!**

CARING INDIVIDUALS honestly seek to **HELP MEET THE NEEDS OF OTHERS!**

OUR LOVE FOR EACH OTHER SHOULD BE MARKED BY HONESTY! (Authentic Love and Active Love!)

II. OUR LOVE FOR ONE ANOTHER SHOULD BE MARKED BY HEALING. (Galatians 6:1-2)

When I say *"HEALING"*, I am saying that in the sense of us *"BEARING ONE ANOTHER'S BURDENS."* True *"BROTHERLY LOVE"* reaches out to those who are hurting.

Note the **LAW OF CHRIST:** *John 13:34-35*—*"A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."*

1 Thessalonians 4:9-12

Just like the story **JESUS** told in *Luke 10:29-37* about **THE GOOD SAMARITAN**, we need to respond to each other with the kind of **CARING** that says, *"when my brother is hurting, I'm going to do what I can do to take care of him."*

- A. We Need To Understand That We Won't Have A HEALING LOVE If We Are SELF-CENTERED!**
Remember in that parable of the Good Samaritan, the man who was robbed, wounded, and left for dead was passed by a *"Priest"* and a *"Levite"*.

Both were busy, important men. Perhaps their minds were

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absorbed with their jobs in the **TEMPLE**.

Far too often we fail to **CARE** for those who are hurting because we don't want any interruption in our own plans.

B. We Need To Understand That We Won't Have A HEALING LOVE If We STAY ISOLATED or DISTANT From OTHERS!

People in **CHURCH** are often masters at this. Many times we make small talk and speak superficially to people without really getting to know them because we are afraid of getting involved with other people and their needs.

But we can't come to know others or their needs by **STAYING ISOLATED** from them or **STAYING DISTANT** from them.

C. We Need To Understand That We Won't Have A HEALING LOVE If We DON'T LISTEN When Someone Expresses A Need!

One woman was fed up with the superficial level of communication in her Church, so she conducted an experiment.

To everyone who passed her in the hallways and asked, "How are you?" she replied, "Lousy!"

Some people didn't even hear what she said.

Some said, "I'm sorry to hear that" but no one asked her why or asked if they could be of help to her.

We must learn to **LISTEN** to folks who have needs!

D. We Need To Understand That We Won't Have A HEALING LOVE If We Think Someone Else Should Be The One To Help!

When some people hear about a problem in another person's life, the first thing they do is call the **PASTOR**.

That's OK, but have you ever thought about **allowing the**

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LORD to use YOU to help meet a need in someone's life? Each of us has a responsibility to DEMONSTRATE LOVE!

The **LORD** may make **YOU** aware of a need because **HE** wants to use **YOU** in the process of meeting the need.

E. We Need To Understand That We Won't Have A HEALING LOVE If We Think Problems Will Solve Themselves!

Don't listen to those **FLESHLY** thoughts that say, "*Don't get involved! They'll work it out!*" Listen to the **HOLY SPIRIT** within that wants **MANIFEST HIS FRUIT** through you to **HELP OTHERS!**

Just because we may have been able to work through a similar situation doesn't mean someone else will be able to do the same thing without some **HELP** or **GUIDANCE!**

(2 Corinthians 1:3-6)

OUR LOVE FOR ONE ANOTHER SHOULD BE MARKED BY HONESTY...HEALING...and then finally. . .

III. OUR LOVE FOR ONE ANOTHER SHOULD BE MARKED BY HUMILITY!

HUMILITY? What does **HUMILITY** have to do with demonstrating "**BROTHERLY LOVE?**"

HUMILITY must be a part of this equation because **PRIDE WILL KEEP US FROM DOING WHAT BROTHERLY LOVE REQUIRES.**

A. BROTHERLY LOVE Requires That We Try To RIGHT OUR WRONGS!

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Matthew 5:24—“Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.”

B. BROTHERLY LOVE Requires That We Try To RECONCILE WHEN OTHERS HAVE OFFENDED US!

Matthew 18:15-17—“Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.”

C. BROTHERLY LOVE Requires That We FORGIVE OTHERS WHEN WE’VE BEEN OFFENDED!

Matthew 18:21—“Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven.”

Colossians 3:12-13—“Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.”

Conclusion:

Two men were heading by dog sled to their outpost in Alaska. They were both in danger of freezing to death. As they were going along, they came upon someone who was apparently nearly frozen. One said to the other, "Let's stop and help him." The other said, "No, if we stop and help him, we will surely freeze to death and never make it."

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The one who wanted to help said, "Let me off here and you go ahead." He got off the dog sled as his companion continued. He tried to revive the dying man by massaging his arms and legs in order to get the blood circulating in his body.

The effort he expended in massaging the man's limbs gave him the physical heat that he needed to keep from freezing to death. The snowstorm was soon over and the two were safe, but down the path was a dead man with a dog sled who was all alone. It was his companion who continued ahead alone.

**We are never more like JESUS than when we exhibit COMPASSION!
We can LOVE EACH OTHER BECAUSE WE HAVE BEEN LOVED SO GREATLY.**

Have you experienced that **LOVE**? If not, you can experience **that LOVE** today!

If you have experienced that **LOVE**, are you **SHOWING IT TO OTHERS** and **SHARING IT WITH OTHERS**? It is what we’ve been called to do!