

Increasing in Love – Part 1

1 Thessalonians 4:9-10

I. We Must Be Taught by Our Heavenly Father to Love One Another as a Christian Family (vs. 9-10a)

The Greek word translated by the phrase “brotherly love” is *philadelphia*, word that was used by the early Church in a special way.

Leviticus 19:18

When Paul says that the Thessalonian believers are “taught by God,” he uses the rare Greek word *theodidaktos*.

Jeffrey Weima sums up the scholarly consensus pretty well when he writes that the use of the word *theodidaktos* “is striking since there are no known occurrences of this term anywhere in Greek literature before its appearance in this verse, thereby suggesting that it is a new word created by Paul ... The remarkable character of this term is also evident in that it occurs nowhere else in the NT, only rarely in later Christian literature, and never in non-Christian writings” (BECNT, p. 286).

Isaiah 54:13 – The Septuagint translation of this passage says that “your children shall be *didaktois theou*,” using the Greek noun *Theos* – *God* – with the Greek adjective *didaktos* – *taught* – to speak of their being *taught by God*. Paul apparently simply combined these terms into a single compound word, and new adjective *theodidaktos*, to speak of the Thessalonians as having been *God-taught*.

John 6:44-45 – Just as no one can come to Jesus in faith unless he is drawn and taught by God, even so no one can love as God loves unless he is taught by God to do so.

II. We Must Increase in Our Love for One Another as a Christian Family (vs. 10b)

Recall 1:2-4; 3:5-7, 11-13