

Studies in Christianity Spiritual Maturity #6

S#1.

Integral To Maturity

S#2.

Text : **II Pet. 1: 4-8 ; I John 3: 13-21**

A. God gives us ALL things that pertain to life and godliness.

1. **II Pet. 1: 2** – Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord; **3** seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence. S#3.
2. God has given us everything that pertains living a godly life and dwelling with God eternally in Heaven, but we must acquire the knowledge of it.

B. The scriptures command us that we must grow in Christ. (*not optional*) S#4.

1. **II Pet. 3: 18** – grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.
2. **I Pet. 2:2** – like newborn babies, long for the pure milk of the word, so that by it you may grow in respect to salvation,
3. Our series of lessons are giving us the knowledge to help us grow in grace.

C. Thus far our current series has shown us that :

S#5.

1. **Faith** must not be allowed to set and melt away; it must be grown or it will perish.
2. Growing our faith is important enough that God has instructed be **diligent** about it.
3. The first thing we add to our faith is **moral excellence** which causes us to do right.
4. Of course, we must know right before we can do right so we seek more **knowledge**.
5. The more we learn the more we are motivated toward **self-control**.
6. All these cause us to love God more and to **live godly**, i.e., as in His presence.

D. By this lesson we will see that a heart filled with godliness will feel part of the family of God and be filled with love for his brothers and sisters.

* Godliness has to do with our vertical relationship and brotherly kindness to do with our horizontal relationship.

S#6.

E. With this lesson we will seek to understand :

S#7.

1. What is “**brotherly kindness**?”
2. This brotherly kindness does not apply to all men.
3. Love between brethren is emphasized in scripture.
4. There are consequences to brotherly love.

I. What is “brotherly love?”**S#8.****A. Unlike the word translated love, brotherly love is a specific term.****S#9.**

1. That there is a difference is made clear by our text.

II Pet. 1: 7 – and in your godliness, brotherly kindness,
and in your brotherly kindness, love.

2. One would not say, “Add love to your love.” The Holy Spirit is making a distinction.

S#10.**B. The word translated “brotherly kindness” is not the same word translated “love.”**

1. The most common word for love is some form of “agape, agapao.”
2. The word translated “brotherly kindness” is “philadelphia.”
 - a. It means : “love of brothers, brotherly” (*commonly= blood related siblings*)
 - b. It is also translated as : brotherly love, love of the brethren
3. “philadelphia” is a compound word :
 - a. philós (beloved, dear)
 - b. adelphós (brother, brotherly).

C. Philadelphia is also used in :**S#11.**

1. **Rom. 12:10** – Be devoted to one another in brotherly love;
give preference to one another in honor;
2. **I Thes. 4: 9** – Now as to the love of the brethren, you have no need for anyone
to write to you, for you yourselves are taught by God to love one another
3. **Heb. 13: 1 ... I Pet. 1:22 ... II Pet. 1: 7**

II. As used here, “philadelphia” does not apply to all men.**S#12.****A. This is not to say that we do not have a love for all men.**

1. “Philadelphia” was a restrictive term used only for siblings .
 - a. Familial love between parents and children was mostly expressed as *storge*.
 - b. The feeling of kindness and best wishes (God’s love) was expressed as *agape*
 - c. Romantic love was *eros*. (Not a biblical term.)
2. The fact that the Holy spirit distinguishes between brotherly kindness is significant.
II Pet. 1: 7 – and in your brotherly kindness, love. (*add or supply love to brothers ...*)

B. There is a special family relationship in Christ.**(*Brotherhood is not an* S#13.**

1. **Heb. 13: 1** – Let love of the brethren continue.

***insignificant doctrine.*)**

2. There is a special love that exists only between Christians. (*felt anywhere*)

a. **Rom. 12:10** – Be devoted to one another in brotherly love;
give preference to one another in honor;

b. **I Thes. 4: 9** – Now as to the love of the brethren, you have no need for anyone to write to you, for you yourselves are taught by God to love one another

C. Jesus said that there must be a special relationship between His followers. **S#14.**

1. **John 13: 34** – A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. **35** By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another

2. Jesus wanted love to be the hallmark of his believers.

3. In the second century an unbelieving Greek writer wrote of Christians ;
It is incredible to see the fervor with which the people of that religion help each other in their wants. They spare nothing. Their leader, Jesus, has put it in their heads that that they are brethren.

D. This kind of love was a new concept.

1. In those days the social structure was ridged; classes didn't intermingle.
2. The family was the most closed of the social structures and closer than any other.
3. The church mixed social strata and mixed families to function as one big family.

III. Love between brethren is emphasized in scripture.

S#15.

A. Remember our text.

S#16.

1. **I John 3: 14** – We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love abides in death.
2. Passing out of death is to be saved.
3. THUS, loving the brethren is a mark of salvation. (The opposite is also true.)

B. There are at least 60 “one another” commands .. 24 main passages .. for example:

1. **Rom. 12: 10** ... Give preference to one another
2. **Col. 3: 16** ... Teach and admonish one another
3. **Phil. 2: 3** ... Regard one another as more important
4. **Eph. 4: 32** ... Forgive one another
5. **Rom. 14: 19** ... Build each other up
6. **Rom. 15: 7** ... Accept one another
7. **Gal. 5: 13** ... Serve one another

S#17.

S#18.

C. “Philadelphia” Loving each other is one of the repeating themes of I Peter.

1. **I Pet. 1: 22** – Since you have in obedience to the truth purified your souls for a sincere love of the brethren, fervently love one another from the heart,
 - a. We are purified when we are saved .. **SO** .. we are saved to love the brethren.
 - b. Fervently = *ektenōs* = earnestly, fervently, intensely
 - c. This word comes from the root = *ektenēs* = “stretched to limit”
2. **I Pet. 4: 8** – Above all, keep fervent in your love for one another, because love covers a multitude of sins.
 - a. “Above all” Peter places the highest priority on love between brethren.
 - b. “keep fervent” like any relationship, Christian love needs maintenance.
 - c. “covers a multitude of sins” love will keep peace in a congregation.

IV. There are consequences to fervently loving the brethren.

S#19.

S#20.

A. Loving the brethren identifies one with the church and opens him to opposition.

1. **I John 3: 13** – Do not be surprised, brethren, if the world hates you. **14** We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brethren.
2. This has been a problem since the earliest days of Christianity.

“It is our care for the helpless, our practice of loving kindness that brands us in the eyes of our opponents. ‘Look,’ they say, ‘how they love one another. Look how they are willing to die for one another.’” Tertullian 160 – 225 A.D.
3. The whole family’s reputation is linked together.
 - a. Whatever any member does affects everyone else in the family.
 - b. Everything that I do affects the family. (*congregation*)
 - c. The family’s actions affect how others see me.

S#21.

B. Being a loving brother can disturb my peace of mind, the tranquility of my life.

1. **Rom. 12: 9-10** – Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil; cling to what is good. **10** Be devoted to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one another in honor;
2. **Rom. 12: 15-16** – Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep. **16** Be of the same mind toward one another;
3. When we become of the same mind with a group, some in that group have problems.
 - a. Some have devastating afflictions thrust upon them by the devil.
 - b. Some of those problems were brought on by bad decisions and/or sin.

- c. Some of those problems take time, effort and much prayer to work through. **S#22.**
James 5: 16 – Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another so that you may be healed. The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much
- 4. Dealing with each other's problems strengthens bonds and builds our faith. **S#23.**
- C. At times, being a member of God's family may become financially challenging.
 - 1. **Rom. 12: 13** – contributing to the needs of the saints, practicing hospitality.
 - a. Hospitality is to house those in need .. NOT fellowship.
 - b. Fellowship is very important and often neglected, but hospitality is not just eating.
 - 2. If a person just will not work, his need is to repent and we must encourage that.
I Thes. 3: 10 – For even when we were with you, we used to give you this order: **S#24.**
 if anyone is not willing to work, then he is not to eat, either. **11** For we hear that some among you are leading an undisciplined life, doing no work at all, but acting like busybodies
 - 3. The family of God has a responsibility to any brethren in any need. **S#25.**
I John 3: 16 – We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. **17** But whoever has the world's goods, and sees his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him?
 - a. It can be difficult for us to turn loose of that for which we worked.
 - b. “the love of God” refers to our loving God .. How can we say we are godly and be selfish during a brother's time of need ?

CONCLUSION :

- A. All Christians are part of one large family. **S#26.**
Heb. 3:6 – Christ was faithful as a Son over His house — whose house we are, if we hold fast our confidence and the boast of our hope firm until the end. **S#27.**
- B. Unique relationship – Christians give preference to other Christians above others
 - 1. **Rom. 12:10** – Be devoted to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one another in honor;
 - 2. **Gal. 6: 10** – So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith.
- C. The Christian should never fear facing life alone. **S#28.**
 - 1. **Gal. 6: 2** – Bear one another's burdens, and thereby fulfill the law of Christ.
 - 2. We pray for one another, but we do more than just pray.
I John 3: 18 – let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth. **S#29.** ... Communion slide

Lesson Text :**II Peter 1: 4-11**

4 For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust. **5** Now for this very reason also, applying all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence, and in your moral excellence, knowledge, **6** and in your knowledge, self-control, and in your self-control, perseverance, and in your perseverance, godliness, **7** and in your godliness, brotherly kindness, and in your brotherly kindness, love. **8** For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they render you neither useless nor unfruitful in the true knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. **9** For he who lacks these qualities is blind or shortsighted, having forgotten his purification from his former sins. **10** Therefore, brethren, be all the more diligent to make certain about His calling and choosing you; for as long as you practice these things, you will never stumble; **11** for in this way the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be abundantly supplied to you.

I John 3: 13-21

13 Do not be surprised, brethren, if the world hates you. **14** We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love abides in death. **15** Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer; and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him. **16** We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. **17** But whoever has the world's goods, and sees his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him? **18** Little children, let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth. **19** We will know by this that we are of the truth, and will assure our heart before Him **20** in whatever our heart condemns us; for God is greater than our heart and knows all things. **21** Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence before God;