

Add to Your Godliness Brotherly Kindness

INTRODUCTION.

- A. Brotherly kindness is closely related to brotherly love. It refers to love of the brotherhood. This is the strongest attachment to Christ's flock; feeling each as a member of you own body.
- B. Brotherly kindness may also be translated as "love of the brethren." One might consider *love* as the cause and *kindness* as the effect.
- C. Let look at some statements on brotherly love.
 1. *"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."* (John 13:34-35; cf. John 15:13; 1 John 3:16)
 2. *"Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart,"* (1 Peter 1:22)
 3. *"And this commandment we have from Him: that he who loves God must love his brother also."* (1 John 4:21)

I. THE IMPORTANCE OF BROTHERLY KINDNESS.

- A. In the Old Testament, God emphasized the importance of brotherly love. (Zechariah 7:8-10; Deuteronomy 22:1)
- B. In the New Testament we have admonishes from Peter and Paul.
 1. Peter emphasized: *"to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love."* (2 Peter 1:7) *"Honor all people. Love the brotherhood."* (1 Peter 2:17) Peter is referring to all true Christians.
 2. Paul told the church at Ephesus: *"And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ forgave you."*

(Ephesians 4:32) and to the Colossians he said: “*Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering;*” (Colossians 3:12)

II. HOW CAN CHRISTIANS SHOW BROTHERLY KINDNESS?

- A. What are some ways that we can show brotherly kindness?
1. We can show brotherly kindness **through our conversation.**
 - a. We should speak kindly to each other.
 - 1) Tremendous possibilities are found in the tongue. (Proverbs 18:21; Proverbs 15:2, 4)
 - 2) A soft answer will turn away wrath. (Proverbs 15:1; Colossians 4:6; Ephesians 4:31,32)
 - 3) We must not call our brother “Raca.” (Matthew 5:22)
 2. We can show brotherly kindness **through sympathy.**
 - a. The apostle Paul wrote, “Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, . . .” (Romans 12:10-13)
 - b. The members are to have the “*same care for one another.*” (1 Corinthians 12:25, 26)
 - c. Christians were to “*remember the prisoners as if chained with them.*” (Hebrews 13:3)
 - d. A good example of showing sympathy is Onesiphorus who was kind to Paul. (2 Timothy 1:16-18)
 - e. Jesus Christ demonstrated compassionate sympathy. (Matthew 14:14; cf. Mark 6:34)
 3. We can show brotherly kindness **by assisting the needy.**
 - a. We are commanded to bear each other’s burdens. (Galatians 6:2; Romans 15:1-2; Philippians 2:4)
 - b. Christ taught the value of giving. (Matthew 5:42)

- c. When the apostle Paul was speaking with the elders of Ephesus, he said: *“I have shown you in every way, by laboring like this, that you must support the weak. And remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'”* (Acts 20:35)
- d. If a brother or sister is in need, we should not turn him or her away. (James 2:15-16; 1 John 3:17)
- 4. We can show brotherly kindness **by restoring those who sin.**
 - a. Our true friends are those who will tell us of our faults. (Matthew 18:15)
 - b. If we truly care for one another, It is an act of brotherly kindness when we show interest in restoring one. (James 5:19-20)
 - c. If we are to restore one who sins, it must be done in the spirit of meekness. (Galatians 6:1)
- 5. We can show brotherly kindness **by forgiveness.**
 - a. Consider the parable of the unmerciful debtor. (Matthew 18:23-30)
 - b. We are commanded to forgive even as God forgave. (Ephesians 4:32; Colossians 3:12, 13)
 - c. We must forgive as often as we are asked. (Luke 17:3,4; Matthew 18:21, 22)
- 6. We can show brotherly kindness **by practicing the golden rule.**
 - a. *“Therefore, whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.”* (Matthew 7:12)
 - b. This is not a negative rule but a positive rule. We must do something.
 - c. It does not meant that we are to be as kind to others as they are to us.
 - d. To ascertain its meaning, change places with the other fellow.

7. We can show brotherly kindness **by doing good for evil.**
 - a. Anyone can return good for good. (Matthew 5:46)
 - b. Peter reminds us that we are to return good for evil. (1 Peter 3:8-9)
 - c. Paul points out that you cannot overcome evil with evil. (Romans 12:17-21)
8. We can show brotherly kindness **by respecting conscience of others.**
 - a. We must not make our liberty a stumbling block. (1 Corinthians 8:9; Romans 14:13)
 - b. We should be willing to sacrifice our rights so that we might avoid offending. (Romans 14:21; 1 Corinthians 8:13)
 - c. We must keep in mind however that the Gospel must not be sacrificed for any one's conscience.
9. We should demonstrate brotherly kindness **by preferring each other.**
 - a. When Paul wrote to the church at Rome, he said: *“Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep.”* (Romans 12:15; cf. 1 Corinthians 12:26)
 - b. We should do good to all and especially the household of faith. (Galatians 6:10)

CONCLUSION.

- A. To oppress the poor is to reproach God. (Proverbs 14:31)
- B. When we sin against brethren we sin against Christ. (1 Corinthians 8:12; Acts 9:4; Acts 9:1)
- C. Finally, our actions toward brethren will meet us at the judgment. (Matthew 25:31-46; Hebrews 6:10)
- D. Based on all of the things that we have looked at, it is clear why Peter listed brotherly kindness as one of the Christian graces.