

Cultivating Brotherly Kindness

Lesson for Sunday, October 5, 2025

REVIEW:

Begin with the Scripture memory and how what we have discussed so far fits together...

- ⇒ We are answering the question: What does it mean to be like Christ? Peter gives us the formula in 2 Peter 1:5-7.
- ⇒ It begins with a daily pursuit of *arete* (**virtue** – the excellence of Christlikeness) – daily seeking the **knowledge** of the Person, work and ways of Jesus found in His Word.
- ⇒ Then we are to daily seek to practice self-control (**temperance**), submitting our personal desires to what we have discovered in the Word. At the same time, we are to remain faithful to those things no matter what pressure is upon us (endurance/**patience**).
- ⇒ These first four virtues produce a daily desire to be committed to “seeking first the kingdom of God” even at the risk to self (**godliness**).
- ⇒ Notice that each of these qualities are essential! We will not be godly if we lack self-control, etc.
- ⇒ Last week we mentioned that godliness is the bridge virtue. What we have studied up to this point all deals with the individual. Now we begin to focus on virtues that deal with others.

INTRODUCTION:

- ⇒ What are the most common sins that do the most damage to relationships?
 - *Allow the class to answer but here are some of the things you will most likely hear: gossip, bitterness, anger, partiality, envy, etc.*
- ⇒ POINT OUT: What is interesting is that many times we have more interpersonal issues with fellows Christians than we do with people outside the church. As someone once said:
 - To dwell above with the Lord we love, O, that will be glory...
 - To dwell below with those we know, Now that’s another story!

BIBLE STUDY:

1. **Defining** Brotherly Kindness (2 Peter 1:7)
 - a. The Greek word is “philadelphia” and is a compound word:
 - i. Philia meaning **affection**
 - ii. Adelpia meaning **brother**
 - b. The problem is that the English does not capture the richness of the Greek.
 - c. In the Greek world during NT times, the word was only used for blood relatives. Then the early church began to extend its use outside the natural family because they considered anyone in the body of Christ a “brother” or “sister” in Christ.
 - d. Consider these verses where the NT writers use the word:
 - i. Romans 12:10; Hebrews 13:1; 1 Peter 1:22
 - ii. Here’s a good working definition: *A God-energized affection for and service to those in the local church.*
 - e. KEY POINT: Brotherly kindness is based on what we have in **common**, specifically in Christ.

- i. The world focuses on superficial ways that we are alike (common interests, same ethnicity, same background, etc.).
- ii. Christianity takes the superficial differences and brings them together based on the essential fact that we are all saved by the same Lord.
- iii. No matter what differences appear on the surface, our stronger identity is in our union with Christ.

2. **Displaying** Brotherly Kindness

- a. The NT is full of descriptions as to what brotherly kindness is to look like. We refer to these passages as the “one anothers.”
- b. At the heart of the issue is the key quality of **humility**. Read Romans 12:3-5.
 - i. We live in a world that only encourages a “me focus.”
 - ii. Paul instructs us to have an “other’s focus” characterized by humility.
 - iii. Once we have humility, we can focus on the specific one anothers. They typically fall into one of two categories.
- c. TEACHERS: Use group work for the following section. Have groups look up the verses, read them together and report back to the group the specific action we should have if we are to display brotherly kindness to others.
- d. First are our **dispositions** to one another.
 - i. Romans 12:10a Be warm-hearted
 - ii. Romans 12:10b Be others-focused
 - iii. Romans 15:5 Be like-minded
 - iv. Ephesians 4:31-32 Be kind
 - v. Ephesians 4:32 Be tenderhearted
 - vi. 1 Peter 5:5 Be humble
- e. Second are our **duties** to one another. (There are tons of these in the Bible. We just chose the top few for this lesson.)
 - i. Ephesians 4:32 Forgive others
 - ii. Romans 15:7 Accept others
 - iii. James 5:16 Pray for others
 - iv. 1 Thess. 4:18 Comfort others
 - v. Hebrews 10:24 Encourage others
 - vi. James 4:11 Don’t badmouth others
 - vii. James 5:9 Don’t grumble about others
- f. APPLICATION:
 - i. Choose from the one anothers above ones that you feel are most appropriate for your group to discuss. Get specific on how we follow through on these within the church or your class.
 - ii. Discuss: How do we attack the me-first attitude so that we can be ready to focus on others and show them brotherly kindness?