

2 Peter 1:2-15

Here in 2 Peter 1, Peter gives us a Holy Spirit inspired pathway to maturity.

1. This was Peter's focus for the rest of his life.
2. If he felt that understanding this pathway to maturity was that important, shouldn't we also carefully consider it as well?

Let's look at the text together.

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. 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.

1. God has provided you with every thing you need for life and godliness, along with precious and magnificent promises so that you can be partakers of the divine nature.

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.

2. Because of these great graces, you must apply all diligence in your faith-walk to add to this faith moral excellence, and to moral excellence knowledge etc.

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 short-sighted, 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.

3. If these qualities become yours and are increasing...you will not be useless, unfruitful, blind, or at risk of falling away, but you will have the kingdom abundantly supplied to you!

Peter's goal was to pound these truths into the church with the remainder of his earthy days.

12 Therefore, I will always be ready to remind you of these things, even though you already know them, and have been established in the truth which is present with you. 13 I consider it right, as long as I am in this earthly dwelling, to stir you up by way of reminder, 14 knowing that the laying aside of my earthly dwelling is imminent, as also our Lord Jesus Christ has made clear to me. 15 And I will also be diligent that at any time after my departure you will be able to call these things to mind.

We have been spending our time walking through the qualities Peter identifies in vs 5-7. So far, we have looked at faith, moral excellence, knowledge, self control, perseverance, and last week, godliness. You can go back and catch up on any that you missed through the church app, website, or on sermon audio.

This morning we come to the seventh quality that Peter lists: brotherly kindness.

7 and in your godliness, brotherly kindness,

Brotherly kindness or brotherly affection comes from the greek word philadelphia which you might recognize as the city of brotherly love.

1. The word in greek is used to describe a tender, kind, caring, concerned affection
 - a. This is not a love brought on by beauty, or an attractive personality
 - b. It is basically the type of love that occurs within a family.
 - c. 1 Timothy 5:1-2 *Do not sharply rebuke an older man, but rather appeal to him as a father, to the younger men as brothers, to the older women as mothers, and the younger women as sisters, in all purity.*
2. What he says is, love your fellow believers tenderly, as if they were family because they are... and are actually closer than family!
 - a. We are not connected by blood of parents and grandparents and great grandparents
 - b. We are connected by the precious blood of Jesus Christ!
3. Peter treated this “philadelphia” love as absolutely necessary, as we can tell from his first letter.
 - a. 1 Peter 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,*
 - b. 1 Peter 2:17 *Honor all people, love the brotherhood, fear God, honor the king.*
 - c. 1 Peter 3:8 *To sum up, all of you be harmonious, sympathetic, brotherly, kindhearted*
 - d. 1 Peter 4:8 *Above all, keep fervent in your love for one another, because love covers a multitude of sins.*

If we are truly born again, this should come naturally.

1. If we have been born again and adopted into the family of God, we should love our brothers and sisters in Christ, just as we love our brothers and sisters in our biological families.
2. 1 Thess 4:9-10 *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; 10 for indeed you do practice it toward all the brethren who are in all Macedonia. But we urge you, brethren, to excel still more*

If we are born again, we have been taught automatically by God to do this

1. It is clear that love for our brothers and sisters in Christ is evidence that we have been saved.
 - a. 1 John 2:9 *Whoever says he is in the light and hates his brother is still in darkness.*
 - b. 1 John 3:14 *We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brothers. Whoever does not love abides in death*
 - c. 1 John 4:7-8 *Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love*
 - d. 1 John 4:12 *if we love one another, God abides in us and his love is perfected in us.*
 - e. 1 John 5:1 *Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God, and everyone who loves the Father loves whoever has been born of him*
2. We must possess and increase in this type of concern for the brethren if we are to mature as believers.

How do we pursue this quality of brotherly kindness? At least 4 ways...

1. Minister to the Brethren

In the Word of God, we have less of a definition of brotherly love, and more of a demonstration of it.

1. We can exercise brotherly kindness by using our spiritual gifts to serve and bless our fellow believers. Get beyond the excitement of discovering our gifts and start using them.

2. Romans 12:3-10 *For through the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think; but to think so as to have sound judgment, as God has allotted to each a measure of faith. 4 For just as we have many members in one body and all the members do not have the same function, 5 so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. 6 Since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, each of us is to exercise them accordingly: if prophecy, according to the proportion of his faith; 7 if service, in his serving; or he who teaches, in his teaching; 8 or he who exhorts, in his exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness. 9 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*

3. This is primarily a ministry, not towards the lost world, but towards fellow believers

a. Matthew 25:40 *The King will answer and say to them, 'Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me.'*

b. What a testimony this is to those who are outside of the family of God! These people care for one another

c. Acts 2:44-45 *And all those who had believed were together and had all things in common; 45 and they began selling their property and possessions and were sharing them with all, as anyone might have need.*

4. This is a ministry, not only towards those on our membership rolls, but all believers

a. 1 Thess 4:9-10 *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; 10 for indeed you do practice it toward all the brethren who are in all Macedonia. But we urge you, brethren, to excel still more*

b. This church expressed their love for the brethren across the whole region!

c. Again, what a testimony to those who are unbelievers to see the global church bear one another's burdens.

John 13:34-35 *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. Honor the Brethren

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

1. We are to honor God.

a. All we do should be for His glory

b. It is about Him!

c. And in the light of this great truth, our responsibility to honor others is often overshadowed.

2. We must prefer others...as some translations say...outdo one another in showing honor.
 - a. We're not to sit back and wait until someone else **honors** the other one.
 - b. We're not to sit back till someone else **shows preference** to the other one
 - c. Until someone else **meets another's need**, till someone else gives to another's request.
 - d. We're not to wait till someone else **shows honor to whom honor is due, love to whom love is due**.
 - e. We're not to wait until someone else **takes care of something that needs to be done**.
 - f. But, we are to lead out in this. Regardless of personal gifting, we need to initiate!
 - g. In other words, we're to be the first to honor our brothers and sisters in the Lord.

3. That is the essence of the term.
 - a. We're not sitting back and waiting, but leading the way in honoring and serving others.
 - b. Phil 2:3 *Do nothing from rivalry or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves*
 - c. We are to outdo everyone else in showing honor...imagine what that would be like!

3. Show Hospitality to the Brethren

1. Hebrews 13:1-2 *Let love of the brethren continue. 2 Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by this some have entertained angels without knowing it.*

2. We have built big fancy buildings to fuel ministry...when in fact they may have done just the opposite.
 - a. We inevitably begin to think that only what is done in the “church building” counts
 - b. We schedule our Bible studies in the building...our fellowships in the building....our ministry projects in the building...our meetings in the building...and everything revolves around the building...so much so that when we say we are going to church we are referring to a building, not a body.
 - c. That way our homes are seldom if ever open...and neither are our lives.

3. Yet, the Bible says let love of the brethren continue. Do not neglect to show hospitality
 - a. It doesn't say “do not neglect to show hospitality” unless you have a church building.
 - b. It says do not neglect to show hospitality...in other words, something is missing in the Christian life, the Christian church, and the process of discipling without hospitality... open doors and thus open lives.
 - c. That is one plus experienced from 2020...our people started learning that the building is not essential for church life to flourish.
 - d. In fact, if our Christianity cannot flourish without a building, we might need to ask if it's Christianity.

4. By making it a priority to show hospitality to the brethren, it can become easier to show hospitality to strangers.
 - a. We could benefit from broadening our circles...engaging some new folks, some different folks NOT TO VIRTUE SIGNAL, but to show the love of Christ!
 - b. It can even become a part of gospel seed sowing among the lost.
 - c. *The Story of the Saudi student and his gift.*

Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by this some have entertained angels without knowing it.

4. Be an Encouragement to the Brethren

Brotherly kindness, philadelphia love, was very present, necessary, and impactful in the early church.

1. Acts 2:42-47 *They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. 43 Everyone kept feeling a sense of awe; and many wonders and signs were taking place through the apostles. 44 And all those who had believed were together and had all things in common; 45 and they began selling their property and possessions and were sharing them with all, as anyone might have need. 46 Day by day continuing with one mind in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they were taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart, 47 praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved.*

3. We need others! Others need us! Isolation could be more dangerous than Covid friend!

4. We were created for fellowship and to need accountability and encouragement.

a. Please do not let anyone or anything rob you of that!

b. Hebrews 10:24-25 *24 and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, 25 not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near.*

Conclusion:

Please please please do not underestimate your need to experience brotherly kindness...or your need to show brotherly kindness.

1. This should not be a one way street! Give and receive...

a. Ministering to one another intentionally and creatively, and allow others to minister to you.

b. Seek to outdo one another in showing honor and allow others to honor you when appropriate.

c. Open your heart and your home to those you know, those you don't know well and even strangers to show hospitality...and be willing to receive hospitality.

d. Make gathering together for mutual encouragement and accountability a top priority.

2. This will be a testimony to those who are not yet part of the family and a blessing to those who are.

3. Are you part of this family?

a. Luke 18:29-30 *And He said to them, "Truly I say to you, there is no one who has left house or wife or brothers or parents or children, for the sake of the kingdom of God, 30 who will not receive many times as much at this time and in the age to come, eternal life."*

b. GOSPEL

1 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.*