

The Evidence of Spiritual Life, Part 8 | Brotherly Kindness

I. The Definition of Brotherly Kindness

- John 13:34-35; II Peter 1:7; Proverbs 18:1; Romans 12:9-21
- As we diligently mature in our faith, we will grow in our knowledge of God and submission to the Holy Spirit which will enable us to live a self-controlled, consistent, morally excellent life in conformity to the character of Jesus Christ. And though there is much that defines such a life, there is one dynamic character trait in particular by which all of God's people must be known.
- But even though there is one primary character trait (love), there are two very important characteristics that must define this trait. This week we will be studying the *relational necessity* of Christian love, and next week we will be studying the *personal responsibility* of Christian love.
- If God Himself sacrificed everything to lavish His love on us, how could we not be equally as loving since we are the recipients of His love?

II. The Requirements of Brotherly Kindness

- I Thessalonians 4:9-10; I Peter 1:22-25
- Brotherly kindness is the love that drives us to serve others and commune with them in Christian fellowship and familial unity. It's what motivates our relationships with other believers, and it's something in which we must constantly mature.
- If perseverance in Spirit-controlled godliness is the goal, we recognize that we will never perfectly achieve it in this life. Therefore, it must be our constant endeavor to *mature* in this regard. However, we will never grow in our love for God's people in our own strength. It's impossible to truly love someone for selfish reasons.
- According to these passages, in order to love the brethren as we should, we must . . .
 - Know the living and enduring Word of God.
 - Believe the Word of God and thereby be born again from its imperishable seed.
 - Purify our souls in sincerity to the truth.
- If you are truly born again and growing in your knowledge of the Scriptures, you should discover that your relationships with God's people are multiplying and deepening. A person who hates, rejects, and avoids God's people is someone who likely doesn't possess spiritual life.

III. The Relationships of Brotherly Kindness

- Hebrews 13:1-9; Romans 12:9-21
- Here we see seven unique relationships. In order of how they were revealed in the passage we have: love of the church, strangers, persecuted Christians, spouses, community relationships, God Himself, and our spiritual authorities.
- God expects that as we become more godly, our closest relationships, most distant relationships, and every relationship in-between must reflect these attributes, and those attributes are just the beginning.
- Continue to the next page to see the LifeWork assignment.

IV. Conclusion

- I Peter 4:8; I Thessalonians 5:11; Ephesians 4:2-3; Romans 13:8; I Corinthians 12:24-26; Galatians 5:13-14; Ephesians 4:32; Ephesians 5:21; Philippians 2:3-4; I Thessalonians 5:11; Hebrews 10:24-25; James 5:16; I John 3:23

Romans 12:9-21 identifies even more markers of brotherly kindness. **Read the passage from your own Bible and then follow the instructions below.**

Below you will find 20 necessary markers of brotherly kindness along with 7 different relationship categories. **In the boxes, write a number from 1 to 10 that describes how mature that character trait is (on average) in your relationships.** For example: **1** = This character trait is *not* evident in this relationship sphere. **5** = This character trait is evident in about 50% of this relationship sphere. **10** = This character trait is evident in nearly every facet of this relationship sphere. Write "N/A" in the top box if you have no contact with anyone from this category.

	God	Spouse	Children	Local Church	Community	Universal Church**	Strangers
Not Hypocritical							
Mutual Hatred for Evil							
Mutual Love for Good							
Devotion to Each Other							
Selfless							
Diligent, Fervent Service of God							
Rejoicing in the Hope of God							
Persevering in Difficulty							
Praying Together							
Caring for Needy Christians							
Hospitable							
Blessing Those Who Treat You Poorly							
Rejoice When They Rejoice							
Weep When They Weep							
Unified in Christ							
Humble							
Loving							
Respectful							
Peaceful							
Righteous							