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Love one another with brotherly affection...

Romans 12:10a

The need to be loved is perhaps one of the greatest, if not *the* greatest, of human needs. Sometimes those who feel the least loved do things which make it difficult for them to experience genuine love. Hollywood doesn't help. It has largely presented love in a very one dimensional way. This is a distortion of the depth and breadth of true love. Before we can begin to understand what *brotherly* love is, and then to implement it, we need to understand that love necessarily comes in different varieties. At the time of the writing of the New Testament, the Greeks thought of love as being four different kinds. The four ancient Greek words for the English word 'love' were -

Storgay – Family love, like *a mother's love for a child*.

Eros – Sexual expression of love between a man and a woman.

Phileo – Brotherly love like a friend's love for a friend. Greek word for *brother* is *delphia*.

Agape – God's love. This is unconditional selfless devotion.

1. What is involved in *showing* brotherly love? Consider Ephesians 4:32 and Colossians 3:12-14.

2. If a fellow believer told you that they were struggling with respecting another believer, how might you help them to apply Colossians 3:13?

3. How might we apply the then cultural intention of verses such Romans 16:16; 1Cor. 16:20 (Refer also to 2Cor. 13:12; 1Thess. 5:16; 1Peter 5:14) today?

Brotherly love among believers involves a higher degree of politeness than we might ordinarily show someone. One of the interesting things about how we relate to those we feel closer to, is that we become more transparent with them. This includes how we *feel* and what we *think*. If you've ever wondered why those you're closest too will sometimes get the angriest with you, it's because of this principle (that we are most transparent with those we are closest to).

4. How does First Peter 3:8 instruct us to show brotherly love?

5. Sometimes brotherly love involves bringing correction and interacting with members of the opposite sex. Note First Timothy 5:1-2 and discuss -
(a) how we are instructed to speak with those older than us-

and,

(b) how we are to interact with members of the opposite sex

In Second Peter 1:5, the Apostle wrote to believers that they were to '*make every effort to supplement you faith with...*' and in verse 7 he lists 'brotherly affection'.

6. What do Peter's instructions in this passage tell us about the challenges of showing brotherly love?

Amen. (Hebrews 13:1)