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These Qualities

# PHILADELPHIA

2 Peter 1:7

*Are you on the way to a more generous love of your fellow Christians, or mostly critical and at odds with your brothers and sisters? What grade would you give yourself in brotherly love—what grade would your sisters give you? Are you good, knowledgeable, self-controlled, patient, godly, and not loving of your brothers?*

**WHAT**—*to cherish, highly regard, to think well of, to love believers*

* A recognition of a theological reality—*the abiding “seed” of God, shared in common, makes us eternal kin.* (Isa. 40:6-8; Mk. 3:31-35; 10:30; 1 Jn. 3:9f)
* A recognition of a practical requirement—*to honour the gift for our devotion to Christ.* (Mk. 10:30; Jn. 13:34)
* A validation of genuine faith— *how we know we have passed from death to life.* (Jn. 13:35; 1 Jn. 3:10-18; 4:7)

## WHY—*the rule of conduct for the new creation community*

Because:

* God is love—*siblings are expected to model the Head of the household and love each other sincerely*. (1 Peter 1:22-23)
* You need to be loved—*love given is love needed.* (Matt. 22:37,39)
* You are not enough, you need your brothers. (1 Cor. 12; Gal. 6:10; Eph. 1:22-23; 4:1-3, 12-13, 15-16; Heb. 10:24-25)
* Being counter cultural in brotherly love is a magnet for the gospel. (Jn. 13:35)
* Any division strengthens the effectiveness of the enemy. (Eph. 4:26-27)
* Excellence in *Philadelphia* marks you out for glorious kingdom assignments. (Gen. 24:12-14,16; Ruth 3:10-11)

**HOW** – “*Treat others the same way you want them to treat you.”* (Jesus, cf. Lev. 19:18; Lk. 6:31)

 To excel at brotherly kindness, there are a few things you need to learn how to do…

* **Deal with social/civil disputes**--*Exhaust all dispute and disagreement resolution internally*—*don’t embarrass the Lord by taking family scuffles public.* (1 Cor. 6:1-7)

If any of you has a dispute with another, *do you dare to take it before the ungodly for judgment instead of before the Lord’s people?* **2**Or do you not know that *the Lord’s people will judge the world*? And if you are to judge the world, are you not competent to judge trivial cases? **3**Do you not know that we will judge angels? How much more the things of this life! **4**Therefore, if you have disputes about such matters, *do you ask for a ruling from those whose way of life is scorned in the church?* **5**I say this to shame you. Is it possible that there is nobody among you wise enough to judge a dispute between believers? **6**But instead, one brother takes another to court—and this in front of unbelievers! **7**The very fact that you have lawsuits among you means you have been completely defeated already. Why not rather be wronged? Why not rather be cheated?

* **Deal with anger against your brother**--*What you damage, fix!* (Matt 5:21-24)

**21**“You have heard that it was said to the people long ago, ‘You shall not murder, and anyone who murders will be subject to judgment.’ **22**But I tell you that *anyone who is angry with a brother or sister*will be subject to judgment. Again, anyone who says to a brother or sister, ‘Raca,’ is answerable to the court. And anyone who says, ‘You fool!’ will be in danger of the fire of hell.

**23**“Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there *remember that your brother or sister has something* ***against you***, **24**leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to them; then come and offer your gift.

* **Deal with disputable matters/liberties**--*Do not attack your brothers/sisters by weaponizing your many liberties or spiritualizing personal preferences*. (Rom. 14; Gal. 5:13-15)

Different sides of personal health, both lawful (exemptions/ non-exempt)—Gov’t says we can do life together!

**3**The one who eats everything (masks) must not treat with contempt the one who does not, and the one who does not eat everything (mask) must not judge the one who does, for **God has accepted them**. **4**Who are you to judge someone else’s servant? To their own master, servants stand or fall. And they will stand, for the Lord is able to make them stand.

**22**So whatever you believe about these things keep between yourself and God. Blessed is the one who does not condemn himself by what he approves. **23**But whoever has doubts is condemned if they eat, because their eating is not from faith; and everything that does not come from faith is sin. Rom. 14

* **Deal with temporary needs**--*Meet practical needs*. (Lk. 6:38; 2 Thes. 3:10; 1 Tim. 5:8; 1 Jn. 3:16-17)

**10**For even when we were with you, we gave you this rule: “The one who is unwilling to work shall not eat.” 2 Thes. 3:10

**8**Anyone who does not provide for their relatives, and especially for their own household, has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever. 1 Tim.5:8

**16**This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters. **17**If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person? 1 Jn. 3:16-17

* **Deal with accusations/misunderstandings**--*Instead of thinking the worst, always think the best—champion rescue, restoration, generous affection, and unity*. (Prov. 10:12; 1 Cor. 13:4-8; Eph. 4:1-4; Col. 3:14; 1 Pet. 4:8)

**4**Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. **5**It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. **6**Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. **7**It **always** protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. **8**Love never fails. 1 Cor. 13:4-8