

"Love As Brothers"

First Peter teaches us about our behavior and hope in a time of suffering. We are to patiently endure mistreatment (2:18-23). We are not to be ashamed to suffer as a Christian (4:14-16). We are to cast our care upon God, knowing He cares for us (5:7).

In several places, we are reminded to love the brotherhood.

"Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart" (1:22).

"Honor all people. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king" (2:17).

"Finally, all of you be of one mind, having compassion for one another; love as brothers, be tenderhearted, be courteous" (3:8).

In tumultuous times brethren may grow cold toward one another. This can happen when pressure is exerted from without the body of Christ, or from within. We are reminded, however, to maintain love for the brethren in these circumstances.

To love brethren, does not mean compromise with sin. Paul loved the Corinthians and Galatians, thus he admonished them to change their ways (2 Cor. 12:14-15; 13:1-3; Gal. 3:1; 4:16; 5:1-4). The "apostle of love," John, loved Diotrephes, but did not tolerate his sin (3 Jn. 9-11). God loves us, has done and continues to do what He can to help and encourage us, but He also rebukes us for our sins and demands we repent (Jn. 3:16; Jas. 1:21-22).

When going through difficult times, let us not compromise with error, nor let us compromise our love of the brotherhood. "Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another" (Rom. 12:10).

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