

Mutual affection

2 Peter 1:7



Small Group Study, week commencing 21st November 2022

For starters

Question: What do a city in Pennsylvania (USA), a cheese, and mutual affection have in common?

Answer: Philadelphia! Mutual affection (NIV) translates the Greek word *philadelphia*, which means brotherly love.

Additionally, some groups might like to get creative with this question: in what ways is Philadelphia Cheese like brotherly love?

Answers might include “It needs to be spread”, “It’s healthy” (apparently it’s a great source of vitamin A, low in lactose, and a good source of antioxidants), “It comes in different forms ...” (original, light, chives, sweet chilli ...).

Introduction

Peter continues to build up his equation for a fruitful Christian life, i.e.

<i>faith + goodness + knowledge + self-control + perseverance + godliness + mutual affection + love (verses 5-7)</i>	=	<i>effective and productive knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ (verse 8)</i>
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In this study we take a closer look at **mutual affection**.

Read

Read [2 Peter 1:3-7](#).

Study

1. The word *philadelphia* combines two Greek words which mean “love” (*philos*) and “brother” (*delphos*). What makes brotherly or sisterly love different from other kinds of love?
2. Read 1 Samuel 18:1-5ⁱ. Notice the reference to covenant (agreement, binding commitment) in verse 3. In what sense are natural siblings bound together in mutual commitment?

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3. “*Blood is thicker than water* is a proverb in English meaning that familial bonds will always be stronger than other relationships” (Wikipedia). Have you ever used that phrase? Do you agree with it?

4. For a moving illustration of brotherly love in action, take a look at <https://www.bbc.co.uk/sport/triathlon/37402716>, in which Alistair Brownlee helps brother Jonny over finish line in a dramatic World Series triathlon final. What were the implications for Alistair? For Jonny?

5. Read the following verses to remind yourselves of what our family connection to each other implies. What is your experience of giving these things? What is your experience of receiving these things?

- John 13:34
- Romans 12:10
- Romans 12:16
- Roman 15:7
- Romans 15:14
- 2 Corinthians 13:11
- Galatians 5:13
- Ephesians 4:2
- Hebrews 10:24

6. “And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters” (Romans 8:28-29). How does the knowledge that Jesus is a brother, albeit a preeminent one, affect your understanding of brotherly love?

7. As with much of this series, it’s not understanding the words that is challenging, but putting them into practice! Think of one way in which you can ‘make every effort’ (2 Peter 1:5) this week to add to your faith ‘mutual affection’.

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Maths

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Prayer

Reflecting on the implications of being brothers and sisters, pray for forgiveness (if it is needed), and for commitment to your 'one way' (question 7).

ⁱ As an aside, should it come up, there is no implication of homosexuality in this passage. Those who see it are reading the passage through the lens of modern culture.