

Love One Another!

Main Idea: Since you have been born again, live in the reality of your new nature by loving like your Heavenly Father.

Hereditary Characteristics and Traits

As many of you know, I have a wonderful dad! In fact, I would love to be just like him. As a kid, I spent a lot of time and energy attempting just that. However, there are a few things that just happened... traits that I inherited from my dad, without any effort at all.

For example, I got my dad's voice. I remember, as a kid, sitting by Dad in church and wondering why he was trying to be such a man by singing an octave lower than everyone else. Now I understand that it had nothing to do with his ego.

While I got his voice, my brother (Tyson) got my Dad's incredible metabolism and athletic body. He can eat whatever he wants and do just about anything he sets his mind to.

Another thing I got from my dad is his sense of humor, which virtually no one appreciates. Thankfully, I have an amazing wife who laughs at my jokes and tries to convince our kids that I am funny.

Again, while I got the short end of the stick in a faulty sense of humor... Tyson got Dad's great mind. A few Sundays ago you all saw a virtual tour of the New Building that Tyson put together. After the service, Vern Heinrichs came up to me and said, "I can't believe YOUR brother was smart enough to put that together!"

Like it or not, each of us has received characteristics from our dads. Thankfully, the same is true for those who have put their faith in Christ and have been adopted into God's family... They have received wonderful characteristics and traits from their Heavenly Father!

The New Testament is constantly calling us to live in the reality of the new nature we have received from our Heavenly Father and that is what we are going to be focusing on today as we look at 1 Peter.

Context

Before we read the passage, I want to give a brief summary of what has come before so that we understand these verses in their context.

In the first twelve verses Peter is primarily explaining the extravagant grace of God demonstrated toward us in Salvation! It is a beautiful passage packed full of God's magnificent grace!

At the beginning of verse thirteen, the word “Therefore” signals a significant transition from the amazing grace God has demonstrated, TO instruction regarding the appropriate response! (How the believer is to live in light of these incredible realities!)

Last week Michael talked about the first two commands in this book. The first is found in verse thirteen when it says, “...set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.” This is in contrast to setting hope on things like money, comfort, retirement, etc. These things are far too small, far too temporal, and setting our hope on them will only bring disappointment.

But the future completion of our salvation... The grace that we will receive when we see Jesus... That is worth setting our hope on! When we do, our current priorities and the way we live will be significantly impacted.

The second command, and the one that Michael spent most of his time on, is this, “As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, ¹⁵ but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct...”.

Peter goes on to talk about the precious blood of Christ as the ransom that was paid to redeem us from our old way of life. The section ends reminding us that our faith and hope are in God, who raised Jesus from the dead.

That is where we pick up with our study today, beginning in verse twenty-two...

1 Peter 1:22 – 2:3

²² Having purified your souls by your obedience to the truth for a sincere brotherly love, love one another earnestly from a pure heart, ²³ since you have been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God; ²⁴ for

“All flesh is like grass
and all its glory like the flower of grass.
The grass withers,
and the flower falls,
²⁵ but the word of the Lord remains forever.”

And this word is the good news that was preached to you.

¹ So put away all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander. ² Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up into salvation— ³ if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good.

Faith

The introductory phrase in verse 22 is a little confusing. At first glance, it looks like it is suggesting that these believers have purified themselves; that they have accomplished their own salvation. It says this, [“²² Having purified your souls by your obedience to the truth for a sincere brotherly love...”](#)

The surrounding context is very clear as to who has caused our salvation, and it's not us! It is the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit! The verse that came immediately before, just talked about the believer's faith being in God!

The phrase, “Your obedience to the truth”, is simply another way of saying “Your faith”. When you heard the truth; the Word; the Gospel, you responded in faith/obedience. The two are synonymous, in this context.

It is God who caused us to be born again. It is Jesus who paid the debt that we owed, and it is the Holy Spirit who cleansed us when we looked to Jesus; when we believed the good news; when we “obeyed the truth”.

Love One Another Earnestly

The next phrase is the main command or exhortation, in the segment we are looking at today. It says, [“love one another earnestly from a pure heart...”](#).

In other words, love each other eagerly, intensely, and authentically. Remember, biblical love is different from “love” as we define it today. We have cheapened this word and frequently use it in reference to things that are not really love. Often for things that are the complete opposite.

Biblical love is NOT lust. It isn't even synonymous with “like”. When we say things such as, “I love pizza”, we really mean “I LIKE pizza”. However, Biblical love does not equal “like”. It is possible to love someone without liking them.

Biblical love is an act of our will toward the good of another. It is choosing to be concerned about the interests of others!

We will come back to this and talk about it a bit more when we move into application. But first, why is this passage calling for an earnest love for one another?

Because It's Hereditary

Peter gives the main reason in verse twenty-three. He just said, [“love one another earnestly from a pure heart,”](#) and then he continues, [“²³ since you have been born again,”](#)

More literally, “since you have been begotten again”. It means, because you have been made new. You have been re-conceived, NOT refurbished or remodeled. You are a brand new creation. It's the idea we see so beautifully expressed in 2 Corinthians 5:17,

“¹⁷ Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.”

The reason Peter gives for loving one another earnestly is the fact of being born again; the reality of a new nature; the truth that the old has passed away, behold the new has come!

This is further developed as we continue in the passage. It goes on to specify who we have been born of, and thus, who our new nature comes from...

“²³ since you have been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God;

In other words, when you were born the first time, it was of your earthly father (perishable seed). However, when you were born again, it was of your Heavenly Father (imperishable seed)! Your first birth was by the perishable seed of man. Your second birth was by the imperishable Word of God!

Peter continues to point to the contrasts between the first and second births; the perishable and the imperishable, as he continues in verses 24 and 25, beginning with a quote from Isaiah 40... *“²⁴ for*

*“All flesh is like grass
and all its glory like the flower of grass.
The grass withers,
and the flower falls,
²⁵ but the word of the Lord remains forever.”*

And this word is the good news that was preached to you.

What does all of this have to do with loving one another earnestly? Simply said, Peter is saying, love one another earnestly from a pure heart, BECAUSE IT'S HEREDITARY! You have been born again; begotten; re-conceived by God! He is now your Father. For real! And you have received his unmatched, incomparable love, as part of your new nature. Love earnestly because you have inherited that trait from your Heavenly Father. It is hereditary. It's who you are!

John expresses the same idea in 1 John 4:7...

“⁷ Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God.”

Again, the reason we should love one another earnestly is because love is at the core of our new nature. The nature we inherited from our Heavenly Father. The one who loved us enough to sacrifice His only Son, while we were his enemies, so that we could be given new life and the sure hope of future grace!

You've inherited an incredibly loving nature. It is already a reality... Walk in it! Love like your Father!

Main Idea: Since you have been born again, live in the reality of your new nature by loving like your Heavenly Father.

Put Away the Old Nature

Verse one, of chapter two compliments the exhortation to love one another earnestly by instructing the readers to put away the old ways of relating to each other. [“So put away all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander.”](#)

This is a list of things that are all part of our old sin nature. They are all toxic and destructive; completely incompatible with love; actually the exact opposite of love.

In order to truly love, these tendencies of our old nature must be put away. Peter says, because of God’s incredible work, you are no longer that person. Stop acting like it and instead live in the reality of your new nature, and love like your Father.

Let the Word Continue To Grow You Up

In verse two and three Peter gives further motivation. [“² Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk,”](#). Based on the context, I believe the pure spiritual milk that Peter is talking about is God’s Word. Peter is encouraging his readers to desire God’s Word like infants crave milk!

I will never forget what I learned when Gregory was a baby. He would wake up multiple times a night (it felt like every hour) and act like he hadn’t been fed in a week. I would partially wake up, stumble over to his crib, pick him up, and carry him to Christine, where he would nurse.

The most challenging part of that routine was transporting Gregory from his crib to Christine. He was desperate for milk and wasn’t very discerning when trying to locate it. I quickly learned that I needed to protect myself and carry him in such a way that my chest was not accessible to his desperate lips, which had a shocking amount of suction power.

This isn’t something unique to Gregory. Babies are generally pretty crazy about milk and their mom’s breast milk does wonders to keep them healthy and to help them grow!

Peter is saying that a believer should long for God’s Word like an infant longs for milk. Why? He continues with an explanation, [“... that by it you may grow up into salvation”](#)

The reason we are to long for God’s Word like infants long for milk is because it plays a key role in God’s gracious plan to grow us up into salvation.

The Word of God is both the seed that brings new birth AND the milk that grows us up. God uses the Word in both our conversion AND our sanctification!

That leads us into verse three, a final piece of motivation. Peter has basically said, long for the Word and the result of the Word, and then he continues in verse three... [“³ if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good.”](#)

Have you tasted the goodness and grace of the Lord? Have you experienced the salvation and new life, birthed in you by the seed of God's Word? Have you been born again?

If yes, then don't stop there! You've tasted that it is good and there is so much more! Long for; devour; feed frequently on and apply the Word, so that through it, you will grow up into salvation. The salvation that was purchased for you, with the precious blood of Christ!

Do you see how this connects back to the command to love one another earnestly? God's Word is calling us to live in the reality of our new loving nature, inherited from our Father. Have you been disappointed with the Grace you received when you heard and responded initially to the Gospel? No? Then go on responding to the Word in faith; in obedience and...

...live in the reality of your new nature by loving like your Heavenly Father.

Application

I would like to spend a couple minutes looking more specifically at how we might apply this passage.

First, have you been born again? Each of us inherited a sin nature from our earthly fathers that separates us from God and ultimately leads to destruction. However, in an incredible act of love, God paid our ransom, so that we could be redeemed from sin, adopted into His family, and given eternal life! The price of our ransom was not mere silver or gold; Or billions of US dollars. It was the precious blood of Christ!

THAT is the love He has shown us! Will you look to Him and rely on Jesus for your redemption? When you do, you are instantly born again, cleansed by the Holy Spirit, adopted into God's family, and given a new nature!

Second, If you have already been born again, are you living in the reality of your new nature by loving one another earnestly? Are you loving like your Heavenly Father?

This is the call of God's Word this morning. It is a call to live in the reality of who we are by loving like our Father! It is a good, loving, and gracious call. It leads to freedom and life. If you have tasted that the Lord is good, don't brush of this call! You know it is good!

There are many ways to love one another, but I want to just mention a few. First, we know that love forgives, for that is the kind of love God has shown us! Are you struggling to forgive a wrong that a fellow believer has inflicted? Maybe you have become resentful or even bitter? The call this morning is to love like our Heavenly Father who forgave us, when we owed Him a far greater debt!

Another way that love manifests itself is in looking out for the interests of others? Do we do that? Are we obsessed with ourselves and the things that relate to us or are we concerned about others? If we have been born again, looking out for the interests of others is part of our new nature. We inherited it from our Father!

Do we look for opportunities to show hospitality; do we serve; do we sacrifice for each other?

Do we show this love to everyone or just those who love us? Or just those we like? Maybe just those with whom we are comfortable?

Love

As we close, I would like to read the description of love that we find in 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 and I would encourage you to consider meditating on this passage this week. Consider how God might be calling you to love more like your Father.

“⁴ Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant ⁵ or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; ⁶ it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. ⁷ Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.”

This is the nature of our Heavenly Father! This is the nature we have inherited from Him!

Main Idea: Since you have been born again, live in the reality of your new nature by loving like your Heavenly Father.