

Loving the Brethren

We may sometimes find it difficult to have a true love for others, even our brethren. When Paul wrote the brethren in Thessalonica, it was evident that he cared for them. He had established the church when he was on his second missionary journey (Acts 17:1-11). He went on to Corinth and eventually wrote the two epistles for the brethren in Thessalonica (and us). Scholars tell us these letters can be dated about 50-51 A.D. If you are searching for Thessalonica, it is on the Macedonian peninsula near the Aegean Sea.

When Paul began the first letter, it was quite evident that he wanted the best for those brethren. He desired for them grace and peace “from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Thessalonians 1:1). This is certainly an indication of his love for them. What was it about the church that made it easy for Paul to love them?

To start with, they were the church, and they were “in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.” He was always giving thanks for them (v. 2). If you are thanking God for someone, it’s pretty hard not to love them, too. He could easily love them because he remembered their work of faith, their labor of love and their steadfastness (v. 3). He could love them because they had become followers of the Lord (v. 6)

Paul could love the brethren in Thessalonica because they were good examples (vv.7-8). He could also love them because they, too, were looking forward to the coming of the Lord (v. 9-10).

We sometimes focus on the negative aspects in the lives of our brethren. We notice flaws in the attitudes of others. We need to be looking for the good! It seems that was the apostle Paul’s approach. If we do not see the good in others, our love may fade.

Remember, we are all God’s creatures. We “are made in the likeness of God” (James 3:9). Also remember, as Christians, we are all in Christ (Galatians 3:26-27). If we are children of God who make up the household of God, we have a special relationship. We are brothers and sisters in Christ. I need to remember that my brothers and sisters are struggling to follow God and do His will just as I am trying to do likewise. They need encouragement just like I do. Hopefully, we are all anticipating going to heaven together at the end of time. **Let us love one another like we are going to spend eternity together.**

By: Paul Clements