

## BROTHERLY LOVE

According to **2 Peter 1:5-11**, another important element that Jesus wants us to add to our faith is brotherly kindness. This is from the two Greek words PHILIA (“love”) and ADELPHOS (“brother”) that combine to make PHILADELPHIA (literally, “brotherly love”).

**Romans 12:9-10** uses three different Greek words for love: AGAPE, PHILADELPHIA, and PHILOSTORGE. We will look at AGAPE next week, if the Lord wills. PHILOSTORGE is actually a compound of two words for love: PHILO (“love”) and STORGE (natural family love).

**Rom. 12:9** says our love (AGAPE) is to be without hypocrisy. **Rom. 12:10** says that we should have a natural love for each other because we are family.

There is really nothing different between AGAPE and PHILIA as they are used in scripture. In fact these words are used interchangeably in **John 21:15-19**.

Jesus asks three times, “Do you love Me?” Twice He used AGAPAO, and He used PHILEO the last time. John recognizes that the words mean the same kind of love. Peter implies the words are the same in his answer each time. Peter answered, “Yes, You know that I love (PHILEO) You.”

If Peter believed in the exaggerated distinction between AGAPAO and PHILEO commonly made in modern commentaries, he would have answered, “No, Lord; You know I only like You.”

This is not to say there is no difference in meaning. It is to say that the difference is in the emphasis, not in the type of love.

The distinction in Peter’s second letter is the object of the brotherly love. It is the love you have for another because he is a brother. Our common faith and all spiritual blessings we share bind us together with a bond stronger than physical family blood. Charity, or love, is for all people, even our enemies, because of who we are and the love of God abiding in us by faith.

Both forms of love are good and necessary. Both words are used to command our love for God (**1 Cor. 16:22** and **Matt. 22:37**) and for our brethren (**Rom. 12:9-10**).

Let us love because God first loved us (**1 John 4:19**) and love our brethren because they are family (**Rom. 12:10**).