



Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

The city of brotherly love

Philadelphia is the Greek word for brotherly love.

1 Thessalonians 4:9–10

“But concerning **brotherly love** you have no need that I should write to you, for you yourselves are taught by God to love one another; and indeed you do so toward all the **brethren** who are in all Macedonia. But we urge you, brethren, that you increase more and more.”

One Distinguishing Feature

- **Purity**
- “Having **purified** your souls by your obedience to the truth for a sincere brotherly love, love one another earnestly from a **pure heart**, since you have been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God” (1 Pet 1:22–23, ESV).

Brotherly love...

- Is supposed to be pure, free from any pollutants, free from anything that would taint or poison this love.
- Let's identify some of those pollutants from which brotherly love should be free.

Pure brotherly love...

- **Free from hypocrisy.**
 - “Let love be without hypocrisy” (Rom. 12:9).
 - “Let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth” (1 John 3:18).
 - Nothing pretend about it; brotherly love ought to be real or genuine.

Pure brotherly love...

- **Free from reproach.**
 - Just like our Father, “who gives to all liberally and without reproach” (James 1:5).
 - “God loves a cheerful giver” (2 Cor. 9:7).
 - Brethren receive enough reproach from the world (Luke 6:22); they should expect better from one another.

Pure brotherly love...

- **Free from selfishness.**
 - And so it gives “preference to one another” (Romans 12:10).
 - “Willing to yield” (James 3:17).
 - Willing to forgive (Matt. 18:21–35).
 - Doesn’t seek anything in return (Luke 14:12–14).

Pure brotherly love...

- Free from other fruits of selfishness, like bitterness and vengefulness.
 - “Let all bitterness...be put away from you” (Ephesians 4:31).
 - “Love your wives and do not be bitter toward them” (Col. 3:19).
 - “Do not avenge yourselves... overcome evil with good” (Rom. 12:19, 21).

Pure brotherly love...

- Free from envy, which is another product of selfishness (James 3:14, 16).
 - “Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another” (Gal. 5:26).
 - “Love...does not envy” (1 Cor. 13:4).

Pure brotherly love...

- **Free from partiality.**
 - “But the wisdom that is from above is...without partiality” (James 3:17).
 - “Do not hold the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ...with partiality (James 2:1).
 - Must show love for “all the saints” (Philemon 1:5; Eph. 1:15; Col. 1:4).

Pure brotherly love...

- **Free from attachment to this world.**
 - Puts a premium on the welfare of each other's souls.
 - Teach, comfort, and encourage one another.
 - But also to rebuke, warn, and admonish.
 - All in the interest of helping each other “stand perfect and complete in all the will of God” (Col. 4:12).

Conclusion

- **According to Hebrews 2:11–12, Jesus is our brother.**
 - And so we know at least one brother whose love is perfectly pure.
 - Father, help us not only to show brotherly love, but to show THAT brother's love.
 - “But we urge you, brethren, that you increase more and more” (1 Thess. 4:10).