

**TITLE: "Marks of the Believer's Birthright"**

**PASSAGE: 1 Peter 3:8**

**THEME: *Partakers of grace give evidence of grace***

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**By way of introduction, please turn to Matt. chapt 7 (13ff.)**

Jesus is giving a warning ==>

13 "Enter by the narrow gate; for the gate is wide, and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and many are those who enter by it. 14 "For the gate is small, and the way is narrow that leads to life, and few are those who find it.

What's the lesson? All roads don't lead to heaven. In fact, not all roads branded "Xn" lead to heaven. There's only 1 way to eternal life, that way is narrow, that way comes through JC, and few are those who find it.

He goes on in v. 15 ==>

15 "Beware of the false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves. 16 "You will know them by their fruits.

He gives an illustration: **Grapes are not gathered from thorn bushes, nor figs from thistles, are they?**

No, if you want grapes you look where? Grape vine. Grape vines produce grapes, thorn bushes produce thorns.

Verse 17 ==>

17 "Even so, every good tree bears good fruit; but the bad tree bears bad fruit.

In fact ==> 18 "A good tree cannot produce bad fruit, nor can a bad tree produce good fruit.

The fruit isn't the issue. The tree's the issue.

19 "Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. [judgement] 20 "So then, you will know them by their fruits.

Again, t/fruit (works/deeds) aren't the issue.

In fact, a bad tree (unregenerate heart) cannot bring forth good deeds (good fruit). So it's not a matter of being religious enough, or good enough, or doing the right things.

In fact, there will always be those who look religious on the outside, but are yet unregenerate bad trees on the inside. What does Jesus say in v. 21?

21 “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven; but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven. 22 “Many will say to Me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?’ 23 “And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness.’”

Isn't that interesting? Here are those who call Him Lord // prophesied in his name, cast out demons, did miracles. Yet, Jesus refers to them as those who produce "bad fruit" - those who (v. 23) "practice lawlessness."

What's the difference? What's the diff. between t/one who does good and t/one who does evil? Can you tell by the fruit? Yes. But not always w/absolute certainty.

So it goes back to v. 23 & Jesus words "I never knew you." To know JC is to be known by Him. It's to be called // elect // justified // regenerate // heir. Again, it goes back to t/nature of t/tree. Bad trees are those whom J. never knew. Good trees are those whom J. knew from all eternity, those whom He called.

## Judas was a "bad tree"

Remember, in John 13 Jesus washes t/disciples feet. An act of great service & humility. Then, Jesus says ==>

17 "If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them. 18 "I do not speak of all of you. I know the ones I have chosen; but it is that the Scripture may be fulfilled, 'He who eats My bread has lifted up his heel against Me.'

Jesus never knew Judas. Judas was a false prophet, a counterfeit believer, a worker of lawlessness. In t/end his deeds confirmed t/state of his heart.

## I want you to see two things here

There's the call. Then there's conduct. The call is God's work. It's t/call to eternal life. That call was worked out in eternity when God t/Father decreed to send God t/Son as payment for those whom He would later purchase in time. And God t/Spirit would come & quicken t/hearts of those men & women who were spiritual corpses, so that they would believe t/Gospel & be saved. That's t/call.

But there's also conduct. BTIM - those whom God has truly called and who are converted will demonstrate that conversion by their conduct, by what they believe & how they behave.

Conduct Confirms Calling. How you behave & what you believe is a barometer of spiritual birth. See that t/o Scripture.

John t/Baptist warned t/Pharisees to bring forth deeds in keeping w/true repentance. James warned his readers that if their faith had no works, that faith was dead. It gives evidence of a dead, unregenerate heart. 1 John is filled w/admonitions to those who profess X, that their profession must be orthodox & that their behavior was indicative of their heart.

## What does the barometer of God's Word say to your beliefs & your behavior?

How do you act? How do you act toward those whom you are in sympathy with, such as friends. Even more telling, how do you act toward those who are adversaries. How does your behavior & belief line up when things aren't going well, when you're going through tough times.

These are t/issues that Peter now addresses in 1 Peter chapter 3 . . .

### Read Passage

One of the things we can glean from this passage ==>

Partakers of grace give evidence of grace. Graced people are gracious people.

Those whom God has called are inherently different than those whom He has not called. They will embrace t/Gospel w/their hearts as well as their heads. They will demonstrate different attitudes than t/lost. Attitudes of love for one another & forgiveness for those who hurt them.

As a rather small child I remember walking through the neighborhood with my mom and dad. An older man who was sitting outside visiting with one of the neighbors called out to my mom as we walked by. He was a friend of the family whom she had not seen for years. Even though he had not seen her since she was a girl, he recognized her by a birthmark on her leg. The mark on her leg served to identify her.

What sorts of things identify t/genuine believer in JC?

### *I. Marks of the Believer's Birthright (8-12)*

Those things that identify us as being one born of God & thus those who will inherit t/blessing of v. 9.

In antiquity, t/birthright was given to the firstborn. It generally involved a double-share of t/family inheritance. Cf. Deut. 21.

In t/OT, this was a family issue, a custom. It was largely a physical matter.

When I refer to birthright as it relates to t/believer, I'm talking about a spiritual matter. For t/believer, t/birthright is t/guarantee of a future inheritance. Cf. 1 Peter chapter 1 {read vv. 3-5}

## I. Marks of the Believer's Birthright (8-12)

What are some indicators that one is a Jacob, not an Esau?

There are 5.

### A. The Mark of Love: *How do I Act Toward Friends?* (8)

**Finally**, [NASB has "to sum up"] Peter is drawing a conclusion to what he's been addressing from 2:11 to 3:7 {quickly sum up}

With all this in mind ==>

**Finally, in everything be . . .**

What follows is a series of five adjectives (with no verb) to the end of the verse.

**of one mind, sympathetic, brotherly love, tenderhearted, humble.**

These 5 adjectives function as imperatives (commands).

**Finally, in everything be of one mind, sympathetic, brotherly love, tenderhearted, humble.**

## <1. Chiasm>

The way v. 8 is structured literarily is called a chiasm, or chiasmus. Quite common, esp. in t/OT. A chiasm takes it's name for t/Greek letter "Chi" which is t/first letter in t/Gk. name "Christ." A "Chi" looks like an English "X." A Chiastic pattern follows the curvature of the side of t/X.

### <a. Made up Chiastic pattern>

A Today we will celebrate God's goodness  
    B We will worship in song  
        C We will hear God's Word  
    B We will sing praises to His name  
A Today we will celebrate God's goodness

### <b. Verse 8>

A Of one mind  
    |  
    |    B Sympathetic  
    |    |  
    |    |    **C Brotherly Love**  
    |    |  
    |    B Tenderhearted  
    |  
A Humble

Of one mind & Humility (first/last) parallel to ea. other, as do t/middle sympathetic & tenderhearted. Love is at t/center. I think it's t/main focus of t/verse. T/rest, **being of one mind, sympathetic, tenderhearted, humility**, are elements of that love, (help define what this love looks like).

## **A. The Mark of Love: How do I Act Toward Friends? (8)**

Since t/central idea is "love" I'm going to go ahead and address that aspect of verse 8 first. There in t/middle of t/verse.

### **Finally, in everything be . . . brotherly love . . .**

I know that's a bit awkward. [NASB has "brotherly"; most other translations have "love as brethren" or "loving as brothers"]

### **<2. Word is φιλάδελφος - adjective used only here in NT>**

Word originally referred to t/common love brothers & sisters shared. In Xnty it came to be used of t/family love that believers share.

### **<a. This isn't the first time we've seen this in 1 Peter>**

In 2:17 we're exhorted to "love the brotherhood."

### **<(1) Before that, in chapter 1:22> (turn there)**

**Having purified your souls by obedience to the truth for a sincere love of the brethren, fervently love each other from a pure heart.**

### **<(a) This is one of the central truths of the NT - We are to love one another>**

John 13:34-35 "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. "By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

1 John 3:23 **And this is His commandment, that we believe in the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, just as He commanded us.**

There's no doubt in anyone's mind that we are to love each other. Yet, what does that flow out of? What is the fuel for that sort of thing?

If we unwrap 1 John 3:14 we find t/answer==>

1 John 3:14 **We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brethren . . .**

It's another way of saying that t/result of genuine salvation is love for other believers. Why John could say in chapter 4 ==>

**The one who does not love [his brother] does not know God . . .**

It's a fruit, an evidence of t/Holy Spirit's work in our hearts. In that regard, it heads t/list in Galatians 5 (fruit of the Spirit is . . . )

Remember that God saved you for that very thing; He saved you that you would love one another.

**<(b) Our salvation is fuel for the fire of brotherly love>**

That's what Peter is saying==>

**Having purified your souls by obedience to the truth . . .**

That's your salvation! Your "soul" (ψυχή) HAS BEEN purified.

**<i. Perfect Active Participle>**

Perfect tense points to a past action w/continuing results. Your soul has been purified, how pure is your love for your brother's and sisters?

**<(c) Four characteristics of this kind of love: sincere; brotherly; fervent; pure>**

**<i. First: Our love is to be sincere>**

This is another way of saying that it is to be "non-hypocritical." Romans 12:9-10 captures this so very well ==>



Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil; cling to what is good. Be devoted to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one another in honor; This is sincere love. It is w/o hypocrisy; it clings to what is good; it is devoted in brotherly love; it prefers the other person in honor.

### <ii. Second: Our love is to be brotherly>

[it's] a sincere love of the brethren . . . ("love of the brethren" = 1 word)  
Latin Vulgate translates it w/the word "fraternitalis" (fraternity).

That's the idea - it's the word φιλαδελφία (brotherly love). This word is related to the word we saw in 3:8. In chapter 3 it's an adj. Here it's a noun. But they carry t/same sort of idea, one of brotherly love.

Our relationships in t/CH are to be marked w/same kind of consideration & purity that marks a godly family.

We are a fraternity; a fraternity of t/redeemed.

### <iii. Third: Our love is to be fervent>

Peter uses t/same word later, in 4:8 - Above all, keep fervent in your love for one another, because love covers a multitude of sins.

ἐκτενῶς – comes from the verb τεινω, to stretch. Has t/idea of intense strain, being stretched. It's to be passionate, but not only passionate, also consistent. IOW - it's t/kind of love that has an intensity about it. It goes t/distance, it lasts. It's not a wimpy, overly emotive. It's a love w/depth.

### <iv. Fourth: Our love is to be pure (from a pure heart)>

[we have been redeemed] for a sincere love of the brethren, fervently love each other from a pure heart. (our love is to be pure).

Our love is to be pure, or from a pure heart, or from the heart. It's from a heart that is καθαρος (catharsis - purification of bad emotions)

Idea of having a "Pure heart" rich background in OT (esp. Psalms) ==>  
Psalm 24 [where psalmist asks] **Who may ascend into the hill of the Lord? And who may stand in His holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart...**  
Psalm 51:10 [following David's sin w/Bathsheba] **Create in me a clean (or pure) heart, O God . . .**  
Psalm 73:1 **Surely God is good to Israel, [qualifies it:] To those who are pure in heart!**

Not absent from NT==>

Matt. 5:8 [6th beatitude] **Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.**

## ***I. Marks of the Believer's Birthright (8-12)***

### ***A. The Mark of Love: How do I Act Toward Friends? (8)***

Friends is the emphasis here as we see from the context (verse 9).

1 Thessalonians 4:9 **Now as to the love of the brethren, you have no need for anyone to write to you, for you yourselves are taught by God to love one another.**

What does that mean? How is one "taught by God to love". It's something God writes on the heart of the believer.

Jeremiah 31:33 [N.C.] . . . **"I will put My law within them, and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.**

## **<3. Love characterizes the genuine believer>**

### **<a. Love for God>**

Paul says that if anyone does not love the Lord, let Him be anathema.

We remember Luther who, B4 his conversion, hated God. This love for God is characteristic of genuine believers, not religionists.

## <b. Love for His Word>

The Psalmist declares in Psalm 119: "I shall delight in thy commandments, which I love."

## <c. Love for the Gospel>

To be saved is to receive "the love of the truth" according to 2 Thess. 2:10.

## <d. Love for the lost>

1 Thess. 3:12 - we are to have love not only for one another, but for all men, those who are lost.

## <e. Love for the Brethren>

1JO 3:14 We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love abides in death.

2:9 The one who says he is in the light and yet hates his brother is in the darkness until now.

4:8 The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love.

4:20 If someone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for the one who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen.

5:2 By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and observe His commandments.

1JO 5:13 These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, in order that you may know that you have eternal life.

Partakers of grace give evidence of grace. Graced people are gracious people.

## I. Marks of the Believer's Birthright (8-12)

### A. The Mark of Love: *How do I Act Toward Friends?* (8)

We noted that t/rest of t/verse gives us elements of what this love looks like. There are 4 such elements.

**1. First Element of this Love: Unity** back to t/beginning of t/verse  
**Finally, in everything be of one mind . . .**

**a. Be ὁμόφρονος (only here in NT)**

Word that means "to think the same," "To be like-minded." It's a word that has to do w/the mind, not sentiment.

Listen, we can all think whatever we want & just share some emotional sentiment of good intentions. That's not what's in mind here. This is t/MIND. This relates to what we objectively believe to be true. Out of that common belief comes a peaceful co-existence.

**b. There is no real unity apart from the Gospel**

That's why I loath ecumenicism as I do. It's an attempt toward unity apart from truth.

*"Didn't Jesus pray that we would be one?"* Yes, but not apart from truth.  
"Sanctify them in truth, Thy Word is truth"

As Spurgeon noted in his day ==>

Unity without truth is hazardous. Our Lord's prayer in John 17 must be read in its full context. Only those sanctified through the Word can be one in Christ. To teach otherwise is to betray the gospel. [C.H. Spurgeon, cited in The Berean Call, April 1996]

"Hang 'unity' if the truth of the gospel is at stake." [Martin Luther]

Our doctrine, our common belief in the Gospel, must unite us.

Phil. 1:27 ==> our unity is to be centered on our striving for truth of t/Gospel.

**(1) We know that the history of the church is a history of much disunity**

**(a) That's the legacy of the fall**

If there were no sin there would be no disunity. People are sinful and as long as they make up part of t/equation you're going to have problems. There's a lot that goes into this. You have immature CH's; // doctrinally weak CHs // Apostate CHs. Even in good CHs you have sinful people who, even at their best, often leave much to be desired. Not to mention tares among t/wheat.

**(b) All of this is not only true today, true in history, was true in the first century while apostles still roamed the earth!**

Corinthian CH could have been the poster child of disunity. The Corinthian CH was t/planted & nurtured by no less than TAP himself!

They had factions that were personality driven. Some aligned themselves w/Paul; others with Peter; others with Apollos; and still others (super-spiritual) w/X. There was selfishness and immorality. Doctrinal confusion. Influence of false teachers.

Paul's first letter to them came with this admonition==>

1:10 **Now I exhort you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all agree, and there be no divisions among you, but you be made complete in the same mind and in the same judgment.**

Interestingly, some 50 yrs later, Clement of Rome wrote to this same CH: **Ye are fond of contention, brethren, and full of zeal about things which do not pertain to salvation.** That's where much contention comes from, things not related to t/Gospel (arguing about music; how much money to spend on new carpeting)

Clement's advice ==>

Look carefully into the Scriptures, which are the true utterances of the Holy Spirit. Observe that nothing of an unjust or counterfeit character is written in them. – 1 Epistle of Clement, Chapter 45.

Clement would agree that unity comes from truth.

It also comes by God's grace (Rom. 15:5) ==>

Now may the God who gives perseverance and encouragement grant you (διδωμι - "give you") to be of the same mind with one another according to Christ Jesus;

We pray God graciously grant us unity even as we strive to maintain it!

BTW - I talked to a man just t/other night who told me about how t/CH he was attending had made some wholesale changes, basically adopting a "seeker" mentality. Ended up splitting t/CH (was t/third CH split he had experienced in that same body). People were angry // hurt // many dropped out of ministry all together.

This is more and more t/norm. It's ironic that as CH's choose to put aside truth, the result ends up being more disunity.

I like what the old Baptist theologian John Gill wrote about this ==>

" . . . of sameness of judgment with respect to the doctrines and ordinances of the Gospel, in which saints should be perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment; for as the church is but one body, of which Christ is the head, there should be but one mind in it; even as there is but one Spirit of God, who convinces, enlightens, and leads into truth; and but one heart and way, given to fear the Lord; and there is but one hope of our calling, or to which we are called; and one way to it, and therefore ought to agree in everything respecting the way, the truth, and the life; though in things which do not, should bear with one another; and there is but one Lord, who gives the same laws and ordinances to one as to another, and which are to be kept alike by all; and

there is but one faith, one doctrine of faith, which is uniform and all of a piece, and but one rule and standard of faith, the sacred Scriptures, and but one baptism, to be administered in the same way, and upon the same sort of subjects, and in the same name of the Father, Son, and Spirit; and but one God and Father of all; all belong to the same family, and [he concludes] therefore should preserve a unity of spirit and mind, and speak the same things; which is necessary to carry on the worship of God, honourably and regularly, to the glorifying of him, and for the peace, comfort, and safety of the churches of Christ . . ." [Gill]

Growth in godliness, spiritual maturity, t/HS working through t/truth of t/preached and taught Word, brings unity. Also brings wisdom as to where to draw t/line on secondary issues.

That's t/beauty of Clarkson. We have leaders that know t/difference between zeal for t/Gospel & charity toward others who may believe differently on secondary matters. We have unity here, not uniformity. Uniformity is conformity. It means that you must think this way whether you want to or not. Unity comes by way of God's Spirit as God's people are steeped in sound doctrine.

Partakers of grace give evidence of grace. Graced people are gracious people.

## ***I. Marks of the Believer's Birthright (8-12)***

### ***A. The Mark of Love: How do I Act Toward Friends? (8)***

**Finally, in everything be of one mind . . .**

### **2. Second Element of this Love: Sympathy**

**. . . in everything be sympathetic . . .**

### a. Here we have the word συμπαθεῖς

From συν (with) & πασχω. (to suffer). It's to suffer alongside of someone else.

The verb form of this word is used in Heb. 4:15 Christ ==>

For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin.

JC can sympathize with us. He suffered for us. Since he has suffered for us & knows all matters of suffering, when we suffer He knows what we're going through.

Same word is used later in Hebrews (10:34) =>

For you showed sympathy to the prisoners, and accepted joyfully the seizure of your property, knowing that you have for yourselves a better possession and an abiding one.

The parallel to sympathy is ==>

### 3. Third Element: Compassion

**Finally, in everything be of one mind, sympathetic, brotherly love, tenderhearted . . .**

**tenderhearted,** (εὐσπλαγχνοί)

### a. From the prefix ευ and the word σπλανγχνον

Was a word used by Hypocrates, the father of medicine, of "healthy intestines." We feel things in the pit of our stomachs. We talk more about the heart. In antiquity they not only talked about the heart, but also the bowels. "I can feel it in my gut" - "Having a gut feeling."



To be tenderhearted or compassionate.

We should all be like Siamese twins - ever wonder what it would be like to be one of those??!! I remember reading as a child about two beautiful young women who were joined at the hip and who both later married. I'm not going to even go there!

Of course, one when twin hurts, so does the other. Same in the body of X.

1CO 12:26 **And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; if {one} member is honored, all the members rejoice with it.**

Hebrews 13:3 **Remember the prisoners, as though in prison with them, and those who are ill-treated, since you yourselves also are in the body.**

The cost of sympathy and compassion // love . . . There is a cost. I hate hurting for others. I know how difficult it is when one of my family members hurts, or is facing some great trial. (Cf. my mom two years ago.) I feel the same thing for those in the church! That's not in and of itself "fun." Something I think about all the time - the personal cost of love. "sympathy."

2 Corinthians 11:29 **Who is weak without my being weak? Who is led into sin without my intense concern?**

LUK 10:33 **"But a certain Samaritan, who was on a journey, came upon him; and when he saw him, he felt compassion,**

JAM 2:13 **For judgment {will be} merciless to one who has shown no mercy; mercy triumphs over judgment.**

Partakers of grace give evidence of grace. Graced people are gracious people.

#### **4. Fourth Element: Humility** *(parallels the first, unity, same mind)*

**Finally, in everything be . . . . humble.**

Much like today, humility was scorned in the Greco-Roman world.

Literally, to be bowed down in mind. This speaks of an internal attitude rather than external appearance. No self-promotion, no desiring to make a name for oneself.

Oswald Chambers wrote:

"We have a tendency to look for wonder in our experience, and we mistake heroic actions for real heroes. It's one thing to go through a crisis grandly, yet quite another to go through every day glorifying God when there is no witness, no limelight, and no one paying even the remotest attention to us. If we are not looking for halos, we at least want something that will make people say, 'What a wonderful man of prayer he is!' or 'What a great woman of devotion she is!' If you are properly devoted to the Lord Jesus, you have reached the lofty height where no one would ever notice you personally. All that is noticed is the power of God coming though you all the time. We want to be able to say, 'Oh, I have had a wonderful call from God!' But to do even the most humbling task to the glory of God takes the Almighty God Incarnate working in us." [cited in Swindoll, 125]

Battle for humility. Pray that I be humble and wise. Pray that I be able to balance my passion for God and the Gospel with humility.

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**"Marks of the Believer's Birthright"**

Partakers of grace give evidence of grace. Graced people are gracious people.

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There is an apocryphal story about a man who had two visions, a vision of hell followed by a vision of heaven.

In the first vision, that of hell, he saw a large ornate banquet table with all kinds of lavish food and drink. It was a beautiful scene. But all those sitting around the table were emaciated with sunken eyes and hollow cheeks.. The food had not been eaten for their arms were like long forks – too long for them to bend their elbows to reach their mouths. They were frustrated and angry in their eternal attempt to satisfy their craving for that which was in front of them, but was impossible to consume. Satan sat at the head of the table laughing hysterically.

In the second vision, that of heaven, he saw a similar scene. There again was the banquet table with all kinds of food and drink. At the head of the table was the Lord, Jesus Christ. He was smiling. Around the table were the saints. They were robust and healthy, filled with joy. But how could this be? They, too, had arms like long forks, arms which were too long to feed themselves. But then, the man looked again. They were not feeding themselves. They were happily extending their arms across the table to feed one another.

Yes, graced people are gracious people.