

Gospel Disconnect series #4: Romans 12:10 - Homegroup study questions

By Phil Bailey

Theme: Brotherly/sisterly devotion to one another and honouring one another more highly than selves.

Aim: To see each other rightly, as blood relatives and firstborn sons (in Christ), and love/honour each other more in line with who we are.

- 1) As noted in the sermon, the particular kind of love Paul has in mind in v.10 is brotherly love or love between siblings (see for e.g. ESV, NASB or KJV as translations that bring this out). What does *devoted* love between siblings look like at it's best (in the world in general, not specifically within the church)?
- 2) Again, as noted in the sermon, honour is related to the value you set on something or someone. At our best, how do we show honour to those whom we value highly in British culture?
- 3) Paul urges us to offer our bodies in worship of God (12:1), implying everything we are and do, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week! V.2 suggests that we will be able to offer our bodies in a way that pleases God as our minds are renewed (by his Word and Spirit). Look at the following snippets of Romans and discuss how God's mercy in these passages should reshape the way view one another in the church:
 - Romans 3:21-26
 - Romans 8:14-17

N.B. the sermon highlighted how all within the church family are blood relatives, because we are made brothers and sisters through Christ's blood. This tie unites us even more closely than kinship with our biological families, because Christ's blood is more precious and belonging to God's family is a higher honour. The sermon also highlighted how we all share the honoured status of firstborn sons (8:15-17 – see NIV footnote f), because we are co-heirs with Christ to the kingdom of God. We will inherit the new heaven and earth with him and reign with him (cf. 2 Tim 2:12). So we could not be more highly honoured by God than we are in Christ! As we look at each other, around the church, we are looking upon God's heirs and so we are worthy of each other's highest honour and respect.

- 4) The way we view one another will shape how we love and honour each other. How might we be more devoted in brotherly love if we consistently viewed each other as blood relatives?
 - How might we be more eager to honour each other above ourselves if we consistently viewed each other as firstborns?
- 5) Obviously none of us have the capacity to meet the needs of every single person in the church family equally. But how should brotherly love characterise our heart response towards a brother or sister's joys, struggles or needs, even when we're not able to rejoice or mourn with them in person (12:15) or lend practical support (12:13)?

I don't know if I've worded this question very well, but what I'm getting at is the fact that we don't always have capacity to show our love for a particular brother or sister in person. But

that doesn't mean our hearts should remain cool and unmoved by their joy or pain or struggles or needs. When we hear about these things, a heart filled with brotherly love still responds with joy, grief or compassion and we can still pray for that person.

- 6) Smaller groups like home groups are vital in a church of 130+ people, as places where we can more meaningfully disciple, love and serve each other.
- How can you practise devoted brotherly love in your homegroup?
 - How can you seek to honour each other more highly in your homegroup?