



MY RESPONSIBILITY TO MY

CHRISTIAN BROTHERS AND SISTERS

Christians are a true spiritual family. God is their father, Christ is their elder brother, and they are brothers and sisters to each other. All Christians should work hard to make their spiritual family a true family of real brotherhood. Christians need each other. If they will help each other as true brothers, they will bring true happiness to the church and real strength to each other. Christians have many responsibilities to each other. Consider 4 of the basic responsibilities.

First, Christians have the responsibility to have true love for each other. Jesus said his commandment was for his disciples to love each other as he had loved them (*John 15:12*). Throughout the New Testament, Christians are taught the importance of loving each other. John said that a Christian's love for his brother is proof he has passed from death unto life (*1 John 3:14*). When Christians have real love for Christians, this proves they have become serious spiritual people. John also said the man who says he loves God but does not love his brother is a liar. If one cannot learn to love the people he lives with, he cannot learn to love God whom he has not seen (*1 John 4:20*). When you show love for a man's family, you show love to him. When you show love to Christians you show love to God.

Second, Christians, as they have ability, will help other Christians in need. Read *1 John 3:16-18*. Our willingness to help our physical family with its needs shows our love for our family. The same is true of our spiritual family. When Christians see a brother with real trouble, they will do what they can to help him. Christians must show love with both *works* and deeds.

Third, Christians will be careful not to cause weak brothers to be discouraged. Read *Romans 14:13,21*. Serious Christians will always watch their actions so they never cause a weak Christian to fall. In the Bible, Jews would not eat a swine. When Jews became Christians they had difficulty in leaving that old way even though it is right for Christians to eat all meat (*1 Timothy 4:3,4*). Even though it is not wrong to eat meat, Paul said he would not eat meat if he

knew it would cause a Christian to be discouraged (1 Corinthians 8:12,13). This is how careful Christians should be to keep from discouraging weak brothers or sisters.

Fourth, Christians quickly will forgive their brothers and sisters who sin. Paul says Christians should forgive each other as freely as Christ forgives them (*Ephesians 4:32*). Christ forgives each Christian daily and never denies them forgiveness. Christians must never refuse to forgive a brother. Not only should they forgive him, but they also should encourage him in doing good. A serious Christian will never forget his responsibilities to his brothers and sisters in Christ.

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Christians are a true _____.
2. Give four responsibilities Christians have to their spiritual brothers and sisters.
3. What is the proof that a Christian has passed from death to life?
4. If a Christian cannot love his brother, who else is it impossible for him to love?
5. What should Christians do when they see brothers or sisters with real trouble?
6. Tell how careful Paul was in not causing weak Christians to be discouraged.
7. How much forgiveness should Christians give to brothers who sin?