

Read: 2 Corinthians 13:11-14

We Are Family

2 Corinthians 13:11

Aim for perfection ... be of one mind, live in peace. And the God of love and peace will be with you.

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

What a beautiful thing it is when a family loves each other. God created us to be part of a family. When you think of family, do you think of your mom and dad? Do you think of brothers or sisters? God wants there to be love and respect for each other. He also wants children to obey their parents. God is pleased with such devotion to harmony.

Ahh, but that's not always the case, is it? There will be times when a husband does not always show love to his wife or when a wife struggles to respect her husband. Remember the last time you argued over something silly with your brother and sister? Or even your parents? When these situations occur, it is important to ask each other for forgiveness and work towards living peacefully with one each other.

That is what our reading is about today. Paul is writing to a family of believers who were struggling to live like a family—to work together and be nice to each other. What a tragedy it would be if all we ever did was argue and fight with each other. How sad would it be if no one was willing to listen to God's Word—the one thing that can help.

But listen to these words: "May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all" (2 Corinthians 13:14). Did you notice the words grace, love, and fellowship? Did you hear where they come from—God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit? Thanks to God, he *gives* them all! We have the undeserved love of Jesus, the love of the Father who sent his only Son, and fellowship (it means "we are together") with one another through the Holy Spirit.

Your family at church or in your home is a beautiful testimony to the One who leads it. May he get all the glory and praise.

The questions below are to help families discuss this devotion. The questions are divided by age group as suggestions, but anyone could reflect on any of the questions as they desire.

Questions for the Younger Children

- Think of the last time you disobeyed your parents. What went wrong?
- Who saved us from the sin of disobeying or arguing?

Questions for Elementary Age Children

- Members of a family (whether at home or church) help out together. Discuss how each member of your family does that at home.
- Think of two ways your family can help out at church.

Questions for Middle School and Above

- True or False. You have heard your mom complain about the lack of help she gets around the house.
- Discuss why it's important to have God's gifts of love, peace, and fellowship in your heart *before* you help around the house.

Closing Prayer:

Dear Jesus, help me to live in peace with everyone in my family. Teach me the importance of "us" instead of "I." Above all, bless my family as together we learn to love each other better by remembering all the ways you loved us—especially your love for us on the cross. Amen.