

Hebrews 13

No. 79

Introduction.

I. One of the greatest chapters in the Bible is Hebrews the 13 chapter. In this chapter the inspired record states. (Heb. 13:1-8, 17).

1. Let love of the brethren continue. 2. Forget not to show love unto strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares. 3. Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; them that are illtreated, as being yourselves also in the body. 4. Let marriage be had in honor among all, and let the bed be undefiled: for fornicators and adulterers God will judge. 5. Be ye free from the love of money; content with such things as ye have: for himself hath said, I will in no wise fail thee, neither will I in any wise forsake thee. 6. So that with good courage we say, The Lord is my helper; I will not fear: What shall man do unto me? 7. Remember them that had the rule over you, men that spake unto you the word of God; and considering the issue of their life, imitate their faith. 8. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and to-day, yea and for ever. 17. Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit to them: for they watch in behalf of your souls, as they that shall give account; that they may do this with joy, and not with grief: for this were unprofitable for you.

II. There are several lessons found in this reading from Hebrews 13 that I would like to discuss with you.

I. **Love The Brethren** - The first lesson is we are to love the brethren. (Heb. 13:1).

A. This is a commandment enjoined on Christians many times in the New Testament.

1. I think it would be profitable for us to consider some of these references. (Jn. 13:34, 35; 15:12; Rom. 12:10; 1 Pet. 1:22; 2:17; 2 Pet. 1:7).

1 John 2:9-11. 9. He that saith he is in the light and hateth his brother, is in the darkness even until now. 10. He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is no occasion of stumbling in him. 11. But he that hateth his brother is in the darkness, and walketh in the darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because the darkness hath blinded his eyes.

1 John 3:14-18: 14. We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not abideth in death. 15. Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him. 16. Hereby know we love, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. 17. But whoso hath the world's goods, and

beholdeth his brother in need, and shutteth up his compassion from him, how doth the love of God abide in him? 18. My Little children, let us not love in word, neither with the tongue; but in deed and truth.

1 John 4:7-11. Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is begotten of God, and knoweth God. 8. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love. 9. Herein was the love of God manifested in us, that God hath sent his only begotten Son into the world that we might live through him. 10. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. 11. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. 12. No man hath beheld God at any time: if we love one another, God abideth in us, and his love is perfected in us:

2. John adds.

1 John 4:20-21: 20. If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, cannot love God whom he hath not seen. 21. And this commandment have we from him, that he who loveth God love his brother also.

B. It is impossible to read these scriptures without being impressed with the fact that we are to love our brothers in Christ.

1. We are to love all men, but we are to have special love for Christians.
2. We are to love one another more than life itself. (1 Jn. 3:16).
3. Eph. 4:32; Gal. 6:2; 1 Jn.3:17.

II. **Hospitality** - A second lesson we learn from this chapter is the fact that Christians are to practice hospitality. (Heb. 13:2; Rom. 12:13; 1 Pet. 4:9).

A. These scriptures set forth the fact that Christians are to be hospitable.

1. This commandment is so important that Paul said a man could not scripturally be an elder unless he was given to hospitality. (1 Tim. 3:2).
2. This commandment is so important that Paul said a woman could not be enrolled on the special list of widows unless she had shown hospitality. (1 Tim. 5:10).
3. This commandment is so important that Christ will condemn those who failed to practice it. (Matt. 25:43).

B. **Hospitality defined** - The word hospitality, as used in these verses, does not have our exact modern connotation.

1. We use this word to refer to having someone into our home for a meal and fellowship. This practice is commendable and needs to be practiced more by present day Christians. The early Christians were especially known for this practice.
2. This is not, however, what the Bible means by the word "hospitality." The word "hospitality"

comes from a Greek word which literally means “love of strangers” as it is translated in the American Standard Version. It referred to the ancient practice of having strangers into one’s home for the night and for fellowship.

C. **Reasons For Hospitality** - There are several reasons for this commandment to be hospitable to strangers.

1. In the first place, there were **not many suitable places to lodge at night**. At that time the inns were not a place of wholesome environment. They were places where immorality and drunkenness dominated with little or no privacy. They were hardly the kind of place a decent person would want to take his family. It was needful therefore that Christians open up their homes to Christians and other deserving people.

2. In second place, this hospitality was commanded in order that **the gospel might be spread throughout the world**.

a. Many of the preachers were poor and did not have the money to pay for suitable lodging even if they could find it. If Christians had not opened up their homes to these preachers, the spreading of the gospel would have been greatly hampered.

b. Many people feel that hospitality on the part of these early Christians was a great factor in the gospel being taken to the whole world by A.D. 62..

c. **Example of Cuban hospitality**

3. In the third place, this hospitality was commanded because a person might **entertain angels unaware**. (Heb. 13:2).

a. This verse undoubtedly refers back to the time that Lot entertained 2 men not knowing they were angels. These angels proved to be a blessing to him by saving him from the ruin of Sodom.

b. Our guests may be messengers sent to us from God for our benefit.

4. In the fourth place, this hospitality was commanded because it gave **Christians the opportunity to share their faith and experiences with one another**. This fellowship often proved to be a blessing to all concerned.

D. **Limitations Placed On Hospitality** - God’s word places a limitation on this hospitality. (2 Jn. 10-11).

E. **Applications Today** - Someone might ask, “What is the application of these teachings on hospitality for us today?”

1. The application for modern times is at times difficult because of changed customs and conditions.

2. Today there are thousands of excellent motels and hotels available. Although there are many facilities for lodging, Christians should still open their homes to Christians and other deserving people who cannot afford these facilities. We should also at times open our homes to those who can afford them. The blessings of their fellowship always outweighs the expense involved.

- III. **Content With What We Have** - A third lesson we learn from this chapter is that we are to be content with what we have. (Heb. 13:5).
- A. This does not mean that we should never strive to improve ourselves in life. It means that we should not complain and worry if we do not have everything we might desire. (Phil. 4:11, 12).
 - B. **One time a very contented man was asked the secret of his contentment.** In reply he answered, “First, I look to heaven and remember that my principal business is to get there. Then I look down upon the earth and think about how small a place I shall occupy when I am dead and buried. Then I look around and see the many who are in all respects much worse off than I am. Then I learn where true happiness lies, where our cares end, and how little reason I have to complain.”
- IV. **Obey Those Who Rule Over Us** - A fourth lesson we learn from this chapter is the fact that we are to obey those who rule over us. (Heb. 13:17)
- A. **This has reference to the elders of the church.** The elders have been charged with the awesome responsibility of overseeing the flock of God.
 - 1. Some day they must stand in the judgment and not only give account of their own souls but they must give account of every soul in the flock.
 - 2. The Hebrew writer commands us to obey them that they may give account with joy.
 - B. **We should also honor elders.**
 - 1. **Most elders spend many extra hours feeding the flock** each month and they receive no material compensation for their labor. Often we taken t hem for granted and do not express our thanks to them.
 - 2. When is the last time you went up to one of our elders and said, “I love you and appreciate the work you are doing. What can I do to help you make the church better?” Many elders would faint if they ever heard such because they usually receive only criticism.
 - 3. **Once I heard of Christians in another city** who had taken their elders for granted for years. Some of them decided to express to the elders the love and appreciation they had for them. The elders were greatly encouraged and were inspired to do even greater work.
 - 4. **The Bible commands us to give honor to whom honor is due.** This certainly ought to be given to the shepherds who watch in behalf of our souls.
- V. **Jesus Christ The Same Yesterday, Today and Forever** - A fifth lesson we learn from this chapter is the fact that Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever.
- A. This means that Christ never changes in reference to His moral attributes and His interest in man.
 - B. Christ is **concerned about His followers.** He will comfort, strengthen, and protect them if they will keep His commandments.
 - C. Christ is also very **interested in those outside the church.** He pleads with them to let Him carry their

burdens. (Matt. 11:28-30).

Conclusion.

- I. Christ is inviting you at this time to become one of His followers. Will you accept His gracious invitation tonight? Don't put it off until another time. Too often that time never comes and even if it does a person has lost his desire to become a Christian.
- II. It is said that if you take **a bird when it is migrating** and place it behind bars that it will beat its wings against the cage in its frantic efforts to rise and go on its journey. But let the season pass in which the bird migrates, then open the cage and the bird will not go. You can even take it and toss it into the air and it will not go. Why? The instinct or desire for motion has passed.
- III. Decisions on Christ may also be delayed until there is not any desire to be His. Don't make that mistake. Give your life to Christ now as we and sing!

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