



Lesson 76

Lesson 76: A Call to Brotherly Love

Scripture: Hebrews 13:1-3

Outline for Hebrews

- Chapters 1-11 – Doctrine
- Chapter 12 – General Exhortations (persevere, pursue peace, pursue holiness)
 - ★ Hebrews 13:22
- Chapter 13 – Specific Exhortations

Called to Right Living

- Christians are **called** to live **holy** lives. (1 Peter 1:15; 1 Thessalonians 4:7)
- **Unbelievers** “read” **believers** more than they read the Bible.
- **Believers** are called to **live** holy lives in order to **silence** unbelievers. (1 Peter 2:15; Titus 2:7-8)
- Christ commanded us to let our lights shine so that the world might see our good works and glorify God. (Matthew 5:16)

Love the Brothers (v. 1)

- Two meanings:
 - ① These Hebrew Christians are brothers to their fellow Jews. They can set aside Judaism but ought not set aside their love for their families, relatives, and Jewish neighbors.
 - ② All Christians belong to the **family** of God and considered brothers and sisters to one another. This love is to be **sincere** and **fervent**. (1 Peter 1:22-23)
- “Love is the fulfillment of the Law!” (Romans 13:8, 10)
 - **This is a TRUE Biblical teaching, but greatly misunderstood!**
 - Who **defines** what love is? The only acceptable answer is **GOD!**
 - If we **love** God we will obey the first **four** commandments.
 - If we **love** our neighbor we will obey the last **six** commandments!
 - **DOCTRINE** defines love. Without doctrine one cannot love!

- The Hebrews who were the recipients of this letter had **experience** in showing this kind of love – see Hebrews 6:10.
- The **STANDARD** for brotherly love is defined in Romans 12:10 and Philippians 2:3-4. We are to prefer the needs of others more important than ourselves and our **supreme example** is Christ.
- Biblical love is **not** superficial. Biblical love is **not** just words. Biblical love shows itself! Read 1 John 3:16-19.

Importance of Brotherly Love

- ① In showing brotherly love we show the world that we belong to Christ. (John 13:35)
- ② Loving each other gives us evidence that we are who we say we are. (1 John 3:14)

Enemies of Brotherly Love

❶ **SIN.** Matthew 24:12

❷ **SELF-LOVE.**

- Picture of the horseleech in Proverbs 30:15. Self-love has two sides:

① **Self-righteousness.**

② **Self-pity.**

- Christ, again, is our example – Matthew 20:28!

❸ **PRIDE.** Christ taught, “Take My yoke upon you, and learn from Me, for I am gentle and **humble** in heart.” (Matthew 11:29)

Love Strangers (v. 2)

- Our first responsibility is to our brothers and sisters. (Galatians 6:10)
- Then we are commanded to seek good for all men, even our enemies. (1 Thess 5:15; Matthew 5:43-44)
- Here we are called to show **hospitality** to strangers!
 - “entertain stranger” (φιλονεξία (φιλοξενία) philonexia {fil-on-
ex-ee'-ah}) literally means “to show hospitality” to strangers!
 - “entertained” (ξενίζω xenizo {xen-id'-zo}) means “to receive as
quests”
 - This word is translated “lodge” in Acts 10:18, 23; 28:7.
- **BOTH** words communicate the idea of opening one’s home to strangers!
- “for by this some have entertained angels without knowing it” – see Genesis 18:1-3 and 19:1-3..
- One qualification for an elder (pastor) is that he be “**a lover of hospitality**” – Titus 1:8)
- We called to show hospitality “without grudging.” 1 Peter 4:9

Remember the Prisoners (v. 3)

- “as if chained with them” — This is what the **GOLDEN RULE** is all about. (See Matthew 7:12)
- The Hebrews Christians had practiced this – see Hebrews 10:32-34.
- An ancient Greek orator once said of Christians, “If they hear that any one of their number is in prison or in distress for the sake of their Christ’s name, they all render aid in his necessity, and if they can, they redeem him, to set him free.”
- “Some early Christians sold themselves into slavery to get money to free a fellow believer.”
- Three ways “to remember the prisoners”:
 - ① **BE THERE** with them. Do not forsake them.
 - ② **HELP**. See Philippians 4:14-16.
 - To them directly as the Philippians did for Paul. (Philippians 4:14-16)
 - Looking after their families.
 - ③ **PRAY** for them. Colossians 4:18.

THIS IS A COMMAND: LOVE ONE ANOTHER AS CHRIST LOVES US!