

“Live Love”

08-28-16

Throughout this month of August, we've talked about some pretty tough issues. In many of them, there hasn't been a lot of joy! Today we end the month with encouraging words from Hebrews for our lives here on earth. Since we are secure in our relationship with Jesus Christ through faith, we need to live lives of love and seek to care for those around us, even those outside these walls!

Open to Hebrews 13. At the end of the book, the writer of Hebrews shares some final thoughts that not only give direction but also can fill us with joy as we live a life of faith. Let's look at the first eight verses and see God's concepts for living a life of love. Look at verse 1, ***“Let brotherly love continue.”*** Did you notice? This love was there already and it's been shown to those around you, including your family! The writer is saying, *“Don't let it stop! Keep on showing it!”*

Romans 12:10 says, *“Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor.”* As a part of the body of Christ, you really can't just sit back and wait for someone to love you, you have to take some initiative and go out and love them first! Loving has to be your way of life!

Look at verse 2, ***“Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.”*** In society today, showing hospitality to others isn't really what the world expects or we wish to do! We've moved from knowing all our neighbors and spending time talking to them, to driving out of our garage and driving into our garage without seeing a neighbor or talking to anyone!

Hospitality is important! It was especially important and expected in Jesus' day and before. Open to Genesis 18. Do you remember the story of Abraham and the three men who visited him at his home? Look at verses 1-3, *“And the LORD appeared to him by the oaks of Mamre, as he sat at the door of his tent in the heat of the day. He lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, three men were standing in front of him. When he saw them, he ran from the tent door to meet them and bowed himself to the earth and said, “O Lord, if I have found favor in your sight, do not pass by your servant.”*

Abraham had no idea who the three men were, but he was gracious to these men who walked onto his land and provided for them. When he heard them speak and share the promise of a child, he knew this was the Lord come to speak to him!

Verse 3, *“Remember those who are in prison, as though in prison with them, and those who are mistreated, since you also are in the body.”* **We need to Remember Those in Prison, and Remember those Mistreated.** In this community of prisons, we're not just talking about those incarcerated, we're talking about those who face persecution here and around the world because of what they believe.

Many are included in being mistreated by others because of difference in thoughts and actions. If we say and sing that we are one body, that also means we're willing to suffer with each other and care for each other!

Verse 4, *“Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled, for God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterous.”* **Hold Marriage with Honor.** Unfortunately, we live in a world that doesn't hold to commitments as strongly as they should. Our world looks for convenience and ease. This has come into homes and

broken relationships. We seem to live in a sexually immoral time and it's affected everything we see and do! That wasn't and isn't God's plan! We have to be above what the world does and ask God to be our constant guide and judge!

Verse 5, "*Keep your life free from love of money, and be content with what you have, for he has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you."* Money, money, money! Our world seems to revolve around it. This verse points out two cautions and two directions for our lives. **Keep Free from Loving Money**. It's so easy to want more! Advertisements continually make it seem as though, if you don't have it, you're losing out! Because of love for money, sometimes it seems as though there's a rubber band on every piece of it, and it makes it very difficult to let go and give it!

Be Content with What You Have. God knew that being content was going to be hard for us. I think that's why He included Commandments 9 and 10! The reason we don't stay content is that we look at others and what they have and all we want to do is be just like them!

When we do that, that's coveting! Wanting something someone else has! When we do that, we're putting things ahead of God! We need to change our focus and seek a closer relationship with Him than what we have!

And then we receive His promise! **Jesus said, "I Will Never Leave You nor Forsake You."** This promise helps each of us as we try to live love! Jesus came to you in the waters of Baptism, like we witnessed this morning, when you were called His own! Each and every Sunday, we receive His body and blood given and shed for you for the forgiveness of sins.

He's been with you since the beginning and He's promised to be with you for forever! As you walk by faith in Jesus Christ, heaven for eternity is yours!

Knowing Jesus is always with you can change your perspective as you go through struggles, difficulties, and joys, Verse 6, "*So we can confidently say, "The Lord is my helper; I will not fear; what can man do to me?"*" When you know you're not alone and Jesus is with you, there is nothing to fear! With the Almighty at your side, whatever man tries to do to you will meet with failure! Will it always be easy? No! But the result will be for your good because it's God's plan for you!

Verse 7, "*Remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the word of God. Consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith.*" I thank God and this congregation for giving me the opportunity to preach the Word of God each week. It's a precious blessing to receive and practice. We've also been blessed with so many extremely faithful people. This makes being be such a wonderful place to be. As you look around you, either in this congregation or in your relationships with others, seek out people of faith and, **Imitate Strong Faith!** May they be an example to follow!

Verse 8, "*Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.*" Because of Jesus' divinity, He is unchangeable, immovable, eternal! **Jesus is the Same: Yesterday!** He's been with You throughout all your past! He's the Same, **Today!** He's right now! He's in your present! He's in this very room! He's the same **Forever!** He's your future! He's always there! He's your eternity!

As you walk with Jesus Christ, in everything you do and say, Live Love! Be so filled with Jesus and let His love fill you to overflowing! May His love make a difference in your life and in the lives you touch! Be Church without walls! Be Jesus everywhere!