

Living Truth

Hebrews 13

“The specific practical exhortations for Christians are in chapter 13. This fits the pattern of the New Testament teaching, which is always doctrine and then duty, position and then practice. Chapter 13 is not an afterthought, but its integral to the message of the book. True faith demands true living.

When Pliny the Younger reported on the Christians to the Roman emperor Trajan in the first century, he wrote, ‘They bind themselves by an oath not to any criminal end, but to avoid theft or robbery or adultery, never to break their word or repudiate a deposit when called on to refund it.’ Although he was looking for a charge against them, he was forced to characterize them as a people who did not commit crimes and who paid their debts.

Early Christians were a rebuke to the pagan and immoral societies in which they lived, and those societies often sought to condemn them. But the more they examined the lives of believers, the more it became obvious that Christians lived up to the high moral standards of their doctrine.

Hebrews 13 gives some of the essential practical ethics of Christian living that help portray the true gospel to the world, that encourage men to trust in Christ, and that bring glory to God.” John MacArthur

- I. God never intended our faith to be timid, unassertive, or fearful of confrontation for what we believe in, and he certainly doesn’t want our faith to be easily manipulated or dominated by how man thinks or reasons. Hebrews 13 is more than do this, don’t do that. It is that in many ways, but the reason behind the exhortations it offers is to help us stay on the offense as we battle the forces of spiritual wickedness against the truth we live by. To not put into practice these exhortations, puts the church in danger of becoming a puppet of the evil one who disguises himself as an angel of light for the distinct purpose of distorting the truth of God’s Word. His goal is to get us to live like the world.

Heb. 13:1-9

Heb. 12:22-24

1 Peter 2:9-10

Col. 1:17-18

2 Jn. Vss. 4-6

Rom. 13:8-12

1 Peter 2:9-10 *But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. 10 Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.*

- II. The only ones who have a right to worship at the altar of God are those redeemed by the blood of Christ. Our worship, the fruit of our lips, is God specific. We bow down to Him alone. We worship His ways, His truth, His existence, and His character as the One who willingly and sacrificially laid down His life for us. He bore the shame of our sin to free us from its bondage and condemnation, which makes us very unique in a world steeped in godlessness. It is not our world, we are merely passing through, yet our pilgrimage to the God's city was never meant to be traveled alone. Instead, it is one where we come along side one another in ways that please our Master as we help one another run the race we are in with perseverance.

Heb. 13:9-19

Romans 12:10 *Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves.*

1 Jn. 3:18 *Little children, let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth.*

- III. A benediction is "a declaration of blessings from God upon His loved ones... [They] offer words of assurance or precepts designed to bring joy, peace, comfort, and security to those who place their trust in God." The benediction in Hebrews 13 **assures us** that we live at peace with God through the death, burial, and resurrection of His Son. It **gives us security and comfort** in knowing that Jesus is our Great Shepherd who cares for us, speaks to us, and keeps us safe from the wolves that desire to harm us. **It gives us Joy** in knowing that He has equipped us through the power of the Spirit to serve Him in ways that please Him. Everything He has done for us is for our benefit and His Glory. We serve an awesome God!

Heb. 13:20-24

Romans 15:13 *May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.*