

7/14/24

Hebrews 13:1-17

It is said that there are twenty imperatives found in this chapter on fifteen separate topics.

Jesus said, “By this shall all men know that you are my disciples, if you have love one to another.” Jn. 13:34

1. This is to be the distinguishing mark of the Church!
2. We are to love God with all our heart, mind and soul and second, love our neighbor as ourselves, Matt. 22:37-39
3. Love is the fulfilling of the law. Rom. 13:10b

Therefore the author of Hebrews concludes the epistle with the practical exhortation regarding the proper perspective and practice of love in Chapter 13.

13:1-6 The proper perspective and practice of love outside the church body.

13:1 The believer’s love for other believers.

- 1) The imperative command is in the present, “Let brotherly love continue “meno” meaning abide.
 - a) Jesus said abide “meno” in Me, the same word.
 - b) God is love and he that dwells in love dwells in God, and God in him. 1Jn. 4:16
- 2) The kind of love is brotherly love.

- a) Brotherly “Philadelphia” love of brother and sisters, born from the same womb.
- b) The reference being the same spiritual birth from above.
- c) It refers to affectionate love, showing kindness, sympathy and practical help.
 - 1)) The two greatest commandments Jesus said are to love for God and man. Matt. 22:7-40
 - 2)) Jesus said agape love is to be the distinguishing mark of the church. Jn. 13:35
 - 3)) Peter says, “Honor all people. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king.” 1Pet. 2:17

13:2 The believer’s love for strangers.

- 1) The believer is not to be forgetful to be hospitable, outside the church body, “Do not forget to entertain strangers.” vs. 2a
 - a) All believers are to be given to hospitality. Rom. 12:13
 - b) This is a requirement for the Elders and bishops in a different form of the word. 1Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:8
 - c) In the early church there were many traveling Christians and the inns were flea infested and immoral places!
 - d) The proper perspective in practicing love is not only in church, but by being hospitable.

- 2) The reason for the command is historical, “for by so doing some have unwittingly entertained angels.” vs. 2b
 - a) The phrase entertain strangers “philoxenia” means love of strangers.
 - b) It was synonymous with being hospitable. 1Tim.3:2; Tit. 1:8; 1Pet. 4:9
 - c) The author reminds these believers of the past visitations by angels to Abraham and Gideon, etc. Gen. 18, 19; Judges 6, 13

13:3 The believer’s love for believers in prison.

- 1) The believer is not to forget those in bonds or imprisonments, “Remember the prisoners.” vs. 3a
 - a) The word prisoners “desmios”, means captive, bound and incarcerated.
 - b) Those in prison would be cared for by believers, even as Paul received gifts or they would not have the basic things, some even shared their imprisonment as Epaphroditus. Phil. 2:25-30; 2Tim. 1:16; 4:11
 - * They had already experienced some persecution. Heb. 10:32-24
 - c) We have seen Christians imprisoned in the old Soviet Union, the U.S.S.R., under Mao’s Cultural Revolution in the 1970’s, presently in Iran.

- 1) They were starved, kidnaped and the sold for slaves.
- 2) They has been massacres of people simply for being Christians in history.
- 2) The manner of remembering them is given,”as if chained with them.” vs. 3a
 - a) Putting ourselves in their place, bound!
 - b) And knowing that they were candidates also for imprisonment as Christians.
 - c) But the greater motive should be their compassion, like their Lord.
- 3) The believr is to not forget a second group, those in difficulties, “those who are mistreated.” vs. 3b
 - a) The word mistreated “kakoucheo” means tortured, oppressed, suffering in distress, in adversity, even to death, like the horrific genocide of Christians in Sudan.
 - b) This has been the rule of Chritians and the church throughout the age of Grace, we are pilgrims and sojourneres passing through.
 - c) Men love darkness hates the light, it exposes their evil deeds. Jn. 1:5; 3:20
- 4)The reason is given also, “since yourselves are in the body also.” vs. 3c
 - a) When one member suffers, we all suffer....1Cor. 12:26
 - b) It is too easy to forget these individuals and yet think we are abiding in love, having a wrong perspective! Matt. 25:39

13:4 The believer's love for one's mate.

- 1) The believer is to recognize a simple principle, "Marriage is honorable among all." vs. 4a
 - a) The word all includes the unbeliever, for the simple reason that marriage is God's institution, not man's.
 - 1) The word marriage "gamos" also is used to mean wedding or wedding feast. Matt. 22:29; Jn. 2:1
 - 2) The word honorable "timios" means held as of great price, esteemed, especially dear.
 - b) The believer is to honor marriage and hold it in high esteem.
- 2) The believer is to recognize the natural and appropriateness of sexual relations in marriage, "and the bed undefiled." vs. 4b
 - a) The word undefiled "amiantos" means to be unsoiled, free from being degrading or debased.
 - 1)) The believer is to enjoy and maintain sexual relations in marriage and to have children. Gen. 2:23-25
 - 2)) The believer is to be sexually faithful to their wife or husband, adultery being the only Biblical reason for divorce. Matt. 5:32; 19:1-9; 1Cor. 7:1-16
 - b) Some Christians at times get a little weird about sex and attempt to make it a

- spiritual superiority if they deny themselves and mates of conjugal rights.
- c) Paul had to address the Corinthians about refusing to give conjugal rights to their mates as a sign of spirituality and he rebukes them. 1Cor. 7:1-6
 - 1) Once you say "I do" at the altar, you cannot say "I won't" in the bed! It is undefiled, free from dishonor or soiling!
 - 2) The exception is by consent for a time to seek God and then return, so as not to tempt one's mate or self.
 - 3) The believer is to recognize that God in contrast will judge sexually immoral people, "But fornicators and adulterers God will judge." vs. 4c
 - a) Paul confronted the Corinthians about joining themselves with harlots from the temple of Ahriodite, making Christ one with a harlot. 1Cor. 6:15-17
 - b) Paul says fornication is the only sin against your own body. 1Cor. 6: 18
 - 1)) We get our word pornography for fornication " pornos" and though the word is used in context of adultery at times, for the most part, there is a distinction.
 - 2)) Fornication usually is used by people to refer to sex before marriage being single, those who defile themselves

and dishonor the sacredness of marriage. 1Thess. 4:4

* Breaking the eight commandment, you shall not steal. Deut. 5:19

- 3)) Adultery is sex with a person other than one's husband or wife, while being married, if one person is single, they are fornicating and the married person is committing adultery, being unfaithful to their mate and marriage.
- a)) The seventh Commandment. Deut. 5:18
- b)) The word adulterers "moichos", one who is unfaithful to their mate, disregarding the sacredness of marriage and the sexual union.
- 4)) Paul talking to believers says, "Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? **Do not be deceived.** Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God." 1Cor. 6:9-11

- c) Paul qualifies this, "I wrote to you in my epistle not to keep company with sexually immoral people, Yet I certainly did not mean with the sexually immoral people of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or idolaters, since then you would need to go out of the world. But now I have written to you not to keep company with **anyone named a brother, who is sexually immoral**, or **covetous**, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner-not even to eat with such a person." 1Cor. 5:9-11
- d) Those who forbid marriage is a doctrine of devils. 1Tim. 4:1-2

13:5 The believer's love for things.

- 1) The believer is not to be characterized by a manner of life of covetousness, "Let your conduct be without covetousness." vs. 5a
- a) The word covetousness "aphilarguros" in the negative means without a desire to have what other have, not to be ruled by a constant desire to possess.
- b) The tenth commandment said, "You shall not **covet** your neighbor's wife; and you shall not desire your neighbor's house, his field, his male servant, his female servant, his ox, his donkey, or anything that is your neighbor's." Deut. 5:21

c) Covetousness makes things gods.

- 1) “Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is **idolatry**.” Col. 3:5

* Idolatry and sexual sin is always associated in the Old Testament and the New with their fertility gods.

- 2) Jesus said, “Take heed and beware of covetousness, for one’s life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses.” Lk. 12:15

- 3) These are the things the Gentiles seek and the motive for many illicit sexual relations. Matt. 6:25-34

d) The love of money is the root of all evil, not money, and riches are the most sought out. 1Tim. 6:6-10

- 1) Jesus said, “What will it profit a man if he gains the entire world and loose his soul?” Matt. 16:26
- 2) Jesus gave the parable of the certain rich man, “Then He spoke a parable to them, saying: “The ground of a certain rich man yielded plentifully. “And he thought within himself, saying, ‘What shall I do, since I have no room to store my crops?’ 18 So he said, ‘I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build greater, and there

I will store all my crops and my goods. And I will say to my soul, “Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years; take your ease; eat, drink, and be merry.” ’ But God said to him, ‘Fool! This night your soul will be required of you; then whose will those things be which you have provided?’ “So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.” Lk. 12:16-21

- 2) The believer is to be characterized by a satisfied life, “be content with such things as you have.” vs. 5b

- a) The word content “arkeo” means to have sufficient or enough.
- b) Being content does not mean you are not to try and get ahead, but it means you are thankful and grateful to God for what you have, while being a good steward without covetousness and thankful.

- c) Paul said, “I have learned in whatever state I am, therewith to be content.” Phil. 4:11

1)) This is a great problem today with people, Christians are not excluded.

2)) Hell and destruction are... Prov. 27:20

- b) Now godliness with contentment is great gain. 1Tim. 6:6

* Being a steward and thankful for all!

- c) Our Love for individuals can become perverted by love for their things!
- 3) The believer has the promise of God, “For He Himself has said, “I will never leave you nor forsake you.” vs. 5c-d
 - a) The quote is from the law. Deut. 31:6
 - b) Contentment can only come from God as we have confidence and remember that He will never leave us nor forsake us.
 - c) But rather in our lack of contentment, we are liable to forsake Him for things and people.

13:6 The believer’s love of a pure conscience.

- 1) The confident response of the believer to God’s promise, “So we may boldly say: “The LORD is my helper; I will not fear”. vs. 6a-c
 - a) The quote is from Ps. 118:6.
 - b) Confessing our complete confidence in God’s faithfulness and therefore committing ourselves to Him as a faithful Creator. 1Pet. 4:19
 - c) The word boldly “tharreo” means courageous confidence. 2Cor. 5:6, 8; 7:16; 10:1, 2
 - d) The background is the constant danger of persecution and suffering.
- 2) The confident trust in God by the believer is expressed, “What can man do to me?” vs. 6d

* I am His and I am instantly present before Him the second I die. 2Cor. 5:1-8; Heb. 12:4

- 3) The author already told them, “For you had compassion on me in my chains, and joyfully accepted the plundering of your goods, knowing that you have a better and an enduring possession for yourselves in heaven. Therefore do not cast away your confidence, which has great reward.” Heb. 10:34-35; Matt. 6:24-34

13:7-17 The proper perspective and practice of love inside the church body.

13:7 The believer’s love for the leaders.

- 1) The believer is to reflect on those church leaders who have taught them the word, “Remember those who rule over you, who have spoken the word of God to you.” vs. 7a-b
 - a) The tense is present imperative.
 - b) The idea here is those who have gone to be with the Lord, even as martyrs, those who have spoken God’s word to them.
 - c) We are to show respect and honor in love, not worship them.
- 2) The believer is to follow their example of faith and result of their conduct again and again, “whose faith follow, considering the outcome of their conduct.” vs. 7c-d

- a) He is referring to the example after those of chapter eleven, the Hall of Faith and the apostles.
- b) Men who led by examples to the end of their lives. 2Tim. 4:6-8
 - * Perhaps this is commanded so as not to use it as an opportunity to speak against them now that they were in heaven!

13:8 The believer's ultimate loving example.

- 1) The believer is to recognize Jesus never changes, "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever."
- 2) The believer's faithful example is Christ who is eternal and even if men fail and die, He will not, He is immutable and eternal.
- 3) He is to be their dependency always, like those past rulers in their teaching and life, for He changes not.
- 4) Therefore He, Christ, having fulfilled everything will be faithful today and in the future to all who depend on Him.
- 5) This is important, that their love for those rulers wouldn't be idolatrous or ours!

13:9 The believer's love of the truth.

- 1) The warning, "Do not be carried about with various and strange doctrines." vs. 9a
 - a) Numerous or many colored or multifold in the distinct and particular speculations.

- 1)) Carried away "periphoro" means off the true safe course.
- 2)) It is an imperative command in the present imperative showing they had not been carried away yet, but were wavering, it is for all believers and against all doctrines not found in the Bible.
- b) Strange or foreign in that they contradict the gospel of the past and present.
- c) Both a contradiction to the Jesus who does not change in the preceding verse.
- d) The believer is to love sound, biblical and scriptural teaching, there is nothing new. Col. 2:8: 1Tim. 4:1-2: 2Tim. 3:16-17
 - * Though some leaders had died, there would not be any new revelation given they had not already received, for Christ is the same forever. vs. 8
- 2) The believer's hearts must be made firm by grace, "For it is good that the heart be established by grace, not with foods which have not profited those who have been occupied with them." vs. 9b-c
 - a) The implications are of ascetic practices be they Jewish or early Gnosticism, "by grace" is emphatic.
 - * Such ascetic practices do not make you spiritual, only a bit healthier and at times, self-righteous!

- b) The Bible is clear about both. Rom. 14;
1Cor. 8; Gal. 3-4; Col. 2
 1)) We are to love those who have taught
 us by their example and sound
 doctrine! Eph. 4:11-16
 2)) Paul says, “For the kingdom of God
 is not eating and drinking, but
 righteousness and peace and joy in the
 Holy Spirit.” Rom. 14:17

13:10-14 The love of the believer for the
 sufficient sacrifice.

- 1) The believer has an altar unapproachable by
 any Jewish priest, “We have an altar from
 which those who serve the tabernacle have
 no right to eat.” vs. 10
 a) The sacrifice of Christ, is used in what is
 called a metonymy, substituting the alter
 for the cross, which was the sin offering
 that was completely consumed and as
 they could not eat it, these priest could
 not partaking of Christ. Lev. 16:27
 b) If they returned to Judaism, they would
 not be able to partake of it either.
 2) The priest who served the alter in the Day of
 Atonement marked by lots the sin offering
 for the nation and was burned outside the
 camp, a type of Christ, “For the bodies of
 those animals, whose blood is brought into
 the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are
 burned outside the camp.” vs. 11

- 3) So Jesus in fulfillment was crucified outside
 Jerusalem, as the antitype, “Therefore Jesus
 also, that He might sanctify the people with
 His own blood, suffered outside the gate.”
vs. 12
 a) The offering in the Day of Atonement
 was removed outside the camp of Israel,
 so Jesus was crucified outside the city
 gate, to sanctifying the people. Jn. 19:20
 b) The token was his blood. Lev. 17:11;
Heb. 9:22
 c) Jesus suffered outside the gate.
 4) So the believer is to go forth to Jesus, outside
 the camp and be rejected by the Jewish
 community sharing in His reproach, the new
 exodus to the cross, having faith in Jesus,
 “Therefore let us go forth to Him, outside
 the camp, bearing His reproach.” vs. 13
 a) They are Jews attempting to go back to
 the law, sacrifice and temple.
 b) They would be exposing themselves to
 persecution.
 c) Let us love Christ instead of the ritual or
 religion!
 5) The reason being that our love is not for a
 physical city like Jerusalem, but a city of the
 living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, “For
 here we have no continuing city, but we
 seek the one to come.” vs. 14
 a) The city has been mentioned already.
Heb. 11:10, 14, 16; 12:22; Rev. 21-22

- b) The believer is a Strangers and pilgrims.
Heb. 11:13

13:15-17 The love that pleases God.

- 1) The believer is to offer up sacrifices of praise to God by Jesus Christ, “Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name.” vs. 15
 - a) This is proper perspective and practice of love in the church!
 - b) It is to be continuous, an indication of a genuine heart.
 - c) The fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name, our officiating High Priest in heaven. 2Pet. 2:5
- 2) The believer is to benefit others and be generous, “But do not forget to do good and to share, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.” vs. 16
 - a) The believer is not to forget or neglect to do good “euopiia”, it means to adore the good and be beneficent to others.
 - * The Law spoke of the widows, orphans and the poor. Deut. 10:18; 24:19
 - b) The word share “koinonia” means oneness, partnership, communion, speaking of being loving and comforting to one another in the fellowship of the community of God’s redeemed.

- * Some see more a financial help, but there is no mention of poor or finances directly stated. (Lenski)
- b) The reason being that God is pleased with such sacrifices. Phil. 4:18; Heb. 11:5; 12:28; 13:21
- c) When word and deed become one, that is truth, they can not be divorced!
 - 1) The fatherless. Ja. 1:27
 - 2) Faith without works is dead. Ja. 2:17
 - 3) A brother in need. 1Jn. 3:17
 - 4) Let us not love in word or tongue..._ 1Jn. 3:18
- d) Our spiritual sacrifices are acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. 1Pet. 2:5; Rom. 12:1-2
- 3) The believer is to obey and submit to church leaders, “Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive.” vs. 17a-b
 - a) The imperative command to obey “peitho”, means to be persuaded of it’s correctness and profitableness and be submissive “hupeiko”, which means to resist no longer, but to give way.
 - 1) The submission is as unto the Lord and only in as far as the Scriptures allow, not to anything ask in contradiction of the Scriptures or violation of conscience.
 - 2) Some in authority demand submission in extreme abuse as the “Shepherding

Doctrine”, or any other doctrine that would want to rule your life.

- b) The one’s they were to stop resisting were those who ruled over “hegeomai” them, those who are leaders and elders in the church.

- * These Hebrew-Christians were resisting the leaders by wanting to return to the Law and temple sacrifices.

- 4) The reasons for giving these commands are given, “For they watch for your souls”. vs. 17b
 - a) The word watch “agapneo”, means to be sleepless, indicating their loving, faithful and caring oversight!
 - b) The believer is to see and be persuaded it is right to stop resisting godly and loving leaders.
- 4)) The accountability of the leaders to God for the people kept them on track, “As those who must give an account.” vs. 17c
 - * For they will give an account to God one day as the watchmen of the city. Jer. 6:17; Ezk. 3:17; 33:1; Acts 20:26
- 5) The responsibility of the believer to not make it difficult or create problems for the leadership, “Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you.” vs. 17d-e

- 1)) This is a command, not a suggestion for an obedient church to the teaching of leadership receives the benefit of the leadership and the leadership the benefit of the obedient church.
- 2)) A rebellious church to what is Biblical, only burdens the leadership, making the community life more difficult, having to rule by groaning.
- 3)) It is bad enough if the watchman fails to sound the warning, but worse if when the people are deaf or rebellious to the warnings.