

Hebrews (May 16, 2021)

OPENING QUESTION:

SERMON DISCUSSION: How were you impacted by the sermon? What new thoughts or lessons did you discover? In what ways did you find yourself challenged and/or encouraged?

READ Hebrews 12:28-13:14

NOTE REGARDING HEBREWS 12:28-29: “The concept of worship is almost certainly to be expanded in v. 28b to include a manner of life which is pleasing to God and which is sustained both by gratitude and a serious sense of responsibility. The members of the house church are to regard every aspect of their lives as an expression of devotion to God. This is to serve God acceptably, as each Christian offers to Him the ‘acceptable’ sacrifices of pleasing Him through practical obedience (13:16) and conformity to His will.”
(47B Word Biblical Commentary p. 486-487 by William L. Lane)

1. In Hebrews 12:28-29 believers are called to offer “acceptable worship” in response to receiving “a kingdom that cannot be shaken.” Hebrews 13:1-14 provides what practical applications for such “acceptable worship” and whom do these applications involve?

2. What is gleaned from the following verses regarding “brotherly love” (Hebrews 13:1)?

John 13:34

Romans 12:10

2 Peter 1:5-7

3. NOTE REGARDING HOSPITALITY: “In the ancient world it was expensive to stay overnight at an inn, and such establishments usually had poor reputations. Thus, an aspect of Jewish and early Christian piety, as well as etiquette in the broader Greco-Roman culture, involved taking people in for an evening. In the Christian context such admonitions to show hospitality have their foundation in the Old Testament and the teachings of Jesus...The earliest Christians shared the mobility of the broader culture, and, therefore, many opportunities existed for them to practice hospitality toward traveling teachers, businesspersons, or refugees from persecution. The supreme paradigm for hospitality in early Jewish literature was the hospitality of Abraham, shown to his heavenly visitors (Gen. 18:2-15), which is probably alluded to in Hebrews 13:2: ‘for by so doing some people have entertained angels without knowing it’.” (The NIV Application Commentary-Hebrews p.435-436 by George H. Guthrie)

Research the definition of hospitable and explain how hospitality is more than inviting someone for a meal or accommodations. Why is hospitality so important? (Hebrews 13:1-2; Matthew 25:35)

4. NOTE REGARDING THOSE IN PRISON: “Prisoners were not treated well in the first century, often having to depend on friends and family even for the most basic necessities of life. Christians could minister to fellow believers in prison, who were suffering for the sake of the gospel, either by offering consolations and gifts or by praying for them. To ‘remember’ (*mimneskomai*) means to keep present in one’s thoughts, an idea strengthened by the adverbial phrase ‘as if you were their fellow prisoners.’” (The NIV Application Commentary-Hebrews p. 436 by George H. Guthrie)

Why should the Hebrew audience be especially responsive to those who were in prison and mistreated (Matthew 25:36; Hebrews 10:32-34; 13:3)?
Suggest ways to “remember” those in prison or mistreated.

5. How can believers as individuals and collectively honor marriage? Discuss how honoring marriage influences society.

6. Read Hebrews 13:5-6; Proverbs 18:10-11; Matthew 6:31-32; Philippians 4:11-12, 19; 1 Timothy 6:6-10. Explain how love of money and discontentment controls an individual. Give reasons as to how we can find contentment.

7. Many commentators have noted a juxtaposition between Hebrews 13:4-5 (regarding sexual immorality and love of money). Paul identifies this connection repeatedly (examples such as in 1 Corinthians 5:11; Ephesians 5:1-3, 30; Colossians 3:5, etc.).

What do you consider common traits behind sexual immorality and love of money?

8. Identify the exhortations and warnings given to the Hebrew audience in Hebrews 13:7 & 9? Why might the author have placed Hebrews 13:8 “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever” between verses 7 & 9?

9. NOTE REGARDING THE “CAMP” AND “OUTSIDE THE GATE” HEBREWS 13:11-13:

“The carcasses of the beasts slaughtered at the altar on the Day of Atonement were carried forth outside the camp, in accordance with the prescription of Leviticus 16:27, and completely burned. The camp ground was holy ground, but the ground outside the camp was unholy ground; consequently, ceremonial cleansing was required before a man could return to the camp from outside (Leviticus 16:26, 28). Our author finds it particularly significant that *Jesus also suffered outside the gate*—that is, the gate of the city of Jerusalem which, bounded by its walls, corresponds to the holy ground of the wilderness camp with its boundaries—making there, on that unholy ground, a total sacrifice of Himself...‘To leave this camp, even in the performance of holy duties, rendered a man unclean and excluded him from the holy fellowship. The writer of Hebrews, however, insists that the sacrifice of Jesus was performed *outside* of the holy place, and it is this sacrifice which sanctifies His people. The act of sanctification marks the abolition of the necessity of holy places for sanctification’.”
(A Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews p.579 by Philip Edgcumbe Hughes)

What do the “camp” and “outside the gate” represent?

Why did Jesus suffer outside the gate?

What is involved for us to go “outside the camp and bear the reproach” like Jesus?