

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

MAY 4TH, 2025 // HEBREWS

STICK TOGETHER (HEBREWS 13:1-7) BROTHERLY LOVE

The author is encouraging the readers to continue in "**brotherly love**," using the Greek work "**philadelphia**."

- Brothers look out for one another, protect one another, and fight for one another. Our battle is not physical but spiritual (Ephesians 6:12), so **we fight for one another through prayers and petitions**.

ENTERTAIN STRANGERS

We entertain others not from a production standpoint but from a hospitable one. This was a reminder to provide a safe and hospitable place for traveling brothers and sisters.

- **It is easy to love those like us** (Luke 6:32). Entertaining friends will not fulfill this, because it neglects the call to **be hospitable to those outside our circles**.

UNKNOWNLY ENTERTAINED ANGELS

Abraham (Genesis 18:1-22) and Lot (Genesis 19:1-3) are examples of those who had entertained angels unknowingly.

- It is best just to treat guests as "**messengers of God**" to remove the risk of offending with an inhospitable act. Furthermore, we remember that through entertaining others, **we are entertaining the Lord himself** (Matthew 25:35-40).

THE PRISONER AND ABUSED

We are told to "**remember those in prison, as though you were in prison with them, and the mistreated, as though you...were suffering bodily**."

- We must be empathetic to people's situations. We must **move past a place of simply feeling sorrow for someone's situation**, which is sympathy, into a place of willingly sitting with someone in the situation (Galatians 6:2; Romans 12:15).

"MARRIAGE IS TO BE HONORED BY ALL..."

To "**honor**" marriage is to understand that marriage is an example to the world of Christ's relationship with us, His bride. A proper perspective of the marriage covenant will help ensure that "**the marriage bed [is] kept undefiled**."

- **Sex is a gift to be enjoyed within a marriage, and with great mutual concern for the needs of their spouse** (1 Corinthians 7:2-5; Ephesians 5:21-33).

CONTENTMENT OVER COVETOUSNESS

Money is not evil, but if it becomes anything other than a tool, then pursuit of it will lead to "all kinds of evil" (1 Timothy 6:10).

- Paul showed in Philippians 4:11-13 that contentment has more to do with what we are rather than what we have. **We find contentment in Christ, who will never leave us or abandon us and will provide for us** (Matthew 6:25, 33).

LEADERSHIP

We are to recognize and follow godly leadership within the body. A leader worth following will be shown by faithfulness to the Word of God and by godly conduct.

- As Christian leaders, **people look at us, but can they look to us** as examples? Paul boldly told the Corinthians, "Imitate me, as I also imitate Christ" (1 Corinthians 11:1).

WALKING DIFFERENTLY (HEBREWS 13:8-17) THE IMMUTABILITY OF GOD

The author transitions from discussing the unchanging nature of Jesus Christ to a warning not to be "**led astray by various kinds of strange teachings**."

- His point is this: **God is unchanging and so are His teachings**. We may see things in a fresh way, but we should be leery of "new" teachings.

"ESTABLISHED BY GRACE"

It was "strange" that the readers wanted to return to practices and laws that were fulfilled in Jesus.

- The meaning of verse 9 is echoed by Paul when he wrote, "**Food will not bring us close to God. We are not worse off if we don't eat, and we are not better if we do eat**" (1 Corinthians 8:8). **It is through divine grace that we find a relationship with God** and not from the observance of rituals.

SYMBOLIC LANGUAGE TO CONTRAST PRIVILEGES

In the OT, the altar was a place of sacrifice to atone for sin.

- We have **forgiveness, healing, and a right relationship with God** because of the cross (the altar on which Christ was sacrificed) that those "who worship at the tabernacle" do not have because of their rejection of Christ and His sacrifice.

THE NEW JERUSALEM (REVELATION 21:1-2)

Jesus suffered in the literal sense on the cross outside the gate of the city (John 19:20). His death outside of Jerusalem represented His rejection of the religious inside of the city.

- Hebrews urges us to follow Christ "outside the camp" where we bear His disgrace. We **do not seek to find acceptance** in the "city," instead, we "**seek the one to come**."

"...FROM THE OVERFLOW OF THE HEART" (MATTHEW 12:43)

God is not pleased with the sacrifice of animals, but by Believers who, with a broken and contrite heart, **acknowledge Him in all His ways**, and then **start doing what is good**, and **sharing with others**.

- We are to offer up to God "a sacrifice of praise" as the "fruit of [our] lips." This **reveals the state of our hearts in the same way that the fruit of a tree reveals the nature of the tree**.

OBEY THE LEADERS GOD HAS GIVEN US

Many people **seek positions of leadership** because of the perceived "benefits" but fail to recognize the responsibility that comes with **a call to leadership**.

- Beyond the added responsibility, there is also "a stricter judgment" (James 3:1) upon those who teach. But **this does not remove the individual's responsibility**.

GENUINE AFFECTION (HEBREWS 13:18-25)

"PRAY FOR US"

The author isn't asking that the readers start praying for him as a leader, but that they would continue to lift him up in their prayers.

- There were obstacles in his way that kept him from returning to them, but he was confident that prayer could remove any obstacle in the way. **His urging them shows how seriously he viewed praying**.

PRAYING FOR ONE ANOTHER

The author gives a blessing of peace like that of a priestly blessing in Numbers 6:24-26: "**May the Lord bless you and protect you; may the Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you; may the Lord look with favor on you and give you peace**."

- As an example of brotherly love, he asks for prayers, then prays for his readers.

THEOLOGICALLY PACKED PRAYER

The author refers to God as the **God of Peace** to promote peace in the Body.

- He speaks to the power of God in **bringing up our Lord Jesus from the dead**—the resurrection proves that Jesus was perfect, and His sacrifice was sufficient.
- Jesus is **the great Shepherd**, leading us into and through situations now and into eternity.

GOD WORKS IN US, THEN THROUGH US.

His prayer was that God would bring out their full potential so that they could **accomplish what is pleasing in His sight**.

- We must seek God to equip us with everything needed to accomplish His will. The ability to please God and accomplish His will **begins with allowing Him to work in us**.

CLOSING REMARKS

The author wanted the readers to receive this letter the way it was intended: **as an encouragement**. As an added encouragement, he informed them that **Timothy had been released from imprisonment**, and he hoped they could visit together.

- He asks that his **greetings be extended to everyone** and that some **unknown individuals** (to us) **from Italy also send their greetings**.

"GRACE BE WITH YOU ALL."

The author, throughout Hebrews, has been trying to encourage a group of Jewish Believers not to go back to "old ways" in the face of persecution.

- This is the perfect ending to a book that describes the transition from the Old Covenant, established through the Law, into the New Covenant, established by grace. We have a superior savior, Jesus Christ!

IMMUTABILITY OF GOD

- Christ's work of "**yesterday**" was to offer Himself as the perfect sacrifice for our sins. His work "**today**" is that of our High Priest, and His work "**tomorrow**" is to return and complete the redemptive work of God.
- Do we attempt to find security and contentment in things that are infinitely less reliable and secure than Jesus?

WHAT NEXT?

- God is pleased with our **obedience, praise, and unselfish service to others**.
- We must **allow God to work in us** and **rely on Him to equip us** for what is needed to accomplish His will.
- **Get plugged in!** Our processes are not for the benefit of the leader but for the benefit of those who follow.