

Family Matters

All in the Family

Understanding Our Roles – Part 1

Grace Fellowship Church / Pastor Brad Bigney / Jan. 27, 2019

Hebrews 13:1-25 fleshes out some of the details of what it looks like to submit to a specific group of spiritual leaders and what it looks like to commit to sacrificially loving a specific group of believers.

I. What Does It Look Like to Sacrificially Love Other Believers?

A. You're Willing to Love Deeply and to Speak Truthfully to Each Other

Hebrews 12:28 – 13:1 “Therefore let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, and thus let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe, for our God is a consuming fire. Let brotherly love continue.”

Hebrews 13:1 unpacks what acceptable worship looks like. It looks a lot like what Jesus said when He was asked what the greatest command is.

Matthew 22:37-39 ““You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”

Doctrine does matter, but the lost and dying world doesn't care how much deep doctrine you understand if you don't know how to love another Christian. They are watching to see how we treat each other.

Notice **Hebrews 13:1** says, “Let brotherly love continue.” Beginning to love someone is not the biggest challenge, but it's continuing to love the same person or group of people after you get to see the dark side of them.

The writer uses the Greek word 'Philadelphia' or 'family love' because it refers to the love between siblings in the same family. When Christians join together in a local church, it's a family.

Family love is more than a feeling. Family love means we're giving each other permission to speak into our lives on a level that we do not permit in most other contexts.

Hebrews 3:12-14 “Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God. But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called “today,” that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. For we have come to share in Christ, if indeed we hold our original confidence firm to the end.”

We should shepherd each other in the family of God. That's why God gave His Spirit to every believer and calls every believer to be involved in loving the family of God.

B. You're Willing to Suffer with Those Who are Struggling or Have Been Mistreated in Ways that You Have Not

Hebrews 13:3 "Remember those who are in prison, as though in prison with them, and those who are mistreated, since you also are in the body."

The writer of Hebrews says if it happened to them, it's happened to you because you are in the same body!

This passage calls us not to pull away, but to step in because they are part of the body of Christ and you can bring grace and love to them even if you've personally never experienced that struggle.

C. You're Willing to Pursue and Promote Living Radically Different than the Rest of the World Around Us

1. You Refuse to Live as If There are No Sexual Guidelines Other than Personal Preference and Pleasure

Hebrews 13:4 "Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled, for God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterous."

God's Word hasn't changed. We're supposed to be a church family that personally pursues sexual purity and is willing to help others do the same.

The Bible doesn't say once you're a Christian you won't struggle with the same sexual sins anymore. It says you'll have a new power that you never had before because you're no longer a slave to sin and you're not alone because you have a new family who can come around you and hold onto you as you struggle.

2. You Fight Hard to Keep Using Money Instead of Loving Money

Hebrews 13:5 "Keep your life free from the love of money, and be content with what you have..."

Being plugged into a family of God was designed to help us fight against discontentment and the unending quest for more because there are constant opportunities to think of someone else, to give and to sacrifice.

Hebrews 13:16 "Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God."

D. You Can Only Risk Loving and Living this Way When Your Own Personal Identity and Security Are Rooted in Whose You Are Instead of Who You Are

Hebrews 13:5b "... for He has said, 'I will never leave you nor forsake you.' So we can confidently say, 'The Lord is my helper; I will not fear; what can man do to me?'"

In the original Greek, this is one of the most wonderful verses in all the Bible and it's found in the context of two areas that we struggle with so much – sexuality and money!

We can find it so hard to fight in these two areas and can be guilty of feeling like we're alone in this fight and forsaken by God. But v. 5 is literally saying, "I will never, never leave you. I will never, never, never forsake you!"