

"The Practical Application"

Hebrews 13:1-25

Introduction: In our study of Hebrews we are currently in chapter 13 and it is in this chapter that we find exhortations, examples and instructions about living our new life in Jesus Christ. So far in this chapter we have looked at 3 of the exhortations given by the writer to the Hebrew believers.

I. Exhortation #1 - Love one another.

Notice Hebrews 13:1

Here in this verse the writer exhorted the Hebrews to be sure brotherly love CONTINUED. Brotherly love existed among these believers but it had to be maintained. If it was not there would be the development of strife, divisions, and cliques. They were to be sure to guard against the dissolving of brotherly love for these believers needed one another all the time but especially in the midst of the persecution.

II. Exhortation #2 - Show Hospitality

Notice Hebrews 13:2

They were to show hospitality to strangers for 2 reasons:

1. Some had entertained angels without realizing they were angels and the 3 examples were Abraham, Lot, and Manoah. So the point the writer is making is they never knew who God would send into their lives. It could be a man who had turned his back on all he had and gave his life to serve God and these Hebrews could be the means which God would use to sustain the man.
2. The second reason it was important to show hospitality was because it was the same as reaching out to Jesus Christ.

Matthew 25:40

...Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.

III. Exhortation #3 - Live Selflessly

Notice Hebrews 13:3

The Hebrews were to be sure to identify with those who were suffering. This was not just an exhortation to "think" about them and pray for them. This was an exhortation to reach out to them.

1 John 3:18

¹⁸ *My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.*

James 2:15-16

¹⁵ *If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food,*

¹⁶ *And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit?*

This now brings us to where we are in our study tonight.

IV. Exhortation #4 - Esteem Marriage

Notice Hebrews 13:4a

This verse could also read, "***Let marriage be treated as honorable***".

The word "honorable" means "PRECIOUS". In the eyes of God marriage is precious. It is not to be taken lightly and it is to be maintained and cared for.

When I read this exhortation it really makes me wonder about how marriage was attacked in the days when this letter was written. We cannot be sure about the attack on marriage back then but we can know for sure that marriage is certainly under attack in our society today. The attacks upon marriage which we see today are spiritual attacks. God gave marriage to man for several purposes and it is Satan's goal to destroy that which God has established. Let me show you some reasons why Satan attacks the institution of marriage so relentlessly.

1. **Marriage is the foundation of the family.**

Genesis 1:26-28

²⁶ *And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.*

²⁷ *So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.*

²⁸ *And God blessed them, and God said unto them, **Be fruitful, and multiply,** and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.*

When a man and a woman join together in holy marriage it is the beginning of a family which never existed before their wedding day. It is within the covenant of marriage that they are to procreate and raise their children. In is in the family where the children are to be taught, trained, corrected and disciplined.

Deuteronomy 4:9

⁹ *Only take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen, and lest they depart from thy heart all the days of thy life: **but teach them thy sons, and thy sons' sons;***

Deuteronomy 6:4-7

⁴ *Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD:*

⁵ *And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.*

⁶ *And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart:*

⁷ ***And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children,** and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.*

Ephesians 6:4

⁴ *And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: **but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.***

Proverbs 22:6

⁶ *Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.*

Let me show you what Paul wrote concerning Timothy.

2 Timothy 3:14-15

¹⁴ But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them;

¹⁵ And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

Timothy had been trained as a child in the Scriptures.

So getting back to the point, Satan places a target upon the marriage to do his best to destroy the foundation of the family in order to take away the stability for the children.

2. Marriage is an earthly illustration of the believer's relationship with Jesus Christ.

Genesis 2:18-25

¹⁸ And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.

¹⁹ And out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof.

²⁰ And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for Adam there was not found an help meet for him.

²¹ And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof;

²² And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man.

²³ And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.

²⁴ Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.

²⁵ And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.

Here in this text we see the very first bloodshed in the Bible and it was for the purpose of getting a bride for Adam.

God placed Adam in a deep sleep and while he slept he removed one of his ribs or a piece of his flesh. It was from the piece of flesh that God made the bride for Adam.

Adam, here in this text, is a picture of Jesus Christ. The deep sleep is a picture of the death of Christ upon the cross. The removing of the flesh is a picture of the blood which Jesus Christ shed for each of us. Eve is a picture of the church and just as she could not be the bride without the shedding of the blood so we could have never been the bride of Christ without the shedding of His blood upon the cross. For it was His blood which paid the price of redemption. God announced that Adam and Eve would be one flesh and this is a picture of how we are one with Jesus Christ for we are His body. This is the blue print for the family here in Genesis and in all of this we can clearly see that it is a picture of the believer's relationship with Jesus Christ. But there is more.

Mark 10:7-9

⁷ *For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife;*

⁸ *And they twain shall be one flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one flesh.*

⁹ *What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.*

When God joins a man and a woman together in marriage they become one flesh and there is only one thing which will dissolve the marriage and that is death. Divorce does NOT dissolve a marriage.

1 Corinthians 7:39

³⁹ *The wife is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth; but if her husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will; only in the Lord.*

If it was dissolved by divorce then the picture would be that we could lose our salvation. There is nothing and no one who can take us from the hand of God for we are secure in Christ. (This does not mean that divorced Christians are second class believers.)

Now one of the reasons which Satan attacks the marriage is because it is a picture of our relationship with Christ. Therefore if he can break up a family he has succeeded in ruining a picture of the SECURITY which we have in Jesus Christ. But there is more.

When a husband and wife live by the Truth of God's Word then they become a living picture of the believer and his or her Lord.

Ephesians 5:22-29

²² *Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.*

²³ *For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body.*

²⁴ *Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing.*

²⁵ *Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;*

²⁶ *That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,*

²⁷ *That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.*

²⁸ *So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself.*

²⁹ *For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church:*

Notice Hebrews 13:4a again.

The writer also tells them that **"the bed is undefiled"**.

This phrase could be translated, **"And let the bed be undefiled"**.

Let me show you the words of Guzik:

"The enemy of our souls wants to do everything he can to encourage sex outside of the marriage bed, and he wants to do everything he can to discourage sex inside the marriage bed. We need to recognize this strategy and not give it a foothold among us."

Notice the words of Hughes on this verse.

"Christian sexual morality was unique in the pagan world and a source of wonder. And it has become increasingly so today in a world that considers adultery irrelevant, purity abnormal, and sex a "right" (however and with whomever one may get it) and that has

invented the outrageous term "recreational sex." We Christians are called to be outrageously pure—to be a source of wonder and even derision to this "hormone controlled" world. From the beginning to the end of Hebrews, the abiding concern of the author has been to so instruct the tiny Hebrew church that it would stay afloat on the increasingly hostile seas of first-century Roman culture. Their ship was a microscopic dot on the massive billows of the official pagan/secular enterprise—and eminently vulnerable. It appeared to outside eyes that the external forces could sink it at will. But the author knew that the internal threat to the church was far more deadly. In fact, he knew that it could ride out any storm if things were right on the inside. He knows that nothing will sink a church faster than moral wavering in respect to sex, materialism, or mental outlook. Here is intimate advice regarding how to keep our ship afloat. It is so essential that any church that ignores it will founder and possibly even sink."

We live in a world today that is filled with sexual immorality. No matter where you turn it is in your face and it is not just tolerated but it is accepted and it is considered to be the "normal" way of life today. Abstinence is a word that is hardly ever used today.

Conclusion:

We are going to come back to this next week and look closely at what is recorded in the remaining part of this verse. But before we stop I want to just say that sexual immorality has caused more heartache than any other sin. The cost of sex outside the marriage bed is far more than anyone wants to pay. Let me show you with an example. David stepped into sexual immorality with Uriah's wife, Bathsheba. Then he thought he could cover it up and so he hid it for over a year. Then he was confronted by God through Nathan. Let me show you God's message to David.

2 Samuel 12:7-8, 10-11, 13

⁷ *And Nathan said to David, Thou art the man. Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, I anointed thee king over Israel, and I delivered thee out of the hand of Saul;*

⁸ *And I gave thee thy master's house, and thy master's wives into thy bosom, and gave thee the house of Israel and of Judah; and if that had been too little, **I would moreover have given unto thee such and such things.***

¹⁰ *Now therefore the sword shall never depart from thine house; because thou hast despised me, and hast taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be thy wife.*

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¹¹ Thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house, and I will take thy wives before thine eyes, and give them unto thy neighbour, and he shall lie with thy wives in the sight of this sun.

¹³ And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the LORD. And Nathan said unto David, The LORD also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die.