

"The Practical Application"

Hebrews 13:1-25

Introduction: In our study of Hebrews we are currently in chapter 13 where we are looking at the practical teaching which the writer of Hebrews presented to the Hebrew believers. So far in this chapter we have looked at 4 of the exhortations given by the writer to the Hebrew believers.

I. Exhortation #1 - Love one another.

Hebrews 13:1

II. Exhortation #2 - Show Hospitality

Hebrews 13:2

III. Exhortation #3 - Live Selflessly

Hebrews 13:3

IV. Exhortation #4 - Esteem/Honor Marriage

Notice Hebrews 13:4a

This is where we stopped last week as we looked at how marriage is to be honored and the marriage bed is to be protected. Tonight I want to spend just a little more time on this subject again as we look at the second half of this verse.

Notice Hebrews 13:4

In the second part of this verse we have a contrast and it is between purity in the marriage and sexual relations outside the bonds of marriage. Inside the covenant of marriage sex between the husband and the wife is a gift which God has given for both to enjoy. Sex is not something which is to be used to control each other nor is it to be refused by either spouse without mutual consent.

1 Corinthians 7:1-9

Now concerning the things whereof ye wrote unto me: It is good for a man not to touch a woman.

² Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband.

³ Let the husband render unto the wife due benevolence[affection]: and likewise also the wife unto the husband.

⁴ The wife hath not power of her own body, but the husband: and likewise also the husband hath not power of his own body, but the wife.

⁵ Defraud ye not one the other, except it be with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency.

⁶ But I speak this by permission, and not of commandment.

⁷ For I would that all men were even as I myself. But every man hath his proper gift of God, one after this manner, and another after that.

⁸ I say therefore to the unmarried and widows, it is good for them if they abide even as I.

⁹ But if they cannot contain, let them marry: for it is better to marry than to burn.

So within the marriage sex is to be enjoyed by the husband and the wife, but sexual relations outside the covenant of marriage is sin and it will surely carry with it consequences.

Notice Hebrews 13:4 again.

The writer tells his readers that God will judge 2 groups of people.

Whoremongers - This refers to people who are not married and who engage in what our world refers to as "casual sex".

Adulterers - This refers to people who step outside the bonds of their marriage and those who they have sexual relations with.

The warning which the writer gives here is that God will judge both of these groups. His judgment is seen today sexually transmitted diseases, in broken families, and in many other situations. The bottom line is that as believers we are to live lives of purity. Paul gave the directions for the pure life in 1 Thessalonians 4.

1 Thessalonians 4:3-8

³ For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication:

⁴ That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour;

⁵ Not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God:

⁶ That no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter: because that the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also have forewarned you and testified.

⁷ For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness.

⁸ He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, who hath also given unto us his holy Spirit.

V. Exhortation #5 - Be Content

Notice Hebrews 13:5a

The word "conversation" here means "manner of life". The writer here in this verse is exhorting his readers to accept what they had and to be content. Now I am reminded here that because of their faith in Christ many of them were seen as outcasts. This meant they were shut off from much of what others in their society had access to even to the basic needs of life. Therefore there was the danger of falling into covetousness. There was the danger of allowing anxiety to fill their minds as they had no idea what tomorrow would bring or next week or next month. The anxiety could have very easily driven them to covetousness.

Application:

Covetousness in the life of a believer will lead him or her away from the Lord. The Bible has many verses that warn of covetousness. The tenth Commandment deals with covetousness.

Exodus 20:17

¹⁷ Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's.

In the book of Joshua we can see the heartache and devastation which covetousness can cause.

Joshua 7:20-25

²⁰ *And Achan answered Joshua, and said, Indeed I have sinned against the LORD God of Israel, and thus and thus have I done:*

²¹ *When I saw among the spoils a goodly Babylonish garment, and two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold of fifty shekels weight, then I coveted them, and took them; and, behold, they are hid in the earth in the midst of my tent, and the silver under it.*

²² *So Joshua sent messengers, and they ran unto the tent; and, behold, it was hid in his tent, and the silver under it.*

²³ *And they took them out of the midst of the tent, and brought them unto Joshua, and unto all the children of Israel, and laid them out before the LORD.*

²⁴ *And Joshua, and all Israel with him, took Achan the son of Zerah, and the silver, and the garment, and the wedge of gold, and his sons, and his daughters, and his oxen, and his asses, and his sheep, and his tent, and all that he had: and they brought them unto the valley of Achor.*

²⁵ *And Joshua said, Why hast thou troubled us? the LORD shall trouble thee this day. And all Israel stoned him with stones, and burned them with fire, after they had stoned them with stones.*

Achan brought death upon his entire family because of covetousness. But that is not all.

Joshua 7:1-5

But the children of Israel committed a trespass in the accursed thing: for Achan, the son of Carmi, the son of Zabdi, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, took of the accursed thing: and the anger of the LORD was kindled against the children of Israel.

² *And Joshua sent men from Jericho to Ai, which is beside Bethaven, on the east of Bethel, and spake unto them, saying, Go up and view the country. And the men went up and viewed Ai.*

³ *And they returned to Joshua, and said unto him, Let not all the people go up; but let about two or three thousand men go up and smite Ai; and make not all the people to labour thither; for they are but few.*

⁴ *So there went up thither of the people about three thousand men: and they fled before the men of Ai.*

⁵ *And the men of Ai smote of them about thirty and six men: for they chased them from before the gate even unto Shebarim, and smote them in the going down: wherefore the hearts of the people melted, and became as water.*

Here we see that 36 men died because of the covetousness of Achan.

In Jeremiah we can see that covetousness can cause people to be deceitful in their dealings.

Jeremiah 6:13

¹³ *For from the least of them even unto the greatest of them every one is given to covetousness; and from the prophet even unto the priest every one dealeth falsely.*

In Ezekiel we can see that covetousness will keep us from walking in obedience to God's Word.

Ezekiel 33:31

³¹ *And they come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them: for with their mouth they shew much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness.*

Jesus spoke of how covetousness can keep people from coming to salvation.

Luke 8:11-14

¹¹ *Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God.*

¹² *Those by the way side are they that hear; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved.*

¹³ *They on the rock are they, which, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away.*

¹⁴ *And that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection.*

Luke 12:15-20

¹⁵ *And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.*

¹⁶ And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully:

¹⁷ And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits?

¹⁸ And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods.

¹⁹ And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry.

²⁰ But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?

All of these verses make help us to understand what we are commanded to be content.

Notice Hebrews 13:5 again.

Here at the end of this verse is the very reason why none of us who know the Lord are to worry. The Lord has promised that He will never leave us nor will He ever forsake us. Instead of coveting we are to trust in the Lord to meet our needs and give us that which He wants us to have. We have Jesus and He is all we need for He will care for us in every situation. He will NEVER abandon us.

Psalm 37:1-5, 24-25

Fret not thyself because of evildoers, neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity.

² *For they shall soon be cut down like the grass, and wither as the green herb.*

³ *Trust in the LORD, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed.*

⁴ *Delight thyself also in the LORD: and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart.*

⁵ *Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass.*

²⁴ *Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the LORD upholdeth him with his hand.*

²⁵ *I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.*

Matthew 6:25-34

²⁵ *Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?*

²⁶ *Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?*

²⁷ *Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature?*

²⁸ *And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin:*

²⁹ *And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.*

³⁰ *Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?*

³¹ *Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?*

³² *(For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.*

³³ **But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.**

³⁴ *Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.*

Conclusion:

Notice Hebrews 13:6

As they would live lives of contentment trusting in the Lord it would allow them to have a powerful testimony to the people who were watching them. There would be no anxiety, panic, fear or complaining. But instead there would be a peace which the world is always searching for. What an opportunity for these believers and you and I to magnify our Lord!