

HEBREWS

“NO TURNING BACK”

Hebrews Lesson 20

Ice Breaker: What is the difference between a dysfunctional family and a functional one?

INTRO: Functional families aren't perfect; they just work. The members have relationships that are healthy enough for the family to function. The writer of Hebrews seems to have a functional family experience in view as he closes his letter. He describes the kind of relationships necessary for the family of God to be functional.

READ: Hebrews 13:1-6

1 Keep on loving each other as brothers. 2 Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so doing some people have entertained angels without knowing it. 3 Remember those in prison as if you were their fellow prisoners, and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering.
4 Marriage should be honored by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral. 5 Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, “Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.” 6 So we say with confidence, “The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?”

Q: Why does the writer say, “Keep on loving each other as brothers” in verse 1, and why is this so important to having a functional family experience in Christ?

- Love is work. It will make you tired...
 - [2Thess. 3:13](#) *And as for you, brothers, never tire of doing what is right.*
- But it pays off!
 - [Gal. 6:9](#) *“Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.”*
- [1John 3:10](#) Tells us that we can identify who is a real Christian and who is a counterfeit by whether or not they love their brothers.
 - [1John 3:10](#) *“This is how we know who the children of God are and who the children of the devil are: Anyone who does not do what is right is not a child of God; nor is anyone who does not love his brother.”*

Q: Why does the writer tell us to entertain strangers in verse 2?

- He reminds them that sometimes people are more important than they seem.
 - The word angel is “**angelos**” and means, “one sent, a messenger”.
 - Maybe they have wings, maybe they don't... but they may be serving God.
 - We have two stories they would have been familiar with where this actually happened. Abraham in Gen. 18, and Lot in Gen. 19.
- We are to relate to strangers with respect and generosity.

Q: According to verse 3, how are we to relate to those who are being mistreated and/or punished?

- The NKJV translates this in this way: *“Remember the prisoners as if chained with them—those who are mistreated—since you yourselves are in the body also.”*
- I think what he is saying is not to forget or distance yourself from brothers and sisters who are suffering.
 - 2Cor. 12:25-26 *“...so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have **equal concern for each other**. 26 If one part suffers, **every part suffers with it**; if one part is honored, **every part rejoices with it.**”*

Q: According to verse 4, how are we to relate to marriage and in marriage?

- The word translated as “honored” is the Greek word *timios*, and means precious, costly, of great price. In fact, it appears 13 times in scripture... 10 of those times it is translated as “precious”.
 - I think he wants everyone, married or single, to view marriage as a precious, valuable thing.
- The NIV adds the word “kept” in front of pure, where other translations don’t.
 - This verse could be understood as either a statement or a command.
 - As a statement it is saying marriage is the place for sexual expression, so have fun!
 - As a command it is saying don’t bring sexual sin into your bed.

Q: According to verses 5-6, how are we to relate to money and possessions?

- We are not to love money and learn how to be content with what we have.

Q: What is the problem with loving money, and what is the secret to being content without it?

- 1Tim. 6:6-10 *“**But godliness with contentment is great gain.** 7 For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. 8 **But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that.** 9 **People who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction.** 10 **For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.**”*
 - We often turn to money instead of God for security and fulfillment.
 - Money does a lousy job... you can’t trust it!
 - The secret to contentment is trusting God.
 - God does a great job... you can trust Him!
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APPLICATION ASSIGNMENT: *Answer the following questions as best you can, then get with your discipler/discipleship group and discuss your answers.*

1. Are you getting tired of doing good and loving brothers? If so, what can you do to renew your strength?
2. Do you disassociate yourself from believers who are going through tough times or are their hard times your hard times?
3. How are you doing at being content?
 - a. Ask those who know you best if they see you as a being content or still looking for something.