

## The Promise: Christ in Community Marked by Love

Hebrews 13:1-3  
Sunday, April 29, 2012

### INTRODUCTION

#### **A. Christ in Community marked by Brotherly Love (v.1)**

1. Primacy of Brother Love
  - a) **Galatians 6:9-10**
  - b) **1 Peter 3:8**
  - c) Why is the primacy of this so important? Go back to **12:28-29**...display of His glorious and unshakable kingdom.
  - d) This is an imperative, a command... "Let brotherly love continue."
  - e) But this is a letter. Let's go back and remember that there is an indicative first.
    - (1) **Hebrews 2:10-12**
    - (2) This is why **1 John** is so strongly emphatic on the proof of salvation
      - (a) **1 John 3:10**
      - (b) **1 John 4:7**
      - (c) **1 John 4:20-21**
2. All-inclusive
  - a) The present
  - b) The prospect
  - c) The persecuted

3. Application...
  - a) In our Discovery Class, part of our New Members' process, we tell everyone that we expect each member to regularly attend, regularly serve, and regularly contribute to the body. This isn't a way to keep the machine moving. They are biblical expressions of showing that we love. Serious membership means seriously showing the gospel in our love for one another.
  - b) Join and ABF
  - c) Use your gifts
  - d) You can't realize love in serving and giving in the universal church...join a gospel-proclaiming, gospel-living church

#### **B. Christ in Community marked by Hospitality (v.2)**

1. Do not neglect...
  - a) Forgetfulness emphasized (intentional, one way or another)
  - b) **Hebrews 10:32-34; 12:4-5**
2. The prospect as stranger
  - a) Unknown or presumed
  - b) Entertaining angels
    - (1) "Messengers" (**Revelation 2-3**)
    - (2) **Peter O'Brien** (PNTC), "*Although our author may have had several incidents in mind, the allusion that best captures the 'unknowing' character of hospitality is Abraham's gracious welcome to the 'three men' at Mamre (Gen. 18:2, 16). One of these he found out to be 'the angel of the Lord', who promised him and*

*Sarah that they would have a son the following year. The other two strangers to whom Abraham was hospitable are later identified as the 'angels' (19:1, 15–16) who visit Lot in Sodom. The point for the hearers of the discourse is that strangers to whom they show hospitality may 'prove to be true messengers of God to them, bringing a greater blessing than they receive'.*"

3. The missionary

4. The sojourner

5. Application...

- a) Let's first say that there are those WITHOUT the Words of Life who do better...Muslims & Mormons (who are not Christians, by the way)
- b) Join our greeter / parking team!!! See Ryan Martin at the Connecting Point after the service
- c) Adopt a college student and actually have them in the home
- d) Open your eyes to your neighbors and include them in the home for a meal, or visit them and ask if they have occasion to have homes / pets / lawns cared for while on summer vacation.
- e) Start small, but start.

### **C. Christ in Community marked by Shared Suffering (v.3)**

1. Sharing to provide needs
  - a) No "penal" system as we know it

- b) Dependent upon family and supporters for basic life needs

2. Sharing to provide prayer

3. Sharing to provide testimony

- a) Association without shame
- b) "in the body"...intense identification

4. Application...

- a) Annie Armstrong Offering
- b) Praying through Operation World
- c) While this doesn't necessarily mean start a jail ministry, for it associates more with those imprisoned for the gospel, it doesn't mean don't start one either.
- d) Certainly there is no ministry too undignified for the local church

### **D. Christ in Community understood as Mission**

1. Just because we have association with the local church doesn't mean we love His bride
2. We must embrace the strange economy of God's mission, that loving the body is the first wave of communal evangelism
3. All of **Chapter 13** helps put this in perspective
4. We are not islands...We are not individualistic...We are HIS BRIDE