

*Calvary Chapel of El Paso Morning Ladies' Bible Study – The Book of Hebrews
May 11, 2021 – “Eight Marks Of A Runner” – Hebrews 13:1-9*

Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another. – 1 John 4:11

As we near the end of The Book of Hebrews, we now are instructed in various ways that we individual Christians live this life together. Chapter 11 told us of many Old Testament saints who are examples of living in faith. Then Chapter 12 taught us to *look unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith* – how each of us does this. We can do this because we have come to Mt. Zion, the new covenant of grace, not Mt. Sinai the old covenant of law.

Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: For our God is a consuming fire. – Hebrews 12:28-29

Then Paul “turns a page” to how we Christians relate to others in our walk with Him. We need each other! READ Heb. 13:1-9

Within this short passage, we find God’s reassurances to us:

Verse 4: God is judge [He will take care of those not following His ways, and WE don’t have to do it]

Verse 5: He will never leave or forsake us.

Verse 6: The Lord is my helper; there is no need to fear what man can do to us.

Verse 8: Jesus NEVER changes.

Now we come to the 8 marks of a runner:

Let brotherly love continue.

Do not forget to entertain strangers.

Remember those in prison and those who suffer adversity.

Let your conversation (lifestyle) be without covetousness.

Be content with what you have.

Remember the leaders in the church.

Follow their faith.

Do not be carried away by strange doctrine.

Verse 1: *let brotherly love continue.* This is “philadelphia,” not “agape.”

3 main kinds of love in the Bible:

Agape: the God kind of love, as in 1 Cor. 13 and elsewhere. We cannot have that unless we know Him.

Philadelphia: brotherly (and sisterly) love, which cannot happen unless we have agape love.

Love in a marriage.

So here we have brotherly love based on God's love:

1 John 4:11 Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another. 12 No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us.

This is God's love in action in us, as we relate to one another.

Another aspect of the love of God and our love for one another is that God is the judge (verse 4b-6). So we do not judge others. And we do not fear the judgment of God – His love casts out fear.

1 John 4:17 Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world. 18 There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.

Verse 2: *entertain strangers* – “entertain,” or have a fondness for guests.

There were no hotels and restaurants like now, so people took into their homes those needing food or lodgings. This verse would cause the Hebrews to remember Abraham, who offered a meal to the “three men” who came visiting. At first Abraham did not realize this was the Lord and 2 angels. Lot also “entertained” the 2 angels.

“Strangers” could be those from outside the community, or just those not part of the family or fellowship. The Hebrews were probably hesitant because of the growing persecution of Christians, so Paul encouraged them to go ahead and do it.

We too should do the same in whatever way we can.

Verse 3: The thought in verse 2 carries over to remembering fellow believers who are in prison or are being persecuted, even though we may receive backlash. We are all in this together as the body of Christ.

1 Cor. 12:25 That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another. 26 And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it.

How do we “remember” them? Through prayer and to help as we can; to stand with them.

Verse 4: *marriage is honorable* – here Paul wrote of love between a man and a woman in marriage. [the word “eros” is not in the Bible, but is implied in various passages]

In marriage – is honorable.

Outside marriage – God will judge. Note that “*whoremonger*” is between 2 unmarried people; “*adulterer*” is between a married person and someone else. There are a few other words for these practices, but suffice to say that God will judge those who do not follow His commandments in this area.

Verse 5: Live without greed and be content with what you have. (Although the world around us certainly pulls us in the other direction!)

Why and how? The Lord with us is enough.

I will never leave thee or forsake thee – 5 negatives in this short statement. It just is not going to happen! Note that this promise is to the individual “*thee*” not plural *you*.” God is our Lord of each individual one of us.

(1) He will not withdraw His presence.

(2) He will not withdraw His help.

The phrase *never leave thee* has a meaning of never withdrawing His hand, never dropping you, never withdrawing His sustaining power. He will be there with you at all times.

John 10:28 And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.

So the Lord will never loosen the grip of His hand on your hand. It’s like a daddy holding his little child’s hand through it all – but only God can never loosen His grip one little bit.

Verse 6: So that’s why we can *boldly say, The Lord is my helper*, and there is no need to fear.

Psalm 27:1 The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?

Psalm 118:6 The LORD is on my side; I will not fear: what can man do unto me?

Our Lord is the best, the perfect helper – Almighty God!

Psalm 23:4 Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

Verse 7: Remember and follow the example of your church leaders. Some of those leaders have already passed on into heaven, and we remember the Word they taught us and the example they set for us. Some of those leaders are still with us (Heb. 13:17), and we remember them by how they:

Watch over us (v. 17)

Teach us the Word

Are good examples of how to live out our faith in this world

What treasures we have in true shepherds of we sheep!

Verse 8: Jesus never changes. The Hebrews would remember that the Lord said this about Himself, as recorded in *Malachi 3:6 For I am the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.*

This is so important now. More than ever “reality” out there seems to be constantly changing. We have the Rock Jesus Christ on whom we stand.

2 Timothy 3:1 This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. We are in the last days now.

“*Perilous*” carries the meaning of dangerous, fierce, furious. Sounds like the world around us lately. One of the tactics of Satan that has increased greatly is to challenge truth: much deception and false information; changing rules and “facts”; ridicule of those who stand on the Word of God; etc, etc. And the way it is being done is increasingly downright mean.

SO – thank you Jesus that you never change! We can always rely on you.

Verse 9: Warning about many *diverse and strange doctrines* – we are bombarded now with all kinds of novel (new), foreign (to the Word) ideas. And much of it is in the “church”!

Again it goes back to grace or works (law, for the Hebrews). Hebrews 12:15 – don’t *fail of the grace of God*. The thoughts in that passage are echoed here in our verses for today. If our *heart is established with grace*, we will not fall back into the things warned against here. Don’t get caught up in dead works and rules and regulations.

These 9 verses are full of assurances from the Lord, as well as details on how we are to run the race together as believers. We will see next week that Paul went on to explain, once again, how it is all through our Lord Jesus Christ that we can walk in these things.

*Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable,
always abounding in the work of the Lord,
forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.
– 1 Corinthians 15:58*

