

September 15, 2019 -

Hebrews 13:4-9 -

Essentials of the Christian Life

Introduction:

Nature teaches us about change, the weather changes...seasons change, time changes, ... Technology has changed us and it has occurred so subtly and we don't even recognize it. Our cell phones that fit in our pockets can do everything that would require many different electronic products to do. I think about how the laws have change in our country. There was a day when an unborn child was safe in the womb of one's mother, not today. Our congress has established laws that changed laws of the past for the worst. There was a time when Bible reading and prayer in schools and public places were protected by the laws. Not anymore, that has change. Our government's system of law- contrasts with God's system of moral standards. We have changed over time progressively and subtly and we have lost our moral compass and most don't even know it.

My heart aches for older generations of folks because these changes in our culture have affected their families even to the place of division and dissention. I am saddened to tell you that things will progress even more over time for the worst. If we have reconciled that we live in the last days then we must integrate God's truth and face the reality of the end times. Paul wrote to Timothy concerning the last days in his second epistle to him in chapter 3:1-6.

So, thank God that in a changing world Jesus never changes. **Hebrews13:[8] Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever. [9] Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines.** Things change, but He is unchanging. Many Scriptures tell us that God is unchanging; the scriptures are unchanging too. The Bible speaks again and again about the immutability of His character. Hebrew 13:8, 9 should be the foundation upon why we should...

I. Behave Ethically (13:4-6).

1. This begins in the home. Therefore, the inspired author writes: ***Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled. - But whoremongers and adulterers God will judge*** (13:4). Whoremongers refer to people having any kind of sex outside the marriage of a man and woman. Adulterers refer to married people who have sex with someone other than their spouse. Those who are guilty of these sins, it is God who will judge. The enemy of our souls wants to do everything he can to encourage sex outside of marriage and he wants to do everything he can to discourage sex inside the marriage bed. God allows great freedom in the variety of sexual expression in marriage, all must be done with a concern for the needs of their spouse and in love Christians must recognize this strategy and not give it a foothold.

Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity. I Timothy 4:12

God wanted the Jews to shine in the world as a very unique people. He wanted them separate. He wanted them different.

2. Behaving ethically also means we are without covetousness and content with such things as we have (13:5a-b). To be content doesn't mean to be complacent. We should plan, invest, and work, but we don't have to have more stuff to be content. If you don't have enough stuff right now to make you content, you never will. **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. Luke 12:15**

Someone asked millionaire Bernard Baruch, "How much money does it take for a rich man to be satisfied?" Baruch answered, "Just a million more than he has."

3. Happiness has nothing to do with how much we have; it has everything to do with our attitudes toward what we have. We must stop thinking more stuff will make us happier. A wonderful truth found in Ecclesiastes 5:10 teach us this principle. **He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver; nor he that loveth abundance with increase: this [is] also vanity.**

We now have in America a very serious personal debt problem because of a generation who can't be content no matter how much they have. The United States gross national debt is currently more than \$22.6 trillion and growing by more than \$3 billion every day. That is a debt for every American citizen of \$68,421 as of today.

4. God doesn't want us to lack essential needs. He wants to provide it, but instead of praying and waiting on God, many people just charge it. Few things have minimized prayer like credit. We don't want to pray and wait on God; we want it now. However, Psalm 37:4 gives us this special truth that if we- **Delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart.** --
- Always wanting more than we need is being greedy. Greed is the opposite of contentment. Money and possessions can never bring contentment. Those things will let you down, but God never will.

5. In Hebrews 13:5b, this is a wonderful verse we all love and claim. In the Greek text there are five negatives here. In English we cannot manage five negatives, but the Greek find them not too large a handful. Here the negatives have a fivefold force. It is as though it said, 'I will not, not leave thee; I will never, no never, forsake thee. The inspired author paraphrasing Psalm 27:1 and 118:6 writes we can boldly say in Hebrews 13:6--- The LORD [is] on my side; I will not fear: what can man do unto me? Contentment confidently believes the Lord is our helper. I will not labor this for this was our teaching in Philippians.

Only when we are content can we behave ethically and avoid the danger of the love of money, which is the root of all kinds of evil (1 Tim. 6: 6-10a). Love of money is the source of all kinds of unethical behavior. Essentials for the Christian life include **love continually, behave ethically...**

II Guard the truth faithfully (13:7-9).

1. Believers are also to remember them which have the rule over them and speak to them the word of God (13:7a). We are to follow their faith and consider the outcome of their lives (13:7b). This refers to leaders who taught us God's Word and set good Christian examples for us. Times and leaders change, but Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and today, and forever

(13:8). We serve the same Lord as our spiritual mothers and fathers who set such great examples for us. Jesus is always available because He is the One that liveth and is alive for evermore (Rev. 1:18).

2. No matter what lies ahead, no matter what changes, we can count on the Lord being the same. One thing that is always changing is false teachers. Every generation of believers has a fresh batch of them. Therefore, we must not be carried about with divers and strange doctrines. **For it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace; not with meats, which have not profited them that have been occupied therein (13:9).**

3. Apparently, some false teachers were teaching the recipients of this epistle that they could get extra spiritual strength from certain ceremonial meats. There are a lot of strange doctrines today. This is Satan's ploy. Satan has destroyed many a Christian's testimony, robbed many a Christian of all of his joy and all of his effectiveness by getting him derailed on false doctrine.

I once knew of a TV ministry from which you could purchase a small bottle of water. If you drank it, your health, finances, relationships, or whatever, would miraculously improve. Others offer miracle prayer handkerchiefs, prayer rugs and health, wealth and prosperity gospel all spiritualizes greed and selfishness. Thank God Benny Hinn has repented of this.

Strange doctrines abound today. Therefore, we cannot forget the exhortation in I John 4:1 **Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.**

In other words, we can't let false doctrine go unchecked; we must contend for the truth of God's Word. We have been entrusted with the unchanging faith Christ and the apostles gave us, and we are to keep it pure and teach it to others.

Conclusion:

Instead of us being seduced by the latest spiritual trend, we are to be established with grace, which only comes from reading, studying, and hearing the written Word of God in the Bible. We are not only saved by God's grace but also established by it. To live the Christian life, it is essential to love continually, behave ethically, and guard the truth faithfully. If you are not saved you will struggle to behave ethically and will live like the world.

Remember the world is at enmity with God...**Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God (James 4:4).** Many people have elevated themselves above God's Word in this world today and think they are gods. God knows this evil within the hearts of men and has long proclaimed...Psalms 82:5-8

Gospel...