

APPLYING TO DOCTRINE TO BETTER RELATIONSHIPS (Hebrews 13:1-7)

1. Relationships with brethren (Hebrews 13:1).

- a. The verse sounds like it is a suggestion but the tense in which it is written shows that this is a command.
- b. Not only that, but the tense shows that it already existed and the writer was encouraging them to not let that love be removed or interrupted.
- c. The word translated “brotherly love” is from the philo love.
 - i. It is a form of the word from which we get Philadelphia.
 - ii. It is a family love so this shows the atmosphere that is to exist in congregations of God’s people.
- d. You can imagine how important this would be in the situation in which these brethren found themselves.
 - i. They were being pressured to leave Christ.
 - ii. Some was from family, some from the government, some from neighbors.
 - iii. It was difficult enough being a Christian without problems with the brethren.
- e. Jesus has been shown to be better and those who profess to love Jesus need to be better than those in the world around us.
 - i. If there are fights and arguments, we make it easy on one another to leave the Lord.
 - ii. We have enough pressures from the world without providing pressure to leave the Lord in the church.
- f. Brethren must make sure to treat each other properly, like a loving family does, so as not to make life more difficult for one another.

2. Relationships with strangers (Hebrews 13:2).

- a. Hospitality in that part of the world was very important.
 - i. One would open their home to strangers out of a sense of duty.
 - ii. If one came up, no matter the time, it was considered terrible manners to not allow them in if you had the opportunity to house them.
- b. The word for entertain strangers is a compound word that means love of strangers and it carries the idea of hospitality to those we don’t know.
- c. He mentions to not be forgetful to show hospitality to those we don’t know.
 - i. The word for forget means to become neglectful of it.
 - ii. The writer was telling them to not neglect being hospitable to those whom they did not know.
- d. He makes an interesting comment that by being hospitable, some had taken care of angels.
 - i. This is probably a reference to Abraham and Lot.
 - ii. In Genesis 18, two angels and the 2nd Person of the Godhead in bodily form come to Abraham.
 - iii. In chapter 19, the two angels come to Lot and he brings them into his house.
- e. I don’t believe we entertain angels today, but I believe the writer is telling us that we need to be hospitable because we don’t know what opportunities will open up for us.

- i. Don't get me wrong, I don't mean let random people off the street into our homes.
- ii. Our world is much too dangerous for such.
- iii. However, we must do good to others when the opportunity presents itself.
- iv. **(Illus. of man changing tire and receiving a TV compliments of Mrs. Nat King Cole).**
- v. It may be that you can end up with a Bible study with someone.
- f. People need to know we are Christians all the time and a great way to show them is by the way we treat them.

3. Relationships with oppressed brethren (Hebrews 13:3).

- a. Back in chapter 10, the writer had complimented them on the way they had treated some brethren who had been punished for being Christians.
- b. They were to act as if they were bound with those who had been imprisoned.
- c. Those that were treated evilly by the world were to be viewed as themselves.
- d. Deep compassion and aid as much as possible was to be given to those who were suffering in such ways.
- e. In our time, this isn't something we have to deal with often.
 - i. However, there are missionaries who deal with such and brethren in places where the gospel is poorly viewed.
 - ii. We need to be praying for them and aiding them where possible.
- f. Not only that, but such times are probably headed our way soon.
 - i. How are we going to treat a brother who loses his job for being a Christian?
 - ii. Will we aid a sister who is imprisoned for taking a stand against homosexuality in some way?
 - iii. It's easy to distance oneself from one who is being punished by society so as not to draw unwanted attention ourselves.
 - iv. The writer, by inspiration, says we aren't to do that.

4. Relationships with spouses (Hebrews 13:4).

- a. Thayer tells us that the word "honourable" carries the idea of being honored or viewing as esteemed.
 - i. The ASV translated it "Let marriage be had in honor among all".
 - ii. The ESV, "Marriage is to be held in honor among all".
- b. We are to hold the institution of marriage in an honorable regard.
 - i. Too many today have a low view of marriage.
 - ii. Some just view it as some legal issue that is nothing at all.
 - iii. Others view it as something that is to be gotten into and out of with ease.
- c. God is the designer of marriage and as such, it is a divine institution.
 - i. It is to be held in high regard because of this.
 - ii. God only ordained three institutions, the home being the first along with government and the church.
- d. It is to be held in honor or esteemed because where good homes are, society is stable.
- e. Marriage is a sacred bond and is to be entered into only with the approval of God Himself, as found in scripture.

f. The marriage bed is a reference to the sexual relationship between a husband and wife.

i. This relationship is to be viewed as honorable by all.

ii. The sexual relationship is limited to being between a husband and wife only.

iii. There is nothing dirty about this relationship when it is engaged in by properly married people.

iv. I have a preacher friend whose wife felt dirty morally when they exercised this right of married people.

v. She had been brought up in the Lord's church but with a view of sex being dirty, and there had been no teaching about the beauty of it between husband and wife.

vi. You can imagine that this created some difficulties for a while in their marriage.

g. Notice that there is no instruction for sexual relationships outside of marriage because they are all sinful.

i. Those who break the sexual laws God has ordained, being only between a husband and wife in a God approved marriage, will be judged.

ii. It doesn't matter if it is between married people or non-married people, sexual relationships outside of a God-approved marriage will bear the judgment of God.

h. The doctrine of Christ teaches about the sanctity of marriage and the benefits of marriage for all and those relationships need to be kept pure.

5. Relationships with self (Hebrews 13:5-6).

a. Our manner of life, the way we live and view life, is to be without covetousness.

i. Milligan said this carried the idea that all aspects of our lives and conduct should clearly indicate that our hearts are not set on acquiring the riches of this world.

ii. The ASV says "Be ye free from the love of money."

iii. Greed has killed the influence and souls of many Christians.

b. Instead of being covetous, we need to be satisfied with the things we have.

c. As long as we have God, we have all we need because He is going to make sure our needs are meant.

d. Very similar phrases to the end of verse five are found in Deuteronomy 31:6, Joshua 1:5, and 1 Chronicles 28:20.

e. The idea is that when we are putting God first, He is not leaving us and will provide for us.

i. This does not mean we have no responsibility in the matter.

ii. The writer does not cover that here, but in other New Testament passages the necessity of work is taught.

iii. The Jewish Christians to whom this was written had been reared in a culture that taught a good work ethic and despised those who simply failed to work.

f. Verse 6 is basically a quote of Psalm 118:6.

g. When we have a proper view of the attitude towards this world's goods, we are going to have a proper view of self.

i. It is a total reliance on God for all things.

ii. God will not fail us, let us not fail Him.

6. Relationships with those who taught us the gospel (Hebrews 13:7).

a. Some believe that this is a verse about the relationship between members and elders, but it seems to be between teacher and student.

i. Later in the chapter he will talk about the relationship between elders and members.

ii. It does not make sense for him to address it, leave it, and then come back to it in just a few verses.

b. Several commentators believe it is referring to those who taught the gospel to them and had died.

i. Notice it is to those who “have spoken”.

ii. This is past tense.

c. We are to appreciate the efforts of those who have taught us in the past and we do that by following their examples where they were faithful to Christ.

d. We do it by honoring their memory and sacrifice by remaining faithful to the true gospel message they taught us.

Idea for this outline came from a lecture by Joey Davis in the “Studies On Hebrews” lectureship book by the Schertz Church of Christ.