

Hebrews

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- [0 : 0 0] Well, here's your sheet. We are beginning or continuing with Hebrews chapter 13. This is the last chapter in this particular book that we are considering.
- And I'm already excited about what's coming because we are living in troublous times and we see things occurring on the horizon that make us wonder, how much longer can this old world go on as it is?
- And the book of Daniel that has often been referred to as the book of the Revelation of the Old Testament is that which we will be undertaking when we complete our study of the book of Hebrews.
- And it is a fascinating, fascinating book. And it does contain a lot of practical information as well as prophetic information. And you will see how these things develop when we get into it.
- And that will be determined by when we finish Hebrews. But right now, we have concluded with verse 4. And I just want to make sure that there are not some issues or questions unanswered or points to be made that you would like to care for.
- [1 : 1 0] And I'm talking about verse 4. Where marriage is honorable in all and the bed undefiled. Poor mongers and adulterers God will judge.
- And let your conversation be without covetousness and be content with such things as you have. We'll get into that a little bit this morning. But as regards the subject of marriage, what is involved, the marriage bed, etc.
- Is there anything else that needs to be addressed regarding that? Anybody have any points that they'd like to make or questions? Joe. In that last part of that, where he talks about whore mongers and adulterers, God will judge.
- Yeah. Go to Galatians 5. He really points it out there. As a matter of fact, he says they won't even make heaven. Yeah. Galatians. And this isn't brought out so much in the Greek or in the English, but it is stronger in the Greek.
- And it has to do with the practitioners of these things. It does not mean that anyone who has ever committed adultery is exempt from heaven.
- [2 : 1 4] And we can be grateful that it doesn't mean that. But it does mean that those whose lifestyle is this practice. It means those who engage in these things as a rule of thumb.
- The whore mongers and adulterers God will judge. And they will be excluded. In Revelation, I think, 22 makes that quite clear. But we can be thankful that there is salvation, there is forgiveness available for those who commit not only these sins, but any and all sins.
- And it is available through our Lord Jesus Christ. But that salvation will never be realized. And trust in Christ will never be placed without repentance.
- And repentance has to do with the changing of the mind and the thinking that led to the action that resulted in the sin. And repentance I've often referred to as God's silver bullet.

Because there is absolutely nothing that delights the heart of God more than an individual recognizing their error and their sin and being willing to admit it and turn from it and embrace the truth.

[3 : 30] That delights the heart of God. I think this is in part what is referred to in the Gospels when the Lord Jesus said that there is joy, there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels in heaven over one sinner that repents.

And repentance, repentance always begins with information. And when you preach the Gospel, you are giving people information.

You're giving them a reason to repent, to change their mind. Because the new information you're giving them requires that. So it's a beautiful concept. And we will move on unless somebody wants to park there for a while.

Are we okay with this? Huh? I'm sorry? Do you have another one of the sheets that were? Which one? The scripture sheet?

No, I'm sorry. I just gave out the last one. I've given these out three times. I think you guys are eating them. But anyway, okay.

[4 : 36] I make sure that we make enough copies. They make about 40 or 45 copies. But still inevitably it seems like I've run out. So anyway, verse 5.

Let your conversation be without covetousness. And the New American Standard Bible says, Let your way of life be free from the love of money.

And Rhames translates it, Without fondness for money be your way of life. Let your conduct be free from covetousness.

Do not let your conduct be ruled by the love of money. I remember back years ago when the big flap was going on regarding the Watergate controversy, and Nixon was in the White House, and the hullabaloo over the tapes that were made and everything, and there was an informant that had not been identified, and he was referred to as Deep Throat, and somebody was asking him, Well, where does all this come out?

How does this figure? I remember the phrase that was used. Follow the money. Follow the money. And in almost every kind of situation, whether it's a business transaction, whether it is political tomfoolery, or whatever it is, it's almost always a certainty.

[5 : 56] Follow the money. See who's going to benefit, or who's going to be penalized financially, and likely as not, you'll be hot on the track of something if you just follow the money.

That's exactly what this verse is talking about. Joe, and then... It doesn't mean that you're not supposed to work. If you're not supposed to put effort out on your part to leave, you can't take care of your family.

Right. Absolutely. Absolutely. So you've got to be careful. Right. Dana? If you want to look and see what you are unaware of what you idolize, look at your own checkbook of where you spend money.

Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. I didn't realize I spent that much on that. Maybe I put that in too high of an importance. I don't believe it that. Don't you? In that case, I idolize insurance.

I mean, that's... Let's go through where my money goes. One of my favorite anecdotes involved John Wesley, who was prominent in the New England awakening and Great Britain awakening in the 1700s.

[7 : 05] and he spent a great deal of his life on horseback, going all over, preaching the gospel everywhere. And one day he had heard that a certain wealthy individual in the town had been converted to Christ.

And Wesley's response was, well, that's wonderful news. Tell me, was his purse converted too? Because very often that reveals the degree of one's commitment.

How do you regard money? And what do you consider valuable and worthy of investing? So, it's a problem that we've been struggling with for as long as man has been around.

One of the most misquoted verses in all of the Bible is money is the root of all evil. That is not true. Money is not the root of all evil.

There is nothing evil about money. The text says the love of money is the root of all evil. Huge difference. Money is a legitimate exchange.

[8 : 14] And we need it to conduct life and living. So, there's nothing evil or wrong about money. Jesus dealt with that while he was here on earth. But it's the use of it and the love of it and the demand for it that gets us into trouble.

Be content with such things as you have. I don't know for sure if Paul wrote this, but I suspect he did. And this is the same one that said, Paul did write this.

I have learned in whatsoever state I am therewith to be content. He said, I know how to be abased. I know how to live on next to nothing and be hungry.

And I know how to abound because I've lived on the other side as well. Which means, of course, I've learned to be content with just a piece of bread.

And I've learned to enjoy a good steak from one extreme to the other. But contentment in either case is the key. Someone said that the mark of a man who is truly contented is a man who can enjoy the scenery while he's on a detour.

[9 : 27] Something to think about, isn't it? Yeah. Instead of grumbling and griping and whatnot. Be content with such things as you have.

For he has said, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee. You know, that's supposed to be our underlying basis there.

That's supposed to be our stability. The reason that we can be content with whatever we have, be it little or be much, is because that which really matters most, the only thing that really matters, is that he will be with you and he will not forsake you.

That gives a new wrinkle for everything. Just the knowledge that he is there, no matter whether you are enjoying much or little.

The thing that matters most is that he will never leave nor forsake you. One of my favorite quotes of late has been, if there is no God, nothing really matters.

[10 : 39] But if there is a God, nothing else really matters. It's all a matter of perspective. And that's exactly what this is talking about.

I will never leave thee nor forsake thee. That's our rock and that's our basis. So that we may boldly say, the Lord is my helper. And I will not fear.

I will not be afraid. What man shall do unto me. Jesus made it clear when he said, don't fear those who can destroy the body.

That's the most they can do. But that's the temporal part of your being. That body is not forever. But the immaterial part of your being, that's what really counts.

That's that which is going to exist somewhere forever. That is your eternal spirit. That is your eternal spirit. Joe. Amen.

[11 : 42] Romans 8.31. God before us, who can be against you. And it doesn't mean that if God is for you, nobody can oppose you. Because we know plenty of people for whom God has been for, and who have been for God, have been opposed, and are being opposed.

And some of them are in prison camps, and some of them are undergoing all kinds of deprivation and persecution. And it doesn't mean that God is for you, that nobody can oppose you, but it means that nobody can oppose you so that it ultimately matters and makes a difference in the big picture.

That's what it means. So, anyone who will live godly in Christ Jesus in the sphere of persecution is going to suffer persecution. And that's going on in a lot of countries throughout the world.

And most of the persecution is coming from the hands of Islamic extremists. And they are taking it out on Christians and Jews in different parts of the world.

And right now, it's particularly so in Africa. And there are tremendous prices being paid by Christian people at the hands of Muslim extremists, particularly in Africa, but in other parts of the world as well.

[12 : 58] So that we may boldly say, not timidly say, not tentatively say, but boldly say, the Lord is my helper, I will not fear what man shall do unto me.

Remember them which have the rule over you, your leaders. Knox at the bottom translates it, those who have had charge of you, who have spoken unto you the word of God, whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation.

And this conversation, it's a word that is often used in the New Testament and it really misses the boat as far as understanding is concerned. because it has to do with, it has to do with your lifestyle or your manner of life.

And when Paul wrote to the Philippians and said, our conversation is in heaven from whence we look for our Lord Jesus Christ, we think of conversation as something that takes place between people when they're talking and conversing back and forth.

And that's the modern meaning. But as it was used back then, it has to do with your lifestyle, your daily routine, your living. And what Paul was saying when he wrote to the Philippians is that our place of real residence and real permanence is in heaven from whence we look for our Lord Jesus Christ.

[14 : 37] And the conversation here doesn't mean what one is saying or speaking as it does in our use today. And this is, of course, from the King James. He's talking about the their well, I think the Germans call it your mean.

That's the M-I-E-N. Your bearing. Your way of approaching life. Your lifestyle. Your attitude. The way you live and live out. And that's what he's talking about here when he says considering the end of their conversation.

Considering the end of the manner in which they live their life. Where is that going? What is what is the end result of that? And of course, it ties in with our conversation is in heaven.

And that's all part and parcel of the same thing. Is that clear enough or clear as mud? What, Joe? What? When you talk about those who were older, is he talking about the leaders of the church in Jerusalem?

The ones that started the church? The ones Yeah, I think he's referring to those who are exercising spiritual authority.

[15 : 46] In the case of some of these Hebrews or Jews to whom this epistle was written, you've got to remember that the Jewish people for the first yeah, for about the first eight to ten years after the resurrection of Christ the only believers there were in Jesus Christ were Jews.

Gentiles, that is, a non-Jewish person did not even come into the picture until you get clear over to Acts chapter ten.

Several years after the resurrection. and that was Cornelius the Roman army officer and his coming to faith in Christ as a non-Jew really stirred up a lot of things.

I mean, it was a very controversial issue and Peter even got in trouble for it going to his house and proclaiming the gospel to Cornelius. So, these individuals were across the whole spectrum of Judaism.

Most of the Jews who came to faith in Yeshua, Jesus as their Messiah, as the one sent from God, most of them were what we would call just the ordinary people.

[17 : 17] There's a text in the Gospels that refers to the impact that Jesus had by his preaching and it said that the common people heard him gladly.

These are the ordinary John and Jane does out there in the community. Most of them were, you know, fairly poor people. They were not affluent and they hung on every word of Jesus.

But he got almost all of his flack and opposition from the religious establishment. But, some of those folks eventually came to faith in Yeshua.

We know Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus, they were the ones who sought for the body of Christ and Joseph of Arimathea said, Jesus can use my tomb.

Nobody's ever been laid in it. So, these were Pharisees who had come to faith in Christ. And, as you read the book of Acts early on, I think around chapter 6, 7, 8 in that area, we read that a number of priests, Jewish priests, came to faith in Yeshua as the Messiah.

[18 : 35] And, these were people in positions of authority and responsibility. And, you can imagine what they began teaching when they themselves embraced Yeshua as their Messiah.

They began communicating that to the common people. Just like Saul of Tarsus, upon his conversion, he went right into the synagogue at Damascus and began preaching that Jesus is the Messiah.

And, folks, I was completely wrong. But, now, I have repented and reversed myself. And, the faith that I once sought to destroy, I am now propagating.

Amazing. Yeah, Bob? When you're saying that Jesus spoke to groups of thousands of people and considered common people, were they Jewish or Gentiles?

Oh, no, they were Jews. They were almost exclusively Jews. In fact, Jesus had very little contact with non-Jews. And, this is often not appreciated or understood.

[19 : 35] Remember the Syrophoenician woman that came to Jesus on behalf of her daughter and says, my daughter is ill and I believe that you can... Now, this was quite an admission for a Gentile to make regarding a Jew.

And, she said, I've heard of your reputation and of your healings, would you please come and heal... And remember what Jesus said to her? He said, it is not appropriate for me to take the meat that belongs to the children and give it to dogs.

Remember that? What is that all about? Who's he talking about? Who were the dogs? Gentiles! The Jews regarded Gentiles as dogs.

And one reason they did was because a dog will eat anything. And a Gentile will eat it. A Gentile will even eat pork. A Gentile will even eat lobster and shrimp.

Now, a Jew wouldn't. That was forbidden. That wasn't kosher food. But the Gentiles, that's the way they were regarded. And Jesus did not come to the Gentiles.

[20 : 51] He came to the Jew. This is John 1. He came into his own. Who were his own? His countrymen! His fellow Jews! He came into his own, but he came for the whole world.

For everybody. But through Israel. Yeah. Yeah. Matthew 10. Yeah. The program was not set up for them yet.

Exactly. Get in the program first and then the Gentiles. This was a program that the kingdom program that was designed for Israel because God's intent, God's great game plan is to install Israel as the lead nation for all the nations of the world.

Problem was Israel as it existed when Christ was here was quite well placed and positioned and didn't want any competition from the outside.

These were the shakers and the movers and they were in bed with the Romans who gave them certain perks of keeping the people and keeping the lid on things. So it was a corruption that wouldn't quit when Christ was here and that's the kind of thing that he had to deal with.

[22 : 08] So Gentiles had very, very little involvement in the ministry of Christ and that needs to be kept in mind because it puts the focus where it needs to be and that is on Israel.

Now I know this really rankles a lot of Christians who see the Christian church as the replacement for Israel and they are ready to throw Israel aside permanently and they believe that that's what God has done.

But God has made promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob that his integrity requires him to fulfill and he will fulfill them.

Israel remains the apple of God's eye. Israel is my glory as is stated in Isaiah, I think it's 44 or 45.

So the key, the key to the world renovation, the key to the world restitution lies with the nation of Israel.

[23 : 13] But Israel was not at all cooperative. They rejected the one that God sent to establish that and because of that we are in now what is referred to as the times of the Gentiles.

That's where we are right now. Joe. Oh yeah. Absolutely. And how will that come about? It will come about through the repentance of Israel.

Remember in Acts 2 when Peter preached his message on Pentecost and he charged the nation Israel with having crucified the Lord of glory, you have by wicked hands crucified and slain the Lord of glory.

And the Jewish constituents, the audience there, many of them, we don't know how many because we don't know how many were there, but many of them said, this man's right.

We see it. We see how it all comes together. What Peter is saying is absolutely right on. We crucified our Messiah.

[24 : 28] and then they said, I can see them turning to each other and say, this guy's right, this guy's right. We did that. Our nation did that.

But we can't undo it. Where do we go from here? Men and brethren, what shall we do? And Peter said, repent.

Repent. Change your mind based on the information I just gave you. David wasn't speaking of himself.

We know where David is buried. David was speaking of his son. Thou wilt not leave my soul in Hades. You will not allow my body to see corruption.

What was he talking about? He was talking about his emerging from the tomb before the body was corrupted. David wasn't speaking of himself. David's body did corrupt.

[25 : 30] We know where he's buried. We can take it to David's tomb right now. David was speaking of his son, the Messiah. And all of these Jews listening to this, I could just see what's going on in their minds.

Light bulbs popping on all over the place, connecting dots. And they said, he's right. He's right. Peter said, you repent, you change your mind based on the information I just gave you.

And to demonstrate that you have, you be baptized with the baptisms that you earlier refused when John was baptizing.

Now, put your money where your mouth is. And 3,000 of them responded. How many there were there in the audience? We don't know, but I suspect that there were many, many more than 3,000 who did not repent, who maintained their position, which is exactly what most of Israel did and the leadership.

So here in this text, we're talking about leadership. We're talking about Jews who had come to faith in Christ, some of whom were priests, some of whom were already shakers and movers in the Jewish community.

[26 : 46] They came to faith. And what do you think they're now teaching? They're now teaching Yeshua Hamashiach. He is the Messiah. And we need to put our faith and our trust in Him. And these continued in their positions of leadership among the Jewish people, and I think those are those to whom he is referring here.

When he says in verse 7, remember them which have the rule over you, your leaders, who have spoken unto you the word of God, whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation.

Excuse me. And some of the other renderings are observing the issue of their manner of life, the outgoing of whose behavior, reviewing, be imitating, seeing the outcome of their way of life.

Let your faith be like theirs, the end of whose faith, considering, imitate their faith. In other words, it is saying, those who are teaching you the truth, look at them, examine them, do their lives measure up to what they teach?

If it does, that's the real thing. Follow them. And if it doesn't, of course, you are to abandon them. So you examine the lifestyle of your teachers.

[28 : 08] Joe. And use the word end, the end of the lifestyle. Not how they were way back or past, the end, how they are now towards the end of their life. I guess you could call it finishing well.

Yeah. Finishing well. Billy Graham has written an excellent book. I recommend it. I don't know how available it is. But it had to do with his thoughts and comments when he knew he was near the end of life.

He was in his late 80s or 90s. And he wrote that book. And anybody of the geriatric component ought to really enjoy it. I know I really appreciate it.

And it was kind of a testimony with knowing that life was behind him and it wouldn't be long before he would be seeing the Lord. So if you flip the page here in the scripture sheet, Weymouth renders it, bear in mind how they ended their lives and imitate.

And like Joe said, this is talking about the close of their life, but you call it finishing well. Moppa says look back upon the close of their career and copy. Because when one is coming to what he knows is near the end of life, the twilight of life, it is a very sober time to stop and reflect upon what has gone by, where you are now, what the prospects are for the future.

[29 : 44] And sometimes it calls for a little reordering, repositioning, finalizing things, getting your ducks in a row, and preparing for that exit from which there will be no earthly return.

And then he kept that off by referring to the fact that Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever, a verse that is often quoted, and sometimes often misunderstood.

And I'll close with just this comment as the basis for the misunderstanding. And that is some are of the impression that everything that is in the Bible is to us today, and that we are to go and do that likewise.

And that is a huge mistake that a lot of people make. But it is one that can innocently be adopted because they link the plan and program of God with the eternity and the unchanging nature of Jesus Christ.

And they say Christ is the same today, and yesterday, and forever, and he never changes. Therefore, the manner of programs and methodology of God never changes either.

[31 : 07] That's not true. That's not true. I'm talking about two different things. The character and the nature of Jesus Christ is firmly fixed because God cannot change.

And he reminds us when he says, For I, the Lord, change not, therefore the sons of Jacob are not consumed. So he doesn't change. He is constant. But God's methodology, his plan and program often changes as we see from the old covenants to the new, and from the preaching of the gospel of the grace of God and so on.

So there's a lot of change that takes place because changes are taking place in humanity and in civilization. And God addresses whatever those changes are, whatever the needs are.

So he himself does not change, but sometimes his methodology certainly does.