

Series: Hebrews

Lesson #59

Title: **Brotherly Love**

Scripture: Hebrews 13: 1

Date: 12-14-08

Place: Sovereign Grace Baptist Church of Princeton, New Jersey

Hebrews 13: 1: Let brotherly love continue.

Throughout this Hebrew letter, the Holy Spirit has warned us about turning from Christ to the old covenant. The moment we do so we begin to flatter ourselves with our self-righteousness. We begin to think more highly of ourselves than we ought. The ones who always suffer the most at the end of our self-righteous whip are our brethren. So having urged the brethren to continue on by faith in Christ it is appropriate to include this word of instruction.

Hebrews 13: 1: Let brotherly love continue.

#1: If we would continue in brotherly love then we must continue in the faith.

In order to understand something of brotherly love we must look to the **Firstborn among many brethren.**

Christ Jesus the Son of God accomplished the redemption of those given him by doing two things simultaneously: he loved his Father and at the same time he loved his brethren. He loved his Father by loving the brethren with whom the Father entrusted him. He loved his brethren by honoring their Father.

Illustration: No matter what great thing your brother may do for you, if he dishonors your father it would be hard to consider that he loves you at all. The love of Christ for his brethren is seen most in his love for the Father of the brethren.

How do you honor your heavenly Father? How did Christ do it? God the Father purposed to save a multitude. God the Son entered a covenant to honor God's law and save them. He did it. We could never accomplish that. God does not command us to do that. He commands us to believe on his Son and he gives us faith to do so and preserves us to continue in the faith, while at the same time continually exhorting us through his word--to continue in the faith.

#1: If we would continue in brotherly love then we must continue trusting Christ alone. No matter what we do for our brethren, it is not love if we do not honor their heavenly Father by faith in his Son. Anything less is not *brotherly* love.

#2: If we would continue in brotherly love then we must take the oversight of our brethren.

How did Christ care for his brethren?

- He obeyed God and served them.
- He came down to where we are.
- He humbled himself.
- He took the place of his brethren.
- He bore the pain of their sin.
- He comforted them in his righteousness.
- He gave the unspeakable gift to his brethren, he gave his life for his brethren.

Philippians 2: 4: Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. 5: Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: 6: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: 7: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: 8: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

Those in whom Christ dwells are constrained by his love for us. What he did meant painful, shameful, anguish--even laying down his life.

- He who had every right to make himself of reputation humbled himself to serve his brethren--so we who have no right to make ourselves of reputation can't feel so lofty as not to serve our brethren.
- He honored the Father--honoring the Father and loving our brethren are inseparable; it is an impossibility for one in whom Christ dwells to have one and not have the other--where there is a love for God there will be a love for brethren.
- And notice he took the oversight for us before we asked him to take the oversight for us. He was offended by our sin; yet he provided himself a sacrifice to take away our sin.

1 John 4: 10: Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. 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. 13: Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit.

Illustration: Scott's point--*as unto the Lord*. **Colossians 3:23: And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men;** The truth of that statement is that whatever men do, (truthfully, whatever all men do) we do it to the Lord. Everything that every man does is either done for the Lord's people or it is done against the Lord's people. Therefore everything that is done is done to the Lord. **Matthew 25:40: And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.** If the Lord was here would you wash his feet with tears of joy and dry his feet with your hair? What motivation for a believer to

know that our brethren are so one with the Lord and our Lord so one with our brethren, that what we do for them, we do for him!

#2--Brotherly love means taking the oversight--the care of our brethren.

Looking at these two things remember this:

These brethren were enduring trials within the church because of pressure from those who would turn them back to the law. It would be no love at all for one turn back and leave his brethren or urge them to turn back with him. It would not be love because it ceases to honor God, to honor Christ our Lord.

But this is the word to us brethren. The reason we are urged to continue in brotherly love is because we have that evil nature, that self-righteous nature yet within us.

Those whom we are exhorted to continue loving are those who yet have that old sin nature within them. So the exhortation is to you who are treated spitefully by a brother who is being self-righteous toward you. This verse is for you who are spiritual. Who is it that the Holy Spirit calls on to help a fellow brother in times like that? **Galatians 6: 1: Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.** (Do not break out a verse like our text in Hebrews and scold a brother with it. To do that would be to fall into the same fault as he. But rather do this...) **2: Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ. 3: For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself.**

Let me show you this in another place: **Romans 14: 1: Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, *but* not to doubtful disputations. 2: For one believeth that he may eat all things: another, who is weak, eateth herbs. 3: Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth: for God hath received him. 4: Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand...13: Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in *his* brother's way. 14: I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that *there is* nothing unclean of itself: but to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him *it is* unclean. 15: But if thy brother be grieved with *thy* meat, now walkest thou not charitably. Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died. 16: Let not then your good be evil spoken of: 17: For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. 18: For he that in these things serveth Christ *is* acceptable to God, and approved of men. 19: Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.**

So brotherly love comes down to this: trusting God our Savior with all that we have and are, continuing by faith in Christ Jesus, not going back to that old covenant, to our old thoughts, to our old walk.

And it means giving ourselves to provide, to encourage and to edify one another, regardless if it costs us pain, or if we have been offended. And however we express our love for one another, let it be to lead each other to the Author and Finisher of faith.

Remember: Everything Christ did for us was to reconcile us to the Father; let everything we do be to reconcile our brethren to him. We can show our brethren no greater love than this.