

BRIARCLIFF CHURCH

Small Group Study Guide: Hebrews

Week of November 23 (Week 12)

Hebrews 13:1-25



CHAPTER 13 SUMMARY

Hebrews 13 is a concluding chapter that emphasizes practical Christian living: love, hospitality, purity, contentment, respect for leaders, worship, and perseverance in faith. It reminds believers that Jesus Christ is unchanging and calls them to live out their faith in daily actions.

SERMON DISCUSSION

Topic:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

OBSERVING AND APPLYING THE TEXT

Chapter 12 builds to an intensely theological crescendo with the statement that “God is a consuming fire,” which then is met by the intensely *practical* command that opens chapter 13—namely, to “Let brotherly love continue.” So now we move from *fire* to *function*—from *vertical* to *horizontal*—from *love for God* to *love for the church*. The implication is clear: what we think about God has everything to do with our relationships with one another and with the world. . . So the question posed by our text (Heb. 13) is this: in light of the truth that God is both the consuming fire of Mount Sinai and the consuming love of Mount Zion, how should we live—especially within the church? What should our ecclesial ethics be? (R. Kent Hughes, *Hebrews*, 580-90).

Love that Pleases God (13:1-6)

1. In the cultivation of every congregation’s life, love matters more than all else. How does the writer of Hebrews exhort his readers regarding “love” in Heb. 13:1-3?

2. In verses 1–3, the writer of Hebrews exhorts his readers concerning their social life. In verses 4–6, how does he exhort them regarding the believer’s private life?

3. How am I actively showing love to fellow believers in my daily life?

4. What practical steps can I take to support people who are suffering injustice today?

5. What boundaries or habits help me remain faithful and pure?

Reflection: “Love and two of the commonest perversions of it combine to form a plausible of the *phil-* elements in *philadelphia* (“brotherly love,” v. 1), *philoxenias* (“hospitality to strangers,” v. 2) and *aphilarguros* (“free from the love of money,” v. 5).” (Robert P. Gordon, *Hebrews*, 185-86). “Love seeks the well-being of others and is embodied in concrete efforts on their behalf. The love and hospitality that we extend to fellow Christians, however, is also to be extended to “strangers” (13:2) . . . The rule of God continues to be present every day of our lives in acts of graciousness that we extend to others, acts that reflect God’s love and testify to God’s presence.” (Frances T. Gench, *Hebrews and James*, 74).

Faithfulness that Endures (13:7-19)

6. In verses 7-9, the writer's exhortations focus on religious life. Why does the author highlight leaders' "way of life" as worthy of imitation?
7. How does the author balance authority with leaders' accountability "as those who will give an account" (13:17)?
8. Who are the spiritual leaders I look up to, and how am I supporting them?

Reflection: "The call to consider the lifestyle of the earliest gospel preachers and imitate their faith once more links behavior with belief (v. 7). Although there are pressures from unbelieving societies and other religious traditions to change our beliefs and modify our behavior, the fundamental challenge of this passage is to remember that 'Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever' (v. 8). What he accomplished once and for all continues to benefit his people in the present (vv. 9–10) and provide them the hope of an enduring city (v. 14)." (Peterson, et al. Hebrews, 410).

Grace that Equips and Enables Perseverance (13:20-25)

9. What is the character and nature of God in 13:20-21? Or, how are God the Father and God the Son described in verses 20-21?
10. How does the character and nature of God in verses 20-21 comfort you?

11. How does the benediction in verses 20-21 help you to pray for fellow believers?

Reflection: “The combination of prayers, exhortations and greetings in these concluding verses is revealing. The pastor (i.e., the writer of Hebrews) highlights the need for believers to depend on the grace of God, heed the warnings and encouragements of Scripture conveyed by leaders and his own word of exhortation, and treat one another appropriately as brothers and sisters in Christ.” (Peterson, et al. Hebrews, 416).

PRAYER

PRAYER GUIDE November 24-28, 2025 Read Hebrews 13

Monday: 13:1 “Let brotherly love continue.” Lord, help me to love others with the same kindness and compassion that you have shown me. Allow my relationships to reflect your enduring love.

Tuesday 13:2 “Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.” Father, please open my heart and house to those in need. May I never miss an opportunity to be kind, even to someone I don't know.

Wednesday: 13:3 “Remember those who are in prison, as though in prison with them, and those who are mistreated, since you also are in the body.” God, I pray for those who are imprisoned or suffering. Help me sympathize and act compassionately while remembering them in prayer and support.

Thursday: 13:8 “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.” Jesus, I appreciate you for your unchanging character. You are faithful in all seasons. Anchor my spirit in your steadfastness.

Friday: 13:17 “Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you.” Lord, I pray for my spiritual leaders. Help me to support them with humility and delight, knowing that they watch over my soul.