

3. Remember Suffering Believers

The word translated “*remember*” is the action of recalling something, bringing something up in one’s mind, or being mindful of something. God is not charging us simply to recall the name of someone who is suffering, but to empathise with that person.

a. Empathise with those in prison for Christ

- 1) Christians then (and now) are in bonds and in prison because of their faith in Christ.
- 2) Because we are not in bonds and we have no personal friend who is in prison for the cause of Christ, we tend to forget that it is a reality for many.
- 3) Many are in prisons all around the world today because of their faith in Christ. What should we do?
 - a) Pray for their protection, health, comfort, provision, encouragement, stability, etc.
 - b) Empathise for them as if you too were bound with them. Put yourself in their situation. Trade places with them in your mind.

b. Empathise with those suffering adversity.

- 1) Christians then (and now) are suffering adversity for the cause of Christ. The word “*adversity*” refers to ill treatment, oppression, hurt, and torment.
- 2) Today, thousands of Christians are suffering persecution in North Korea, Afghanistan, Somalia, Libya, Pakistan, Sudan, Yemen, Iran and other oppressed countries.
- 3) We are to empathise with them as if we were suffering with them in their bodies.
- 4) How would I want people praying for me if I was being tortured for Christ?

📖 *We must show love for fellow believers by empathising with their suffering for Christ.*

Conclusion: Are you loving fellow believers as you would want to be loved if you switched places with them. Let’s continue in brotherly love. Reach out with hospitality to God’s servants. Remember and pray for fellow believers who are enduring persecution for the cause of Christ.

Song: Burdens Are Lifted - 218

Loving Fellow Believers

24 November 2019 AM – Hebrews 13:1-3 – Heb19 – Scott Childs

Introduction: God has made it so that we naturally love our family siblings. As youngsters, we may not have always showed it, but we did love our brothers and sisters. We were a family. We stuck together. We helped each other. Sadly, in our day, not every family shares that brotherly love that ought to be natural.

As Christians, God wants us to have a similar brotherly love for fellow believers.

Transition: In Hebrews 13:1-3, God gives us **three commands** regarding our love for fellow believers that we need to heed.

1. Continue Brotherly Love

a. Display brotherly love.

- 1) Brotherly love translates the word *Philadelphia*. It is a love for brothers and sisters. It is a kind and affectionate love. It is a fondness.
- 2) Examining the four other times it is used in Scripture will help us grasp its meaning.
 - a) (Romans 12:10) "*Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another.*"
 - b) (1 Thessalonians 4:9) "*But as touching brotherly love ye need not that I write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another.*"
 - c) (1 Peter 1:22) "*Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently.*"
 - d) (2 Peter 1:7) "*And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity.*"
- 3) From the definition and use of the word, we can see that brotherly love among Christians is a kind, affectionate, fondness for each other because of our common bond in Christ. We can fulfil this command by ...
 - a) Helping fellow believers
 - b) Sharing with them, especially when needy

- c) Encouraging and edifying them spiritually
- d) Not overlooking when they do wrong but lovingly rebuking and seeking to help them get right with God and return to doing right (Galatians 6:1-2) "*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. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.*"
- e) Spending time with them
- f) Praying for them regularly
- g) Helping them bear their burdens.
- h) Forgiving those who seek forgiveness.
- i) Brotherly love ought to lead to the stronger agape love, which is a sacrificing, giving love.

b. Continue brotherly love.

- 1) The command in this verse is specifically to "*continue*" in brotherly love. If this were automatic, the apostle would not have given this command. We face the temptation to keep to ourselves and not care for others as we should
- 2) Remember, the original readers were facing much persecution. Some of them were genuine Christians, others were not. They needed kindness, affection and encouragement during those difficult struggles with persecution. Thus, the apostle commands "*Let brotherly love continue.*"

☞ *We must continue to show love for fellow believers by extending to them acts of tender loving kindness.*

2. Do not Forget Hospitality

a. We must show kindness to unknown believers

- 1) The words "*entertain strangers*" translate a single word that literally means to love strangers or to be hospitable.
- 2) God is not telling us to walk up to a total stranger, give that stranger a hug and saying, "I love you."
- 3) Nor do I not think God is telling us to invite a total stranger in off the street and give him a bed and breakfast. That could be dangerous.
- 4) I believe that in the context it is talking about showing hospitality to travelling Christians that you may not know

personally. In that first century, many Christians were fleeing from persecution and needed a bed and breakfast. Others were travelling preachers with no place to stay.

- 5) The Holy Spirit inspired the same word used in (Romans 12:13) "*Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality.*"
- 6) For us, this may mean opening your home to a missionary or preacher who is speaking in our church. You could invite the same over for a meal. When a new person attends our service, you could invite them over for Sunday lunch. Remember, the word used here does not necessarily apply to total strangers. It applies to any Christian, especially one you may not know very well.
- 7) We must be sure that our hospitality is genuine.
 - ✧ *Let me illustrate. A family was entertaining the pastor and his wife for Sunday dinner on a very hot day. When all were seated, the man of the house turned to his six-year-old and asked him to say grace. "But, Daddy, I don't know what to say," he protested. "Oh, just say what you've heard me say." Obediently he bowed his little head and said, "O Lord, why did I invite these people here on a hot day like this?!" Children are so transparent, but this is a reminder to us to be genuine.*

b. The stranger could unknowingly be an angel

- 1) Paul was not necessarily saying that your next visitor could be an angel. However, he did not rule out that possibility either.
- 2) He simply adds this as an incentive for those who may be reluctant.
- 3) Certainly, the Bible does give examples of angels visiting unawares.
 - a) Abraham had angelic visitors (Gen18)
 - b) Lot had angelic visitors (Gen 19)
 - c) Gideon (Judg 6), Samson's parents (Judg 13)

☞ *We must show love for fellow believers by giving them hospitality.*