

Let Love Continue

Hebrews 13:1-3

“Let love of the brethren continue. Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by this some have entertained angels without knowing it. Remember the prisoners, as though in prison with them, and those who are ill-treated, since you yourselves also are in the body” (Heb 13:1-3).

I. Love is to continue and not commence.

For you to be told to let love for the brethren continue, it is *assumed* love for the brethren commenced. The love Paul references here is that special family love that God plants in the hearts of His people.

A. To love other believers like God loves us is a gift of grace.

Love is the most misunderstood word in the English language because it tries to convey too much. In the Greek language you have *agape*, *phileo*, *eros*, and other words that are translated love. Agape love is God’s love. It is the essence of His character. You might say it is in His DNA. *“By your love for one another will everyone know that you are my disciples” (John 13:35). “Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and whoever is born of God loves everyone who is born of Him” (1 John 5:1).* Christians don’t muster up love, they are made love.

B. To let love continue means that there is a possibility it could stop.

In a similar manner to how an artesian spring stops flowing, your love can come to a stop.

1. A rock of transgression – someone wrongs you. They cross a boundary and close you up.
2. A rock of protection – when you become so self-absorbed, you block off life from others.
3. A rock of distraction – you get so busy that things happen, and you just don’t notice.

We have to work at removing the rocks. When we do, the love continues from within us.

II. Love is action and more than an attitude.

“Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers”– show hospitality, not say you are hospitable.

A. God is more interested in how we treat people than He is what we teach people.

This includes parents/children, husbands/wives, employers/employees, etc.

B. God defines our love by what we do rather than what we declare.

There are 15 descriptive phrases for love in 1 Cor 13: Love is patient and kind, and is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant. Love is not rude, is not selfish, is not provoked, and does not take into account a wrong suffered. It does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth. Love bears all, believes all, hopes all, endures all. Love never fails. Think of love like this.

C. God does for us far more than we could ever do for others.

“Brethren, see that you make this the fixed principle by which you live, the unbroken habit of your lives. Love one another. As you grow in love for Christ, grow in love for one another.”

III. Love shares another’s wounds and doesn’t shame with angry words.

This is not talking about prison ministries and caring for legally incarcerated criminals (though that is a wonderful mission). This verse is talking about those who are in bonds for the gospel’s sake and stepping in to help those who suffer adversity because we are in the same body (i.e. “Christ’s body”).

1. If we love one another, we pray for one another.
2. If we love one another, we bear one another’s burdens.
3. If we love one another, we are forbearing, patient, longsuffering, and forgiving with one another.
4. If we love one another, we meet together to encourage and exhort one another.

“Many things—such as loving, going to sleep, or behaving unaffectedly—are done worst when we try hardest to do them” C.S. Lewis. We are not to *work up* love and hospitality and care; it should continue.