



DAILY FAITH PRACTICES

Sunday, August 28 – September 3 (C) – Hebrews 13:1-8, 15-16

Focus: *Remember*

word of life

“Remember your leaders, those who spoke the word of God to you; consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever. (Hebrews 13:7-8 NRSV)

Read Hebrews 13:1-8, 15-16

Hebrews 12 would be a wonderful way to conclude this letter with its reference to being surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses and the unshakable reign of God. Many biblical scholars believe chapter 13 to be added on to the letter at a later date. Yet it is not unusual to conclude a letter in the first century with maxims for living, especially around the theme of mutual love. The advice is simple, “Let mutual love continue.” (Hebrews 13:1 NRSV)

1. *Describe mutual love.*
2. *Give examples of mutual love within the context of a Christian congregation.*

The author then gives specific examples of how mutual love is expressed in Christian community. The first admonition is to show hospitality to strangers. The reference to unknowingly entertaining angels is to Abraham receiving the strangers who were actually angels announcing the pregnancy of Sarah, Abraham's wife. (Genesis 18:1-15) Abraham did not extend the hospitality to strangers in order to receive a favor, but because it was the right thing to do, especially in the desert climate. It is not like there were others neighbors who could help out.

The writer of Hebrews then urges the reader to remember. Remember! To remember is to feel the need as if it is your own. To remember is to be fully aware of that person—now and in this place. To remember is to re-shape priorities to provide adequate responses as needed.

“Remember those who are in prison, as though you were in prison with them...” (Hebrews 13:3 NRSV) Imagine experiencing the loneliness, the physical needs, and the spiritual challenges which come from being separated from the faith community. And remember!

3. *How does mutual love open the door for remembering those in need?*
4. *What actions might get prompted as we remember those in need?*

Remember those who are married and their promises! Remember to not let money control you! And the list of remembrances continues.

5. *Do you see any connections in the list of remembrances? Explain your answer.*

Remember your leaders in faith. This is not just a nostalgic trip down memory lane, but instead this is an invitation to remember in order to make good qualities of the leader one's own. Remembering is linked to imitating in the most positive sense of that word. Take the best qualities of the leader, but recognize human leaders have limitations as well. Human leaders will come and go, but the key leader of faith is Jesus Christ who is the same yesterday, today, and forever. Remembering Jesus helps a believer not to get carried off in false belief. And so remember! Remember in order to “do good” in ways pleasing to God. (Hebrews 13:16)

6. *How does remembering help someone to “do good” in daily life?*

Word among us

Remember! Remember your ABCs! Remember how to multiply! Remember how to spell words! Remember how to tie your shoes! Remember to set the table with the forks on the left of the plate! Remember to flush!

From an early age, we are encouraged to learn and to remember many things to enhance our lives and the lives of others. Our brains are like a computer programmed to compartmentalize important information as well as trivia. But sometimes our brains feel like they will burst with all the “remembrances”. And with age our ability to remember decreases. It becomes more of a challenge to remember the basics.

Remember where you put your keys! Remember your license plate number! Remember your grocery list! Remember to send a birthday card! Remember what you went into the room to get!

1. *How has your capacity to remember changed over the years?*
2. *What is it you hope to always remember?*

The writer of Hebrews concludes this letter with a plea to remember, using mutual love as a guide for remembering. Thus, we remember the stranger, those imprisoned and in need. But we are also to remember in ways which support others such as those who are married or struggling with money. It is a struggle to be content within one’s own circumstances.

Fortunately, we can remember leaders of the faith, both past and present. We remember those who taught us the faith not only through their words, but also through their actions. Most probably, we have tried to imitate the lives of those we admire, but sometimes we need encouragement to do so.

3. *Name leaders of the faith who have influenced you.*
4. *How have you tried to imitate their lives?*
5. *What qualities in a Christian leader are important?*

faith practice in daily life

Proclaim the good news of God in Christ through word and deed

Remember your leaders! Whether you agree or disagree with your leaders, remember them. That does not mean to complain about them. Instead, remember them in the context of Hebrews 13 which means to remember them with an attitude of mutual love. It is not easy to be a pastor or leader in the church. Leaders need people to pray for them and with them.

6. *How might your congregation intentionally remember your leaders?*
7. *What leader are you trying to imitate?*

Remember “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.” (Hebrews 13:15 NRSV)

8. *Why is this verse important to remember?*

Prayer

Source of all Wisdom, help us to remember Jesus Christ yesterday, today, and forever in such ways to shape our lives to be faithful servants. Amen

last word

Remember!

Daily Faith Practices

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