

Start to Finish – A Plan for 2009

This weekend's topic: Finish Well – Hebrews 13:1-5

February 21 & 22, 2009

Keep on loving each other as brothers and sisters. Hebrews chapter 13 verse 1 (928)

True Love (according to 1 Corinthians chapter 13)... Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous or boastful or proud or rude. It does not demand its own way. It is not irritable and it keeps no record of being wronged.

- ✓ How well am I showing this kind of love?
- ✓ ...to those around me who are different?
- ✓ ...to those right here at Bethel?
- ✓ ...to those who disagree with me?

Don't forget to show hospitality to strangers, for some who have done this have entertained angels without realizing it! Hebrews chapter 13 verse 2 (928)

- "Don't forget" - always keep in the forefront of your thinking
- "show hospitality to strangers" take time to entertain, be with those you don't already know. Open your life & home up to others outside of your comfortable social circles
- ✓ Do I mostly think of myself or of others?
- ✓ Who do I spend most of my time with? Those I already know or those I don't?
- ✓ How willing am I to meet & welcome those I don't know?
- ✓ Could it be that God sent me His "messenger"...but I wasn't willing to show hospitality?

Remember those in prison, as if you were there yourself. Remember also those being mistreated, as if you felt their pain in your own bodies. Hebrews chapter 13 verse 3 (928)

- What's my attitude about those in prison?
- What do my words convey about them?
- How often do I even think about them?
- How do I keep the suffering of the world "in front" of me?
- Am I intentional about allowing myself to see the plight of the mistreated?

Give honor to marriage, and remain faithful to one another in marriage.

Hebrews chapter 13 verse 4 (928)

Give honor to marriage

- Literally - "Marriage is honorable in all"
- "honorable" is translated as "precious" most often in the New Testament
- God wants us all to know that He considers marriage to be precious & that we need to treat it as such
- ✓ Do I treat marriage as precious, something worthy of great care & attention?
- ✓ What do my attitude & actions convey to others about my perspective on marriage?
- ✓ What am I doing to treat my marriage with the precious care & attention God thinks it deserves?
- ✓ How close does my marriage reflect Jesus' relationship with us? (see Ephesians 5)

and remain faithful to one another in marriage.

- Literally - “and the bed undefiled”
- God wants us to know that sex within marriage is pure & right & good...
- & that He intends it to be fulfilling & exciting & enjoyable...
- because when it is, it’s an awesome marriage fortifier & relationship builder
- See 1 Corinthians chapter 7 verses 1-5 for God’s blueprint for sex in marriage
- ✓ If married, do my spouse & I give regular attention to our sex life, realizing that sexual satisfaction is a God-given marriage builder?
- ✓ What am I doing to continually strengthen this part of my marriage?
- ✓ If single & sexually active, do I realize that God actively opposes me because of this?

God will surely judge people who are immoral and those who commit adultery.

Hebrews chapter 13 verse 4 (928)

- This verse refers to all sexual immorality (*any sex outside of God’s plan*) including adultery
- “judge” = punish
- Sexual sin is a serious sin that God warns us against & that He doesn’t let go unpunished
- ***“God’s will is for you to be holy, so stay away from all sexual sin.”***
1 Thessalonians chapter 4 verse 3 (906)
- ***“Run from sexual sin! No other sin so clearly affects the body as this one does. For sexual immorality is a sin against your own body.”***
1 Corinthians chapter 6 verse 18 (873)
- ✓ What steps do I need to take to start honoring God sexually?

Don’t love money; be satisfied with what you have. For God has said, “I will never fail you. I will never abandon you.” Hebrews chapter 13 verse 5 (928)

- “Don’t love money” literally - don’t let your life be characterized by always wanting more
- “satisfied” = “enough”
- What I already have is enough!
- Everything I already have + God = Enough!



Next weekend: We begin our new study, “Uncertainty” by taking a look at how each of us can have peace in the midst of this current economic storm