

Hebrews 13:1-2

Chapter thirteen gives believers some very practical admonitions. In this regard it follows many of the epistles. Doctrine (Hebrew 1-12) first and then duty follows (Hebrews 13). For example

Ephesians 1-3 gives doctrine and Ephesians 4-6 gives us our duty.

Eph. 4:1: "I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called,"

Romans 1-11 gives doctrine and 12-16 is practical:

Rom. 12:1: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, *which is* your reasonable service.

This is the typical style of Paul in his writings. Does this suggest that Paul is the author of Hebrews?

The exhortations in this chapter to godly living, include:

Practicing brotherly love, being hospitable, having sympathy with those in bonds, being faithful in marriage, being content, being submissive to those in authority, being stable in the practice of your faith, leaving behind false religion (in this case Judaism) and embracing God's way not the way of a religion, being benevolent, being obedient to those entrusted with office, and special prayer for him who wrote this epistle.

1 Let brotherly love continue.

Let...continue *meno* μὲνῶ to stay (in a given place, state, relation or expectancy):--abide, continue, dwell, endure, be present, remain, stand, tarry

The inference of this command is that every believer HAS brotherly love and should let it continue to be a ruling factor in their life.

Romans 5:5 *And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.*

1 John 2:8-10 *Again, a new commandment I write unto you, which thing is true in him and in you: because the darkness is past, and the true light now shineth. He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now. He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him.*

Brotherly *adelphos'* "denotes 'a brother, or near kinsman;' in the plural, 'a community based on identity of origin or life.'"
Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words

Love *philadelphia* φιλαδελφια brotherly love (kindness), love of the brethren.

The command here could be one of two admonitions.

- 1) "Brotherly love" could refer to their fellow Jews, brethren according to the flesh, who have turned from Jesus as Messiah. Paul had a continuous love for his lost brethren according to the flesh. Even though he was beaten with rods, stoned, thrown into prison he had a great love for his kinsman (Romans 9:1-3). We should have a love for the lost. They may cause us problems but we need to remember that they are in the snare of Satan and are blind to what is true and right (2 Corinthians 4:4)
- 2) Certainly this command does refer to believers. We are commanded to love one another.

1 Peter 1:22 after getting saved we have a love for the brethren

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:

1 Thessalonians 4:9-10 we need to practice it more

But as touching brotherly love ye need not that I write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another.

And indeed ye do it toward all the brethren which are in all Macedonia: but we beseech you, brethren, that ye increase more and more;

Hebrews 6:10 God will reward our love to the brethren

For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister.

Romans 12:10 brotherly love puts others first

Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another;

affectioned - cherishing one's kindred, especially parents or children); fond of natural relatives, i.e. fraternal towards fellow Christian

Why is brotherly love important?

1) It shows the unsaved our love for Christ - John 13:35

By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

2) It reveals our true identity - 1 John 2:9-10; 1 John 3:14

He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now.

He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him.

We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death.

3) It pleases God - Psalm 133:1

Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!

What is brotherly love?

- It is not superficial, sentimental affection.
- It is affection characterized by practical expression of good deeds towards others.

1 John 3:17

But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?

1 John 3:18-19

My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.

And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him.

1 Corinthians 13 is one of the best expressions of how love operates in our life

- It is always based on truth

1 John 3:18 we love *"in deed and in truth"*

Psalms 85:10 *Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other.*

Mercy - חַסֵּד khah'-sed - 1) goodness, kindness, faithfulness

Proverbs 3:3; 14:22; 16:6; 20:28

Let not mercy and truth forsake thee: bind them about thy neck; write them upon the table of thine heart:

Do they not err that devise evil? but mercy and truth shall be to them that devise good.

By mercy and truth iniquity is purged: and by the fear of the LORD men depart from evil.

Mercy and truth preserve the king: and his throne is upholden by mercy.

When a doctor prescribes medicine for your illness, if it comes in liquid form, it usually has some kind of sweetener added to it to make it taste better and go down easier. Truth is like the medicine - it cures the sickness. Love is like the sweetener - it helps it go down easier.

Lack of love is caused by sin.

Matthew 24:12 *And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.*

God is love - 1 John 4:8 (see also vs. 16) *He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love (agape).*

Agape - usually defined as "willed love, an act of willed self-sacrifice for the good of another"

αγαπη ag-ah'-pay 1) brotherly love, affection, good will, love, benevolence 2) love feasts

αγαπαω ag-ap-ah'-o 1) of persons 1a) to welcome, to entertain, to be fond of, to love dearly 2) of things 2a) to be well pleased, to be contented at or with a thing

Phileo - usually defined as "emotional love, the love of friendship and feeling"

φιλαδελφια fil-ad-el-fee'-ah 1) love of brothers or sisters, brotherly love 2) in the NT the love which Christians cherish for each other as brethren

φιλεω fil-eh'-o 1) to love 1a) to approve of 1b) to like 1c) sanction 1d) to treat affectionately or kindly, to welcome, befriend 2) to show signs of love 2a) to kiss 3) to be fond of doing 3a) be wont, use to do

Are these two words, *agape* and *phileo*, for love mutually exclusive or, perhaps, more related than generally thought?

Consider the following:

2 Samuel 13:15 (LXX) *"Then Amnon hated her exceedingly; so that the hatred wherewith he hated her was greater than the love (agape) wherewith he had loved her. And Amnon said unto her, Arise, be gone."*

Can someone who "loved" (agape) someone inflict the heinous act of rape upon them?

John 3:35 *The Father loveth (agape) the Son, and hath given all things into his hand.*

John 5:20 *For the Father loveth (phileo) the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doeth: and he will shew him greater works than these, that ye may marvel.*

We are told in these two verses that God loved the Son. Both *agape* and *phileo* are used. There doesn't seem to be a difference in these verses.

2 Timothy 4:20 *For hath forsaken me, having loved (agapao) this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia.*

It seems incongruous to use *agape* here if the word means "an act of willed self-sacrifice for another."

1 Corinthians 13:3 *And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity (agape), it profiteth me nothing.*

Here someone sacrificially gives their body to be burned and their goods to feed the poor and yet they don't have love (*agape*). Can *agape* thus be always defined as "willed self-sacrifice for the good of another?"

"The false assumptions surrounding this pair of words are ubiquitous; and so I shall return to them again. My only point here is that there is nothing intrinsic to the verb *αγαπαω* or the noun *αγαπη* to prove its real meaning or hidden meaning refers to some special kind of love."
D.A. Carson, *Exegetical Fallacies*, page 30

Carson also has an excellent section on whether God hates the sinner or the sin in relation to His love:

"How, then, should the love of God and the wrath of God be understood to relate to each other? One evangelical cliché has it that God hates the sin but loves the sinner. There is a small element of truth in these words: God has nothing but hate for the sin, but it would be wrong to conclude that God has nothing but hate for the sinner. A difference must be maintained between God's view of sin and his view of the sinner. Nevertheless the cliché (God hates the sin but loves the sinner) is false on the face of it and should be abandoned. Fourteen times in the first fifty psalms alone (e.g. Psalm 2:5; 5:4-5; 11:5; 21:9) we are told that God hates the sinner, his wrath is on the liar, and so forth. In the Bible, the wrath of God rests both on the sin (Rom. 1:18ff.) and on the sinner (John 3:36).

Our problem, in part, is that in human experience wrath and love normally abide in mutually exclusive compartments. Love drives wrath out, or wrath drives love out. We come closest to bringing them together, perhaps, in our responses to a, wayward act by one of our children, but normally we do not think that a wrathful person is loving.

But this is not the way it is with God. God's wrath is not an implacable, blind rage. However emotional it may be, it is an entirely reasonable and willed response to offences against his holiness. But his love wells up amidst his perfections *and is not generated by the loveliness of the loved*. Thus there is nothing intrinsically impossible about wrath and love being directed toward the same individual or people at the same time. God in his perfections must be wrathful against his rebel image-bearers, for they have offended him; God in his perfections must be loving toward his rebel image-bearers, for he is that kind of God."

D.A. Carson, *The Difficult Doctrine of the Love of God*, page 68-69

2 Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.

Christians are commanded to love strangers

Galatians 6:10; Matthew 5:43-44

As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.

Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;

Genesis 18:1-8 hospitality was offered to strangers (one was God and the others angels and is likely the occurrence referred to in verse 2)

Christians are commanded to be hospitable.

Leaders: 1 Timothy 3:2

A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach.

Titus 1:7-8

*For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not selfwilled, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre;
But a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate;*

Godly woman: 1 Timothy 5:10

Well reported of for good works; if she have brought up children, if she have lodged strangers, if she have washed the saints' feet, if she have relieved the afflicted, if she have diligently followed every good work.

Believers: Romans 12:13

Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality.

1 John 3:17 *"But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?"*

Some practical considerations:

- 1) Hospitality should be a basic characteristic of every Christian.
- 2) We are to love even if we might be taken advantage of.
- 3) We should use our common sense in deciding how to help someone (there are people who will run scams to get money from religious organizations and people).
- 4) We are to first minister to believers (Galatians 6:10; Hebrews 6:10).