Sermon Notes for May 22, 2016

Love and Purity

Hebrews 13:1-6

Introduction

We are pilgrims on a journey.

We are marching toward Zion, our heavenly home.

This is how we are to live as Christ followers in a fallen world.

I. Love as brothers. Hebrews 13:1

“By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.” John 13:35

Historically, the church has done this by its love for the poor, the sick, the hungry and the least of these in our world.

But it is also concerns how we treat one another in the church.

“In essentials unity, in non-essentials liberty, in all things charity (love). Augustine

II. Practice hospitality. Hebrews 13:2

Inns were not healthy places for Christians to stay. So the exhortation to open your home to other believers was a way to advance the gospel.

Hospitality is still an important ministry in the church and it can also be used for evangelism.

III. Remember those who are suffering. Hebrews 13:3

Remembering a brother or sister in prison was risky.

Aristides wrote, “If they (the Christians) hear that any of their members are imprisoned or oppressed for the name of their Messiah, all of them provide for his needs. And if it is impossible that he may be delivered, they deliver him. If there is among them a man that is poor and needy and they have not an abundance of necessaries, they fast 2 or 3 days that they may supply the needy with food.”

Pray for those who are persecuted and suffering. And assist them with their personal needs.
IV. Keep marriage holy. Hebrews 13:4

Marriage is holy and sacred to God. It was given to mankind for our good – for joy and companionship and for the care and instruction of children.

God’s definition of marriage has not changed – one man and one woman.

“For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh.” Genesis 2:24

The marriage bed is to be kept pure. Sex within the bounds of marriage is holy and good, but sex outside the bounds of marriage is sin and God will judge all sin.

This statement on marriage confronts two errors.

- Some thought being single and celibate was more holy than marriage. That is not true.
- Many thought chastity was an unreasonable demand. All must practice self-control.

Our world is not so different from what was going on back then, but our conduct is to be different in the church.

V. Keep your lives free from greed. Hebrews 13:5-6

Greed and sexual immorality are mentioned together in I Corinthians 5:11, 6:9-10; Ephesians 5:3 and Colossians 3:5.

Both are self-centered. Both are idolatry.

The greedy person pursues pleasure and selfish gain whether sexual or financial.

Instead, Scripture calls us to be content, because God is our security.

How much do we really need?

“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven...For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” Matthew 6:19-21

Conclusion:

This is what love for our brothers and sisters looks like.

- Love is unconditional – fervent and ongoing.
- Love is generous – it opens our heart and home to advance the gospel.
- Love is compassionate – concerned for the suffering and persecuted.
- Love is holy – it honors God’s standard for marriage.
- Love is not self-seeking or greedy – it trusts in God and his word.