OUR CHRISTIAN CONDUCT

**DATE: 4/22/2015 Wed.**

**TEXT: Hebrews 13:1-6; I Cor. 13:1-13; Genesis 18**

**INTRODUCTION**

Let’s stand for the reading of the Word of God

As we enter into this final chapter it’s been almost 2 yrs since we began this blessed book (5/15/13)

In case you have forgotten, we titled this series

**“A Better Way”**

We have seen this theme throughout these messages

-- Better than the Angels – chaps. 1, 2

-- Better than Moses – chaps. 3, 4

-- Better than Joshua – chap. 4

-- Better than Aaron – chaps. 4-8

-- A Better Covenant – chap. 8

-- A Better Tabernacle – chap. 9:1-12

-- A Better Sacrifice – chap. 9:13-28

-- A Better Atonement – chap. 10:1-18

-- A Better Privilege – chap. 10:19-39

-- A Better Company – chaps. 11, 12

And now in chapter 13 we will look at …

**“A Better Way”**

Paul exhorts his readers concerning several important and practical issues in these first 6 vs.

Let’s read our text and then pray …

And think on this thought

**“Our Christian Conduct”**

**Read vs. 1-6**

**~~~Prayer~~~**

First our Christian Conduct is shown in …

**I. OUR “COMPASSION” – vs. 1-3**

The Compassion of Love

In case we are not certain what Bible Love is, let’s find out

**I Corinthians 13: 1-13 …** (i.e. **vs. 4-7**)

**A. Compassion in Hospitality –v.1**

***“Let brotherly love continue”***

The word ***“continue”*** means *to remain, to abide, to be present, to stay*

Loving the brethren is not always easy

Some folks are hard to love

Love for one another ought to be the norm among believers

**John 13:34, 35 –*“A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another” “By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another”***

Love for one another ought to be unfeigned, fervent

**I Peter 1:22 – *“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:”***

**Feigned** *– phony, faked, not genuine, simulated or pretended; insincere*

***“Unfeigned”*** *- genuine; sincere*

**Fervent** - *showing eager or extremely passionate enthusiasm*

**I John 4:7 - *Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God”***

Loving others shows someone God

**I John 4:11, 12 – *“Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another …***

***No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and His love is perfected in us”***

**John 4:20 – “*If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?”***

Notice that John lists our love for others as one of the evidences of our conversion

Jesus said – ***“love one another; as I have loved you”***

God takes notice of our love and compassion for one another

**Hebrews 6:10 – *“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”***

**Compassion in Hospitality**

**B. Compassion as a Host – v.2**

***“Be not forgetful to entertain strangers...”***

This is the responsibility of love

Christian love involves action

The word ***“entertain”*** carries the idea of *showing love to strangers*

It has the basic meaning of hospitality

We are to be hospitable to strangers

A stranger is someone that we don't know

Now this is a problem for a lot of folks

It’s easy to show hospitality to friends,

But it's not so easy to show hospitality to a stranger

Honestly, we are naturally skeptical and suspicious about strangers

We don't know what to expect from them

While we must be careful, we must also be hospitable

**v. 2b – “… *for thereby some have entertained angels unawares”***

This statement has fueled a lot of foolishness

A lot of false doctrine is out there as a result of the Angel craze that swept the country a few years ago

This is one of the verses that was used to teach that we encounter Angles on a regular basis

But notice that this verse doesn't say that *we* will entertain Angels

But rather ***“some have”***

I believe the writer is drawing upon the OT account of Abraham being visited by Lord and the 2 angels to illustrate the importance of hospitality

In **Genesis 18 …**

Three men came to Abraham's tent one day and he fed them and took care of them

He showed them hospitality

It turned out that 2 of them where angels

**Genesis 18:22 – *“And the men turned their faces from thence, and went toward Sodom: but Abraham stood yet before the LORD”***

**Genesis 19:1 – *“And there came two angels to Sodom at even; and Lot sat in the gate of Sodom: and Lot seeing them rose up to meet them; and he bowed himself with his face toward the ground;***

The point is that we never know who it is that we are showing hospitality to

Jesus taught a similar truth in **Matt. 25:35-40**

**vs. 35, 36 - *“For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in:” “Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me”***

Then they asked in **v.37 - *“… when saw we Thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink?”***

Jesus answered... **v. 40 - *“…Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me”***

**Compassion in Hospitality**

**Compassion as a Host**

**C. Compassion in Hardships – v.3**

***“Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body”***

We are to remember those who are in prison and those who suffer adversity for the cause of Jesus Christ

In Bible times it was not uncommon to be imprisoned for preaching Christ

Jesus himself suffered that fate

Paul was imprisoned several times

John was banished to and imprisoned on the isle of Patmos

Down through the centuries thousands of believers have gone to jail for the gospels' sake

Even today there are untold thousands incarcerated because of their testimony for Christ and the gospel

We are told to remember them as bound with them

We are to sympathize and do everything we can for those in prison as though we were prisoners with them

In other words, we are to do for them as we would want others to do for us if we were in their place

Are you praying for that dear pastor in Iran?

Probably not

**Saeed Abedini**, a 34-year-old Husband, father, and pastor from Idaho, who is currently imprisoned in Iran

**OUR “COMPASSION”**

Next our Christian Conduct is shown in …

**II. OUR “CONDUCT” – v.4**

First in …

**A. The Conduct of Love inside the Home**

Back in **v.1** Paul talked about ***“brotherly love”***

But now in **v.4** he talks about ***marital love***

 **v. 4a -** “***Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled...”***

This is one the plainest and clearest verses in the Bible about intimacy in marriage

Paul calls for marital purity

Marital purity and commitment in the home is very rare today

We live in an age of promiscuity and perversion

***“Marriage is honourable...”***

God Himself designed marriage and placed special honor upon it

Marriage is the (God) established boundary for the physical relationship

(By the way marriage is still one man & one woman)

Believe it or not, there was a day when men and women waited until they were married before they consummated

Paul says – ***“and the bed undefiled”***

That means that natural affection within a biblical marriage is not perverted or sinful

**The Conduct of Love inside the Home**

**B. The Condemning of Lust outside the Home**

**v. 4b – *“… but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge”***

Notice God's terminology!

He cuts no corners in dealing with man's sinfulness

God, out right, refers to them as ***“whoremongers”*** and ***“adulterers”***

**Monger** – is a person who is involved with something in a contemptible way

**A whoremonger** is *a man who treats what he has from God contemptuously by giving it up for something else.*

*Specifically, it's giving up the spiritually valuable thing in search for the physical*

A Whoremonger is a fornicator

Such straightforward speech isn't popular in today's politically correct world

But then again … God is not running for office

What the world calls a swinger, God calls a whoremonger!

What the world calls an affair, God calls adultery!

God designed marriage as a deterrent to sensual behavior / fornication

Intimacy is a sacred gift that is to be reserved for the marriage relationship only

We can be assured that those who reject the biblical mandate for marriage, God will judge

**OUR “COMPASSION”**

**OUR “CONDUCT”**

Lastly our Christian Conduct is shown in …

**III. OUR “CONTENTMENT” – vs. 5, 6**

**A. Covetousness – v.5a**

***“Let your conversation be without covetousness...”***

We are to be Content with What we Have

The Biblical word ***“conversation”*** means *behavior or lifestyle*

It speaks of what we say with our Life

This word doesn't speak so much of our Lip's Talk,

But our Life's Walk

We are told that our lifestyle is to be ***“without covetousness”***

Webster defines covetousness as *Inordinately desirous; excessively eager to obtain and possess*

This speaks of those who are never satisfied with what they have

They always want / have to have, more

Many people spend all their lives collecting and storing riches, only to die and leave it all behind

Jesus told the story of the farmer who had done well and said in **Luke 12:19** –

***“…soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry”***

He had spent his life making money and storing up for retirement

Finally his dream had come true

But God said unto him in **v.20 – *“Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?”***

Jesus said in **v.21 – *“So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God”***

Such is the common story … yet, people continue to live for riches

**Ill.** It is said that Howard Hughes who was at one time the richest men in the world, was asked, *"How much is enough."* He answered, *"Just one more dollar."*

Covetous people are always looking for one more Dollar, one more Deal and one more Deposit

Only to the neglect … of their own soul

Jesus warned in **Matt. 16:26 – *“For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?”***

The opposite of Covetousness is …

**B. Contentment**

**v. 5b – *“… be content with such things as ye have:”***

We are to be content with what we have

The word ***“content”*** means to be *satisfied*

Paul told the **Philippians (4:11) – *“I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content”***

Contentment doesn’t come naturally

Notice that Paul said, ***“I have learned”***

Contentment is something we have to learn

One of the best ways to learn contentment is to count the blessings we already have

**I Timothy 6: 6-8 – *“But godliness with contentment is great gain” “For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out” “And having food and raiment let us be therewith content”***

**v. 5c – *“The Lord said, (for) I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee”***

This is the greatest Blessing!

This is the greatest incentive for Contentment

We have the Lord! What else do we need?

**II Corinthians 9:8 – *“And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work:”***

The outcome of Contentment is …

**C. Courage – v. 6**

***“So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me”***

That's a grand statement!

***“The Lord is my helper!”***

**Ill.** Someone once said, “*Having such a promise to build and found our faith upon … we may now proceed with His holy presence against all opposition”*

Paul said, ***“I will not fear what man shall do unto me”***

We are to have that kind of Confidence in the Lord

Fear however, is crippling to the Christian life

Fear and faith don’t work well together

**Proverbs 29:25 – *“The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the LORD shall be safe”***

Blessed is the man who can say, The Lord is my helper

 **CONCLUSION**

Blessed is the man that knows Brotherly Love

**THIS IS OUR “COMPASSION”**

Blessed is the man that knows Marital Love

**THIS IS OUR “CONDUCT”**

Blessed is the man that knows the Love of God

**THIS IS OUR “CONTENTMENT”**