



Secure: Hebrews 13v1-10

We can start to struggle spiritually when we start to look for the wrong sources of relief and respite. In Hebrews 12, we heard how life in his presence, the life of worship, is the only life that won't ultimately be shaken (12v28). Hebrews 13 shows us more of that life of worship, and it's a beautiful thing.

1) Beautiful Love (v1-4)

The kind of love within the church described here is family love, love for spiritual brothers and sisters in Christ (v1). It's a love that shows hospitality (v2) to Christians we don't know well yet, because they have the same Father and are joined to Jesus too. It's a love that takes time to remember, to understand and show empathy; loving as if we ourselves were suffering the same circumstances (v3).

This is the kind of love Jesus has for you: he loves you as a brother or sister, welcomes you always, remembers you always, shared your imprisonment even to death, and is betrothed and committed to you for keeps.

How does a church experience and show the kind of love in v1-4? We go to Jesus, as our reflex action. We go to his love as the only lasting and good source of relief when facing trials. We go to him for full affirmation, so that we can be free to love in costly ways. God wants the love of Christ to flow into our hearts, and also out to other people. What might change as we try to make more space in our relationship with him for that to happen?

2) Contentment (v5-8)

The life with Christ as its source is free to be generous and is content in the present (v5), because God is always here with us (see also Matthew 28v20b). He is our strengthening help (v6) and our source of relief. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever (v8). We cannot lose his presence or his loyal love and strengthening grace. It is far, far better to trust him as the source, and to seek his presence as the refuge and the relief (Psalm 118v8-9).

3) Security (v9-10)

We are thinking about how we increasingly become the kind of people described in v1-8.

How do we become grounded and established so that we can give this kind of radical love? (Recall the illustration of the Tacoma Narrows Bridge in 1940 in Washington state).

The answer is for our hearts to be 'strengthened'/'established'/'made steady' by the grace of Christ (v9). Eating and drinking elsewhere is of no benefit (v9)! But there is a sacrifice ('altar', v10), a kindness and a love, that can provide the affirmation and the stability and the security we need to live as in verses 1-8. It is the love of Jesus. Jesus is the source. Let's make it our reflex action to go to him and drink of his relief, love and affirmation.

