

**MOVING ON TO MATURITY**  
*What Does Acceptable Worship Look Like?*  
Hebrews 13:1-6

You've seen him before. Rabid, crazy, devoted, ridiculous. He's got shirts, hats, coats, sweats, gloves, hoodies (sweatshirts), bumper stickers, coffee mugs, flags, rugs. He might even have a room in his house decorated like this! (Show picture). He checks his team's official website daily. He arranges his weekend so that he can be settled on his couch at the right time. Maybe he's your neighbor. Maybe he's your father-in-law, brother-in-law, or maybe he's you. Have you figured out who I am talking about??

The crazy football fan!! (girls too!). For some, football isn't just something that happens in the fall. No, no, no. It is a way of life. It is a lifestyle. The rabid fan finds deep meaning from a long touchdown run. He celebrates a huge victory over an arch rival. And making (and winning) a bowl game or the Super Bowl at the end of a season is the ultimate reward for all his hard work, frenzied support and tears and cheers of the football season. As Lombardi once said, "Winning isn't everything, it's the only thing!" (picture of Vince Lombardi)

If you are from Texas or Oklahoma you have a good understanding of what I am talking about. A couple weeks ago there was a college football game that featured the #1 ranked Oklahoma Sooners hosting the #5 ranked Texas Longhorns. Now I don't know if I have ever cried over something like this, (picture of kid) but this kid was having a hard time. Maybe his mom wouldn't give him \$5.00 for a hotdog and cotton candy, but I don't think so. I think he was bummed that his beloved Oklahoma Sooners were going to lose to Texas!

So what is wrong with this picture? Don't get me wrong, I have loved sports all my life. My favorite team, the Seahawks pretty much stink this season. I still root for them. But there was a time in my life when I worshipped sports. I lived, breathed, and ate sports. I read the sports section of the newspaper every morning in fine detail. I watched ESPN—sports network the moment I got home. My problem was that sports was a lifestyle for me. As Pastor David said last week, worship is to be our lifestyle.

Last week Pastor David unpacked Hebrews 12 for us and explained how we are to worship God in an acceptable way. The focus of the passage was on our vertical relationship with God. But as we move into Hebrews 13 this morning, the author now is going to focus on our horizontal expression of worship. He is going to give us directions/instructions on how to live with one another. How we as His children should live. We express our worship to God through our lifestyle of loving those around us and living in purity as we will see.

v.1-3 tell us to express(show) brotherly love to one another (read v. 1-3)

v. 1—Greek words for love—

- Agape—describes God's love toward us, a self-giving, unchanging love that gives without demanding repayment, it loves because it wants to
- Storge—refers to family love, kind of love between a parent and child or between family members in general
- Eros—describes erotic love, refers to sexual love

Word for love in v. 1 is Philadelphia—speaks of a brotherly friendship and affection. It is the love of deep friendship and partnership.

He assumes that there is brotherly love among the Christians. He simply asks that it would keep happening among them. There should always be plenty of this kind of love among Christians and it should continue.

Romans 12:10—“Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves.”

We at Central Bible need to continue to love each other with a deep brotherly love. And if you are not doing this, you need to start!!

Is expressing brotherly love part of your lifestyle? This is part of our worship to God.

I have been so blessed by the love I have received and hopefully shown to others through my 13 years here at CB. Let’s continue on in this brotherly love.

v. 2—“do not forget to entertain strangers”—

Hospitality is a very important virtue and it is often commanded of Christians and leaders

Romans 12:13—“Share with God’s people in need. Practice hospitality.”

Galatians 6:10—“Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.”

Do you have opportunities to share with God’s people that are in need? Well, unless you don’t cross paths with people, you do!

One of the most powerful testimonies of the early church was their unity and spirit of hospitality. They lived in community with one another to the point where Acts 2:45 tells us how they “sold their possessions and gave to anyone as he had need.”

What is more—v. 2 says “do not forget to entertain strangers”

The point is that we do this for other Christians who are strangers to us. If you invite your best friends over for lunch, that is wonderful—but that is not what this verse says.

Brotherly love means love for all our brothers and sisters in Jesus.

A wonderful way to fulfill this command is to meet and befriend strangers at church and show hospitality towards them.

Story of my first Sunday in Centralia, WA—being invited to Dan’s house, eat pizza, watch the Seahawks, feel welcomed and loved. I never left that church and served in that church for 2 years as youth leader, we launched a college group and I was disciplined by the Youth Pastor. It all started with a believer showing hospitality to this stranger!

When we do this, we really welcome Jesus and perhaps angels.

Matthew 25:35—“For I was hungry & you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty & you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger & you invited me in.”

v. 3—“Remember those in prison as if you were their fellow prisoners, and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering.”

Prisoners here probably refer to those imprisoned for the sake of the gospel. But it can be stretched out to all that are in prison. This is just another way to let brotherly love continue.

1 Cor. 12:26—“if one part suffers, every parts suffers with it.”

Our local prisons can be a great mission field to be involved in. In some prison systems, there are open doors for men and women to serve by leading bible studies, chapel services, etc.

We worship God acceptably as we express our brotherly love to one another and the new people that are coming through our doors!!

v. 4—“Marriage should be honored by all and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral.”

Acceptable worship to God is expressed as we honor marital love.

The Bible says a lot about sex and how it is meant for good. God created sexual union to be a beautiful act between a husband and a wife. The Bible celebrates sexual love within the commitment and covenant of marriage.

“The enemy of our souls wants to do everything he can to encourage sex outside of the marriage bed and he wants to do everything he can to discourage sex inside the marriage bed. We need to recognize this strategy and not give it a foothold among us.” –David Guzik

Genesis 2:24—“For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh”. This one fleshness should be honored by all. The marriage bed is to be kept pure.

The Bible strictly condemns sex outside of the marriage commitment.

1 Cor. 6:9-11—“Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders...will inherit the kingdom of God. And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God!” Praise Jesus!!

1 Cor. 6:19-20—“Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body!”

If you are falling in this area of sexual purity you need to stop deceiving yourself and stop pretending like it is no big deal. You need to admit to yourself that you need a brother or a sister to help you walk through this. You need to confess your sins to God and to others. You need to not fight this alone. You were bought at a price, honor God with your body! There is victory in Jesus and it can begin now! You will never regret your choice to live in purity and integrity!! It will only give you life as opposed to bringing you death. I read Proverbs 4-7 many times a month to constantly remind myself the truth about sexual immorality and the consequences of it. Make it a habit of yours.

Purity is to be a part of our lifestyle and we offer acceptable worship to God as we honor marital love.

v. 5—“Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, Never will I leave you, never will I forsake you.”

A millionaire once was asked, “How much money does it take for a rich man to be satisfied?” He said, “Just a million more than he has.”—which is to say, he is never really content with what he has.

Paul says in Phil. 4:11—“I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances.”

What is the secret of contentment? It’s having everything you want right??

Being connected with the living, exalted Christ is the secret of being content. It is the source of Paul’s abiding strength in Philippians. Finding your identity in Christ alone and nothing else will bring contentment like you’ve never experienced before. Knowing the presence of God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit in your life and that He will never leave or forsake you will bring contentment, not covetousness.

The author is wanting us to be content and not to covet.

v. 6—“So we say with confidence, ‘The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?—this is a quote of Psalms 118:6-9—“The Lord is with me, I will not be afraid. What can man do to me? The Lord is with me; he is my helper. I will look in triumph on my enemies. It is better to take refuge in the Lord than to trust in man. It is better to take refuge in the Lord than to trust in princes.”

Real contentment comes only when we trust in God to meet our needs and to be our security. It is amazing that we are often more likely to put security and find contentment in things far less reliable and secure than God Himself!

We worship God in an acceptable way, with reverence and awe, as we are content in His presence, His love, His grace and His provisions.

Are you confident of His presence in your life? Of his help in your life?

Are you living in contentment with his presence or are you coveting for more...\$\$, stuff, material possessions?

What does acceptable worship to God look like?

A lifestyle of worship where people...

- -show brotherly love to one another
- -Are hospitable to strangers
- -Live in sexual purity
- -Are content with the presence of God in their day to day experience

Does this describe your daily experience? Does this describe our church body as a whole? Let's move in this direction.