

Hebrew 13:1-6

Many churches no longer preach Christ, they no longer preach Christ as the one and only savior, they only promote Him as a moral teacher. All these churches will finally fall apart because they are unfaithful to the Bible's teaching. Some churches fell because they love the world. These churches fell because of internal factors, they were corrupted from the inside, what about external factors? From history of the churches, no churches fell just because of external factors. If we look at the book of Act, the first century Christian were hunted down by the Jewish leaders at that time but even under heavy persecution they did not fall rather they will simply scattered and wherever they run into they establish new churches, because of this the Gospel reach even more people and the church grew. External factors cannot take churches down.

V1 opens with clear command, let brotherly love continue. Jesus doesn't only want us to call each other brothers and sisters, Jesus wants us to treat each other's as brothers and sisters. When this command was given, in the Jewish community family means we share everything. The word continue assume that brotherly love already existed among them but the author command them to continue doing so. Christian community must be a community of brotherly love, no one should suffer extreme poverty because we are a community of mutual sharing and giving. If we do not love one another, it proves that we do not understand Christ's love. Jesus says the parable of the unforgiving servant is about the kingdom of heaven, so to be put in prison to pay means hell. If we truly received billions from God, let us give hundred to our brothers and sisters. What does it mean to give hundred to others? First one is hospitality and second is visitation, both are fellowship related.

V2 is talking about hospitality which means to open your home for others. When this passage was written hospitality was important for many reasons. Firstly, Christian were heavily persecuted, whenever they were persecuted they responded by fleeing to other town, so they need the place to stay wherever they go. Secondly, Christian preacher were travelling from town to town to preach the Gospel and to establish churches, wherever they went they also need place to stay. Thirdly Sunday services back then were held at homes. V2 says we should show hospitality to strangers, why should we show hospitality? For thereby some have entertained angel unaware, this clearly points back to Genesis 18 when Abraham welcomed 3 angels into his home, one of whom was actually The Lord. If you see another brother in need, remember Jesus identifies Himself with this brother, if you see another sister suffering, remember Jesus loves this sister so much, He is currently suffering because the sister is suffering. If you believe you owe Jesus much, you can repay some to His people. Hospitality connects all Christians together regardless who they are and where they come from.

V3, when this verse says remember those who are in prison, it does not referring to prison ministry although it's very good to share the Gospel to the prisoners. This verse means when Christian are falsely imprison for their faith, we are called to bring aid to them even if it means we will be identified with those who are in prison because if you bring foods or medicines to the imprison Christian, they will suspect you are also a Christian. Because of this you can be in danger for helping out the Christian in prison. At the end of v3, it says since you are also in the body, the whole Christian community is often described as one body (1Kor12). In identify us with those who are persecuted, we must be intentional and we must be brave, we must stand with Christian who are mistreated. If someone loses his job

because of his faith, we must be ready to provide for him and his family, we must speak for those who cannot speak. When majority of people shamed and bashed Christians, we must join the Christian who are being shamed and stand with them. With our words and our actions, we prove that our greatest allegiance lies with Christ.

The context of the passage we have just gone through is for group of Christians who were heavily persecuted from outside the church. When external pressure is great, they should respond by love and unity within the church. This brotherly love acts as a Christian insurance as we live in the last days. The love that exists inside will strengthen us to face hatred outside and this brotherly love is a vital sign of Christian community, in fact it's an invitation to welcome the unbelievers to the Christian community. The ones who truly loved will love truly, we love because God first love us. The basis of my love to my neighbor is God's love to me and my neighbor.