

Study Hints for Thinking Further

International Bible Lessons

Hebrews 13:1-3 & 1 Corinthians 13:1-13

Sunday, September 30, 2012

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Some Bible study groups or classes can further discussion by asking some or all of the **Five Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further** below. Others may want to send the bulletin size *International Bible Lesson* home with their students for further study in the coming week to encourage continuing Bible study. The *Study Hints for Thinking Further* below are not actually intended to be answers to the discussion questions, but hints a teacher may use to help students think through and discuss the questions in class.

Five Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further

1. In what ways can mutual love among Christians be expressed?

Showing hospitality to strangers as well as friends. Being concerned for those imprisoned, tortured, and murdered in places that are not friendly to followers of Jesus. Speaking in love, telling the truth, being patient and not rude, showing kindness.

2. In a society where Christians suffer persecution, in what ways can Christians love one another while protecting one another from being persecuted or arrested for their faith?

They can pray for one another, and they can pray that their persecutors become believers (Saul eventually became the Apostle Paul). They can pray for persecutors to be unable to find Christians and for God to hide and protect Christians. They can pray for one another to find encouragement and develop a stronger faith despite persecution. They can pray that persecutors are replaced by people friendly to God's people and God's truth. They can pray and be careful around or communicating with other Christians. They can develop codes, as the early church used the fish symbol as a code.

3. Why is love more important than persuasive speaking skills? In what ways can persuasive speaking skills without love be dangerous?

Persuasive speaking skills can influence someone to do something wrong, and love will restrain a person from using their speaking skills to harm anyone.

4. Consider various faith communities today. Which faith communities emphasize the love Paul commended to his readers?

Christian faith communities will follow Jesus and the Bible's teachings because they love God and others, and they will demonstrate true love and concern for everyone.

5. Read through the "let us" verses. Which one speaks the most directly to you. Why?

Hebrews 4:14 reads, “**let us hold fast** to our confession,” and Hebrews 10:23 reads, “**Let us hold fast** to the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who has promised is faithful.” All the “let us” verses are important for us to do, but in these difficult times when many are being deceived away from faith in God’s Word and others are suffering persecution for their faith in Jesus Christ, we need to remember to “hold fast to our confession” and to “hold fast to the confession.” If we “hold fast to our confession,” it will be easier for us to do what Hebrews 4:16 says, “**Let us therefore approach** the throne of grace with boldness, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.” And finally, when we “hold fast to our confession” we have reason to give thanks to God; for Hebrews 12:28 reads, “Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, **let us give thanks**, by which we offer to God an acceptable worship with reverence and awe.”

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