

“Sir, we wish to see Jesus.” — John 12:21

Hebrews 13

[At the end of this great letter, the author encourages his readers with several exhortations, all based on his argument that the risen Jesus is the “great Shepherd of the sheep” (v. 20) and has finished the work as a mediator of a new covenant (12:24) and that we have received a kingdom that cannot be shaken for which we should be grateful (12:28) Read and pause at each appeal and ask, “how am I doing?” It’ll be good for us to ponder these things. – dp].

Let brotherly love continue. ² **Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers,** for thereby some have entertained angels unawares. ³ **Remember those who are in prison,** as though in prison with them, and those who are mistreated, since you also are in the body. ⁴ **Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled,** for God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterous. ⁵ **Keep your life free from love of money,** and **be content with what you have,** for he has said, “I will never leave you nor forsake you.” ⁶ So we can confidently say,

“The Lord is my helper;
I will not fear;
what can man do to me?”

⁷ **Remember your leaders,** those who spoke to you the word of God.

Consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith. ⁸ Jesus Christ

is the same yesterday and today and forever. ⁹ **Do not be led away by diverse and strange teachings,** for it is good for the heart to be strengthened by grace, not by foods, which have not benefited those devoted to them. ¹⁰ We have an altar from which those who serve the tent have no right to eat. ¹¹ For the bodies of those animals whose blood is brought into the holy places by the high priest as a sacrifice for sin are burned outside the camp. ¹² So Jesus also suffered outside the gate in order to sanctify the people through his own blood. ¹³ **Therefore let us go to him outside the camp and bear the reproach he endured.** ¹⁴ For here we have no lasting city, but we seek the city that is to come. ¹⁵ Through him then **let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God,** that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge his name. ¹⁶ **Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have,** for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.

¹⁷ **Obey your leaders and submit to them,** for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you.

¹⁸ **Pray for us,** for we are sure that we have a clear conscience, desiring to act honorably in all things. ¹⁹ **I urge you the more earnestly to do this** in order that I may be restored to you the sooner.

²⁰ Now may the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, ²¹ equip you with everything good that you may do his will, working in us that which is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.

²² **I appeal to you, brothers, bear with my word of exhortation,** for I have written to you briefly. ²³ You should know that our brother Timothy has been released, with whom I shall see you if he comes soon. ²⁴ **Greet all your leaders and all the saints.** Those who come from Italy send you greetings. ²⁵ Grace be with all of you.

—*Unknown, 66 AD*

Can't Just Love The Easy Ones

By Adam Rico

Some people are just hard to love. You know, the ones you avoid if possible. The ones who make you crazy and push every button you have, and the buttons you didn't even know you had. The ones you're pretty sure stay up late at night practicing ways to say things in just the right way to frustrate you to your core. Those people.

Jesus had those people in His life too, but He had a different response than most of us. Jesus' relationship with Judas comes to mind. I've often wondered what it

"You can choose to love even when you know you are going to get a negative response."

would have been like to observe their relationship. Judas witnessed Jesus' miracles, listened to His teaching and knew Jesus personally for three years. However, this only led to Judas creating a devious plan and ultimately betraying Jesus.

So how did Jesus respond? He clearly knew Judas' heart and still continued to love Judas in the face of impending betrayal. When thinking about how Jesus treated Judas it's easy to look right past Jesus' humanity and just view His deity. Of course Jesus could love someone like Judas, He is God after all. Yet, Jesus did this in the flesh and demonstrated love in a way that almost seems impossible to us. Only with God's help can we imagine conjuring up that level of love, however, what lessons can we learn from Jesus about how to treat those who mistreat us?

Loving someone does not ensure they will return your love — or even like you. Jesus is the epitome of love and showed that love to Judas. He was the best teacher of God's word who has ever walked the earth. Yet, Judas still decided to betray Him. You can choose to love even when you know you are going to get a negative response. Jesus was not extending love so that Judas would reciprocate. Jesus was extending love because that is who Jesus is.

Love even when they don't meet your standards. Judas was not a man of great character who happened to make a big mistake. In fact, it was recorded he stole from the treasury of Jesus' ministry. Jesus knew who Judas was. Well before the night of His betrayal, Jesus called Judas a son of the devil (John 6:70). Yet, Jesus still loved him and called him "friend" as he was being betrayed (Matt.26:50).

Do good to those who mistreat you. Jesus washed Judas' feet along with the others. Jesus could have washed eleven of his disciples' feet and gotten to Judas and decided it wasn't worth it. Judas was about to betray Him and it would be understandable if Jesus wasn't feeling very close to Judas at that moment. I think we would have understood. Yet, Jesus treated Judas the same as all of the apostles. We can choose to treat others with love, respect, and dignity even when we know they have harmful intentions toward us. Easy to say, hard to do.

Jesus said even sinners know how to love those who love them (Luke 6:32). One of the characteristics that would separate His followers from everyone else is loving those who don't love you back (Matt. 5:44). In the world's eyes it's foolishness. In God's eyes it's the goal.

CULTURE COLUMN

A Message to High School Seniors

Last year's Major League Baseball Most Valuable Player runner-up, Christian Yelich, sent out this encouraging message shortly after the lockdowns began. Not being able to participate in sports and missing graduation ceremonies are a couple of the less important but still unhappy consequences of the stay-at-home orders. Yelich's words help keep things in perspective.

From: Christian Yelich

1:53 PM (52 minutes ago)

To: wbarnettwhs

Dear Seniors,

You should all be proud of what you've accomplished so far, not in baseball, but in life. You've experienced things that most people go an entire lifetime without seeing, and each time coming out on the other end stronger! I'm sure this probably isn't how you envisioned your senior year coming to a close but this is just a small chapter of your life that's just beginning!

There's a cliché in sports that goes, "Play Every Game As if it's Your Last" For some of us that comes at 12, others it's at 18,20,22, and for the lucky ones much later. In the end it unfortunately happens to us all. Rarely is it when we want it to be, and most times it seems unfair.

Some of you have played your last game and that's fine!! It's fine because you're going to go on to do great things in this world, things that have a way bigger impact than anything that can be done on a baseball field!

Others get to go on and play at the next level and that's a privilege that shouldn't be taken lightly. Continue to play the game with joy and for all the reasons you started in the first place. Most importantly, play for all your teammates that no longer get to do so, and never forget to realize how lucky you are!

No matter where this next chapter takes you just know that place you call home is proud of you! You're the future of this world. Best of luck in this next phase of life you're prepared for anything that comes your way. Congratulations class of 2020!

Christian Yelich – Westlake Class of 2010

