

Hebrews 13:1-8

Pentecost 12; August 31, 2025

Think for a moment about the people who have had the greatest influence on your life. Maybe it was a parent who taught you how to live. Maybe it was a teacher or pastor who patiently guided you. Maybe it was a friend who stood by you in good times and bad. Their presence brought stability, comfort, and direction. But we also know that people come and go in our lives. Parents get older; teachers retire; friends move away; leaders who once gave us confidence are no longer there; leaders may even fail; That can leave us wondering: What can we count on? Who will always be there? Where is this world going? Uncertainties are part of all of our lives. So, where do we find comfort? In the Savior who never changes as we see in our text: **“Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.”** In a world where everything changes – people, circumstances, and even our own emotions – Jesus remains unchanging. His love for us never wavers; his promises never expire; and His forgiveness never fades.

It is faith in Jesus that gets us through every aspects of our lives. It is faith in Jesus that we believe in our hearts. Faith shows up in every aspect of how we live. Hebrews 13 points us to what that faith looks like: showing love, practicing hospitality, keeping marriage honorable; remaining content and trusting in God’s presence and help. That’s not always easy to do. In many ways our faith runs against the grain of our world. That’s why God wants us to hold on the words: **“Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.”**

At the time that our text was written, Christianity was still young. Many of the Jewish people of that day didn’t want to give up the customs, traditions, sacrifices that God had given his people for the last several thousands of years. Their world was changing before their eyes. The theme of the entire book is trying to show how much better Jesus is than those customs. He wants to convince his readers of the strength and security that they have in Jesus. The world around them was changing, but God’s love for his people was not changing. For it was into this always changing world that God sent his Son, Jesus. God knew that Adam and Eve could not fix the problem of sin that they brought into this world. So, he took on human flesh suffered in ways that we can’t even imagine. Why? He wanted his people to know without a doubt: **“Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.....” “The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can mere mortals do to me?”**

God calls us to live a life of love in a world that is often filled with hate. Let’s briefly take a look at how we can do that as the writer of the Hebrews gives to us.

The writer says, **“Keep on loving each other as brothers.”** That sounds simple, but think about how brothers and sisters often treat each other—poking each other in the back seat on vacation, arguing, fighting, or grabbing toys when Mom isn’t looking. That’s not exactly the picture of love, is it? And sometimes we show that same kind of *“brotherly love”* to fellow believers—sharp words, unkind actions, impatience. Yet brothers and sisters also stand up for each other, because they’re family. That’s the point here. Even when the Hebrew Christians were rejected by their own relatives, they still belonged to a greater family—the family of God—where love, care, and support come from Christ Himself.

“Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so doing some people have entertained angels without knowing it.”

Hospitality can feel intimidating—welcoming people we don’t know. But think about how a good host makes you feel: they smile at the door, they pull out an extra chair, they say, *“We’re glad you’re here.”* That small act changes everything. Who knows how God might work through that simple act that we do that says: *“you are welcome here.”*

“Marriage should be honored by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral.” Love is respected and shared in marriage. Think of a wedding ring—simple, but precious. Not because of the gold itself, but because of what it represents: a promise, a bond, a gift from God. Our culture often treats marriage casually, but God tells us that it is to be a reflection of His faithful love for His people. To honor marriage is to treasure that gift.

“Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have.” That’s not easy in a world that constantly whispers, *“You need more.”* But think of a child who simply reaches up and takes their parent’s hand. They’re

not worried about money, possessions, or what tomorrow will bring. They're content because they trust God. True contentment doesn't come from what we own, but from who holds us.

"Remember your leaders, who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith." Think of the faithful pastors, teachers, parents, and mentors who poured God's Word into your life. Their words, their example, their encouragement shaped your faith. Some may have already gone home to heaven. The writer says: Remember them. Imitate their faith. Their witness points us to the One who never changes—Jesus Christ. How are we going to do these things? How are we going to live this humble life? We trust in the one who loved perfectly. We trust the one who doesn't change in a changing world. For **"Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever."**

We live in a world where people are always watching. That idea makes many of us uneasy, especially with today's technology that seems to know so much about us. But that's not the kind of *"watching"* I mean. People are watching how we live as followers of Christ. They notice our words and our actions. They see God's love in the way we treat those around us. Every day is another opportunity for us to let the love of Jesus shine through us. Let us take comfort that we have a God who has loved us completely. That love will not change! Amen.