

Introduction

Remembering to Recap! (v.9b-14)

- Always good, if you have something to say to:
 - say what you are going to say, say it, then say what you've said!
 - then, apparently, there is more chance people will hear what you've said!
- Apparently by accident, that's what the writer does in vs.9b-14:
 - been dealing with loads of practical teaching - implications again of living as citizens of God's kingdom
 - in the doing of that he's reminded why.... like Paul, his mind seems to zing back to this core when he's talking about its implications
- So we have here, in effect a recap:
 - to people who were in danger of giving up...
 - I've perhaps emphasised more what they were in danger of giving up **from**
 - its worth remembering what they were in danger of giving up and **returning to**
 - Judaism; Jewish, Temple worship; sacrificial system...
 - and the call in these verses to come outside the camp is outside the camp of Judaism - rejecting the "family" of Judaism in favour of the "family" of faith just as Jesus said of his own earthly family "who are my brothers and sisters....?" **"those who hear God's word and put it into practice."** (Luke 8:19-21)
- And what is it that allows us to step outside that God-given system of sacrifices?
 - one perfect sacrifice, Jesus himself, offered once and for all to make us holy!
 - Judaism, Jewish hope, is in fact fulfilled in Jesus Christ
 - here is the "Miles Better" sacrifice, the "Miles Better" Saviour, the ""Miles Better" altar, the hope of an enduring city not a passing, earthly one
- So, in the midst of this passage of therefore - in light of the therefore of 12:28
 - we have a recap on why!
 - so....

Keep going...

- Striking encouragement throughout this chapter is the emphasis on steady, faithful Christian living
 - not on the spectacular, one-off act of amazing faith or faithfulness
 - but on the day-by-day decisions in key areas of life
 - this is about daily discipleship!

Keep going in fellowship

- **v.1-3**
- Not just love once - but keep loving
- Don't entertain strangers and then forget to next time:
 - don't forget, keep it to the forefront
- Don't forget those in prison:
 - don't do the "out of sight out of mind" thing!
- These are hard - its much easier to do something once or a few times then slip from it!

Keep going in marriage

- **v.4**
- Incredible statistics of marriage and relationship breakdown
 - in some ways not surprising, given how hard it can be to keep going, to keep working at those relationships
 - in particular to **remain** pure, devoted sexually only to our husband or wife
 - its hard - the temptations, the role models are all around!

- But the challenge is not to give up!

Keep going in financial matters

- v.5, 16
- **Keep** your lives free from love of money!
 - oh how easily we depart from this!
 - while the church has a bad name for being hung up on sexual sin...
 - Christians seem blithely to love money quite openly without fear of being "called" on their attitude
 - we don't hear sermons on this!
- And the call is to **keep** lives free from love of money
 - it will draw us back, continually!
 - put things in place.... **and** review
 - suggest: at least once a year sit down (whoever takes the decisions over financial affairs)
 - and set aside your giving, your main spending priorities, budget
 - not just good financial management!
 - but so that these biblical principles soak into the way your bank account works
 - part of that will be the generosity of v.16, the sharing...
- Could my bank manager tell I was a Christian?

Keep going in in relation to our leaders

- v.7-9, 17
- Imitating their life
- Guarding the teaching, the truth of what we believe
- Submitting to their authority
 - not in the heavy shepherding movement sense
 - but in the sense of if a leader, from the Scripture, picks up on something in your life, there should be real reckoning taken of that
 - we have this tendency to be solo Christians, to not talk things through - not to abdicate our own responsibility, but to lean on the wisdom of those God has placed ahead of us in the journey

Back to Jesus

- Here and in connection with the financial matters we are reminded drawn back to the Saviour:
 - *God has said: "never will I leave you, never will I forsake you" (v.5)*
 - *Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever. (v.8)*

Keep going in worship

- v.15
- Not giving up!
 - keeping going, regular as breathing

Concluding Prayer

- Prayer is mutual
- Prayer for writer (v.18-19)
- Prayer for Hebrew believers (v.20-21)

Conclusion: Your love is amazing, steady and unchanging...!

- Wee conclusion in 22-25 doesn't add much!
- This is a letter that glories in the love of God for us in Christ
 - that delves into that love, and explores it and explains it in fresh ways
 - and that calls on us - in response to that love of God in Christ - to never give up on Jesus
 - but to serve him faithfully, doing our best day by day, moment by moment, to live as what we are: citizens of the new Jerusalem, of heaven itself

- Take time to reflect on that.... song on CD, images on the screen
 - thank God for his love...
 - pray for his enabling to serve him, perhaps particularly in one of the areas of life we've touched on this evening...