

Consider Jesus: Noticeable Evidence (Part 2) Hebrews 13:1-25

To CONSIDER JESUS as the primary focus of life is the most practical thing we will ever do. Such consideration yields noticeable evidences. Last month we looked at three such expressions: 1) Maintaining brotherly love; 2) Showing hospitality; 3) Caring for the ill-treated. This month we'll see three more noticeable evidences of a Christ-centered life.

We will rightfully esteem marriage (13:4). Divinely ordained as a lifelong, covenant arrangement between a male and female where each is for the other ("for better, for worse"), marriage is our Creator's way of being and doing human families. Humans are made to thrive in such an atmosphere of mutuality and reciprocity, of faithfulness and safety. Infidelity and sexual immorality dishonor what God esteems. Such "out of bounds" attitudes and behaviors that do not illustrate the faithful, covenant love between Christ and His church (Eph 5:22-23) come at a high price to individuals, families, and society.

We will also consciously flee materialism (13:5). We cannot freely and fully serve God if we believe money and possessions are our deliverers (Matt 6:24). When the motive force in life is to acquire, possess, and consume as a means to fulfillment, contentment, our meaningfulness we forget in Whose image we have been created! Made in God's image, we will never fill up on anything material or created. Money and possessions are "perishables" - they will leave us (and we will certainly leave them!). God never leaves or forsakes His own - in this world or the one to come. As we consider Jesus, seek first His kingdom, His promise is we will have what we need (Matt 6:33). What we do not have in hand at the moment... we must not need.

And finally, as we consider Jesus in all things we will respectfully honor our leaders (13:7,17,24). The author seems to specifically have in mind our spiritual leaders (I Thess 5:12). The New Testament does not set up a rigid, authoritarian hierarchy but rather establishes God-directed, functional leadership roles. Leaders are to "keep watch over our souls" as they shepherd, speak truth, and present a living example of "considering Jesus." We are to "greet them" (13:24 - literally, "salute" them!), be teachable, love one another (no parent enjoys sibling rivalries/conflicts), pray for them (13:18), and "obey and submit" to them (13:17). Why? For the sake of peace and functional unity to be sure. But also for this reason: it is one of the primary ways each of us lays hold of a valuable virtue for spiritual maturity - humility (I Pet 3:8; 5:5). To submit only on our terms, when we get our own way, is to remain childish. There are many things that can be learned about the character and the ways of God only in humble and obedient submission!

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Greetings

Most of you know that I have been the only pastor of CenterPoint Christian Fellowship in Gainesville for over 20 years. We've been seeking a full-time pastor for awhile, you've been praying alongside us for God's direction.

To make a long story short, we've come to a decision. As of July 31st, CCF will close down, but not disappear. With a vibrant congregation of 150+ college students (& a few "oldsters"!), we are planting the "seed" of our church in the soil of a new inter-generational, multi-ethnic campus church start in our town (with 3 full-time pastors... but no congregation yet!). It will be named "Salt Church".

It's a "holy experiment" to be sure - there is no set model to follow, no plan to imitate - just raw trust in our God Who "makes all things new" (Rev 21:5). We will keep you posted!

Some wonder, "Where does that leave you?" The same place as always - in Christ! I'll keep doing what I've been doing the last 30+ years as director of One In Christ (with perhaps a few extra weekends available to come and see some of you!). Who knows for sure what's coming next? What we do know is Who will be there with us in the midst of it all... and HE IS ENOUGH!

CALENDAR

JULY

7,21,28	CCF
9	Alachua Study
13-19	Pagosa Springs, CO
30	Ocala Study

Praise & Prayer



CCF Decisions



Our church leaders



Salt Church and its future



Each of our home church leaders

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