



Open it

1. Who is one of your closest friends? Why do you get along with them so well?

Daily Devotions

Day 1

Today's Theme: Explore It

Read Hebrews 13:1-6

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?"

2. What is commanded that we continue?
3. Who should we show hospitality towards?
4. What should our attitude and actions be towards those who are in prison and suffering for the name of Christ?
5. What instructions do we receive about marriage?
6. How can we keep our lives free from the love of money?
7. What can we be confident about?

Day 2

Today's Theme: Do You Love Your Brother or Sister?

Read Hebrews 13:1

Are there students that you don't like at youth group? Do you judge them in your mind or, even worse, talk bad about them with others? This should not be true in the life of a Christian student who is genuinely following Jesus! I John 3:14 says, "We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brothers. Whoever does not love abides in death." You probably have heard or even said yourself, "I have to love them, but I don't have to like them." This isn't a Biblical concept. The Greek word for love in Hebrews 13:1 is "*philadelphia*," no, not the city in Pennsylvania or a brand of cream cheese. "Philadelphia" is an affectionate love. That means that we can't be saying, "I don't like them!" Sure, it's easy to love those who are like us. But God is calling us to love all Christian students because God loves them. If we love Jesus, then we will love what He loves and that means other Christian students at youth group, even ones that can be challenging for you. Not only are we to love other Christian students because God calls us to and shows that we have transformed lives, but it's also a testimony to a watching world. Jesus says in John 13:35, "*By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.*" Our love for one another should attract unbelieving students to Jesus because it's a love that they don't see and can't find anywhere else.

8. If a non-Christian student visited your small group, would he say that you love one another?

9. What makes it hard to love others? How can you overcome these challenges?

Entertaining Angels

Read Hebrews 13:2

Abraham (Genesis 18), Lot (Genesis 19), Gideon (Judges 6) and Manoah (Judges 13) all showed hospitality to strangers and in so doing they entertained angels. In Biblical times, hospitality meant providing food and shelter for travelers. To be hospitable is to give practically and freely of your time, resources, and encouragement to anyone you see in need whether it be a friend or a stranger.

10. Read Matthews 25:35–40. How did the righteous show hospitality to others in this passage? What are some practical ways you can show hospitality to others?

Day 3

Today's Theme: Remember Those in Prison

Read Hebrews 13:3

In the first century, Christians were arrested and imprisoned simply because they said that they believed in Jesus. If a prisoner were going to have food to eat and warm clothing to wear, family and friends would need to take those things to them on a regular basis. This was dangerous because you could be thrown into prison yourself because you too were a believer in Jesus. You may say that you can't live this out practically today, but that simply is not true. There are fellow believers around the world who are imprisoned, not because they committed any crime, but simply because they believe in the name of Jesus. You can learn about these suffering Christians through reading about their stories at persecution.com, and you can pray for them regularly and even give financial support to an organization like Voice of the Martyrs. The day may not be too far off when Christians in America find themselves in prison because of the name of Christ. When that happens, we are to pray for them and take care of them. I Corinthians 12:26 says about the body of Christ, *"If one member suffers, all suffer together."*

11. Click on persecution.com/globalprayerguide and pick a country. What country did you pick, and what did you learn about how Christians are suffering in that country? Spend some time praying for them.

Keep the Marriage Bed Pure

Read Hebrews 13:4

Before you tune out and say, "Hey, I'm not married, and I'm too young to even think about marriage," the truth of the matter is that the decisions you make today in regard to moral purity affect your future marriage. Are you looking at inappropriate pictures or videos on your phone or computer? Have you established clear physical boundaries before you start dating someone? One of the best gifts that you can give your future spouse is your purity. And if you have struggled with sexual purity, repent and commit to start today living a pure life because of your love for Jesus and your love for your future spouse. I have always told students if it honors God, honors your parents, and honors your future spouse, then it's OK to do. Remember that Jesus said in Matthew 5:28, *"But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart."* It's not just our actions but also our thoughts that can cause us to defile the marriage bed!

12. What are some steps you can take to live a sexually pure life?

Day 4

Today's Theme: Be Content!

Read Hebrews 13:5

During his lifetime J.D. Rockefeller was one of the wealthiest men alive, owning 90% of the oil and gas industry, and at his peak, his net worth was 1% of the U. S. economy. He was asked, how much is enough money? Rockefeller responded, "Always a little bit more."¹ The key to being content is not having a little bit more but managing the money that you do have. Everything we have comes from God², including our money. Don't get caught up in the love of money. Jesus knew that this would be a temptation for us. He spoke more about money than about heaven and hell combined.³ How we feel about our money shows what we believe about God. It shows how much we trust Him to take care of us and our needs. You may say, "Well, I'm only a middle school or high school student and I don't have very many possessions." If you read the context of Hebrews 13:5 more carefully, you will see that you have the best possession that anyone could have — Jesus Himself! *"...be content with what you have, for he has said, 'I will never leave you nor forsake you.'"*

13. What can you do to nurture a life of contentment?

Don't Be Afraid

Read Hebrews 13:6

When I was a small child I had a fear of being home alone in the dark. I feared that there was a "boogie man" in my house who wanted to hurt me. As I grew older, I didn't fear the dark, but I started fearing other things. I feared failing an exam in school or being made fun of by other kids at school. As an adult, there are fears of hoping everyone in my family stays safe and healthy, or fear of the future. We all have fears! However, Hebrews 13:6 says that we don't need to be afraid! Because the Lord is always with us, we can have confidence that no matter what we are going through, He will be there to help us!

14. What things do you fear?

15. How has the Lord helped you overcome a fear in your life?

¹ <https://www.google.com/amp/s/amp.shreveporttimes.com/amp/930449001>

² Psalm 24:1 (NIV) - "The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it"

³ <https://www.daveramsey.com/blog/3-bible-verses-legacy>

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