

A Greater Love

Jesus is Greater #24 - Pastor Gary Combs - November 9, 2025 - Hebrews 13:1-6

INTRO: Good morning church! We're continuing our series entitled, "JESUS IS GREATER: An Exposition of Hebrews." Our theme verse is:

Hebrews 1:4 (NLT) This shows that the Son is far **greater than** the angels, just as the name God gave him is **greater than** their names.

Today, we're in chapter 13 in a sermon called A GREATER LOVE. Since God has demonstrated His greater love to us through the giving of His Son, we are now called as recipients of that love to demonstrate the love of Christ to others.

Need: We live in a world where love often grows cold—where relationships are strained, marriages are fractured, and people are lonely even when surrounded by others. What's worse, our world has lost sight of what true love really is. Love today is often reduced to a feeling, a passing urge, or a matter of personal preference. But biblical love—Christ's love—is far greater. It is not merely an emotion, but an act of the will. It involves commitment, sacrifice, and steadfast devotion.

Trans: Yet we can't manufacture this kind of love on our own. We need a greater love—Christ's love—filling our hearts and flowing through us in every relationship. That's exactly the kind of love the writer of Hebrews calls us to.

BODY: In the book of Hebrews 13:1-6, the author, concluding his appeal for believers to live as grateful worshipers in God's unshakeable kingdom, exhorted believers to demonstrate Christ's greater love in all their relationships. We can demonstrate Christ's greater love in all our relationships. How can we demonstrate Christ's greater love in all our relationships? The text gives **five ways** we can demonstrate Christ's greater love in our relationships.

Read text: Hebrews 13:1-6 (ESV) ¹ 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?"

WE CAN DEMONSTRATE CHRIST'S GREATER LOVE...

1. By continuing in love for the saints.

EXP: (1) Circle the word "continue" (1). This is not a call to start loving, but to sustain and maintain the active affection we already share as members of God's family through Christ Jesus. The author had already commended them for their love of the saints and here exhorts them to persevere in it. (See Heb.6:10)

Hebrews 6:10 (ESV) For God is not unjust so as to overlook your work and the love that you have shown for his name in serving the saints, as you still do.

"Let ... continue" (1) (μένω, *menō*) (PAM) - to remain, abide; continue, dwell, endure. Remain active.

"Brotherly love" (1) (φιλαδελφία, *philadelphia*) - brotherly love, fraternal affection, love of fellow believers.

ARG: The identifier of true discipleship is our love for one another:

John 13:35 (ESV) By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.

APP: Let's not let our love grow cold. Let us continue in loving fellowship, forgiveness, and faithfulness to one another. When the world sees our love for one another, they'll see the love of Christ through us

2. By showing hospitality to strangers.

EXP: (2) "Hospitality" in the Greek is literally, "love of strangers." It's the active demonstration of love to those outside our immediate circle of friends and family. In the first century, inns were scarce and often unsafe, so believers opened their homes to traveling Christians and missionaries and others in need.

"Do not neglect" (2) (ἐπιλανθάνομαι, *epilanthanomai*) (PAM) - to neglect; to be forgetful of.

"Show hospitality to strangers" (2) (φιλοξενία, *philoxenia*) - Lit., brotherly love to the stranger.

A Greater Love

Jesus is Greater #24 - Pastor Gary Combs - November 9, 2025 - Hebrews 13:1-6

“Entertained angels unawares” (2) (λανθάνω, *lanthanō*) - to be unaware, secretly, without knowing. This brings to mind the three angels who appeared to Abraham in Gen. 18.

ARG: Showing hospitality without complaint is another mark of Christ’s greater love in us.

1 Peter 4:9 (ESV) Show hospitality to one another without grumbling.

ILL: When the Roman emperor Julian tried to revive paganism, he complained, “The Christians support not only their own poor, but ours as well!” Their love for one another—and even for outsiders—was undeniable.

APP: Let’s look for opportunities to open our hearts and homes. Whether it’s welcoming a new family at church, inviting someone for a meal, or supporting missionaries, hospitality is one of the simplest and most powerful ways to show Christ’s love. You could start today: Meet 1; Encourage 1; Pray for 1.

3. By remembering the sufferer.

EXP: (3) Believers are called to “remember” and identify with (“as though in prison with them”) “prisoners” and those who are “mistreated.”

“Remember those” (3) (μιμνήσκομαι, *mimnēskomai*) (PAM) - to remind; to be recalled, to remember.

“In prison with them” (3) (συνδέω, *sundēō*) - to tie together, to bind together.

“Mistreated” (3) (κακουχέω, *kakoucheō*) - to treat ill, oppress, plague; suffer adversity, torment.

“In the body” (3) (σῶμα, *sōma*) - the living body. “That is, do to them as you would wish them to do to you if you were the sufferer.” (*Barnes’ Notes on the Bible*)

ARG: Jesus said that when we care for others who suffer, we indeed care for Him:

Matthew 25:35-40 (ESV) ³⁵ For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, ³⁶ I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.’ ³⁷ Then the righteous will answer him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? ³⁸ And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? ³⁹ And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?’ ⁴⁰ And the King will answer them, ‘Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.’

ILL: Believers around the world are suffering for the name of Christ. In Nigeria, Christians in the northern regions are facing persecution from Muslim groups. Many have lost homes, churches, and even loved ones because of their faith. Yet their testimonies inspire us—they continue to gather for worship, pray for their enemies, and cling to Christ as their only hope. They are saying: “Please remember us in your prayers.”

APP: Let’s not forget our brothers and sisters who suffer—those imprisoned for their faith, those mistreated, those bearing heavy burdens. We can pray, write, give, and encourage. And remember their families too.

4. By honoring the sanctity of marriage.

EXP: (4) The command is twofold, one positive: “honor” marriage as a sacred institution, and one negative: to ensure that the marriage bed is “undefiled”—pure and holy—sanctified.

“Be held in honor” (4) (τίμιος, *timios*) - as of great price, precious; honor, esteemed, especially dear.

“Marriage bed” (4) (κοίτη, *koitē*) - Lit., “a bed.” the marriage bed (sexual intercourse)

“Undefiled” (4) (ἀμίαντος, *amiantos*) - not defiled, unsoiled. Pure and holy.

“God will judge” (4) (κρίνω, *krinō*) - to judge. Regardless of culture’s opinion, God will have the last say.

“Sexually immoral” (4) (πόρνος, *pornos*) - one who indulges in unlawful sex, a fornicator.

“Adulterous” (4) (μοιχός, *moichos*) - a paramour; figuratively, apostate; adulterer.

A Greater Love

Jesus is Greater #24 - Pastor Gary Combs - November 9, 2025 - Hebrews 13:1-6

ARG: Marriage is not a human construct—it's a divine covenant established by God at creation.

Matthew 19:4-6 (ESV) ⁴ He answered, "Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female, ⁵ and said, 'Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'? ⁶ So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate."

ILL: "Consider the statistics: In 1949 nearly 80% of U.S. households were headed by married couples. Today that figure is nearly half. The marriage rate — which once stood at over 8 marriages per 1,000 people in 2000 — has now fallen to around 6 per 1,000. The institution that once represented the foundation of family and faithfulness has been steadily eroded by cultural, economic, and ideological shifts. Moreover, in a recent survey nearly 4 in 10 Americans said marriage is becoming obsolete. The very idea of lifelong, faithful, one-man/one-woman marriage is being redefined, minimized, or even rejected in the culture." (<https://www.pewresearch.org/social-trends/2011/12/14/barely-half-of-u-s-adults-are-married-a-record-low/>)

APP: Let's honor marriage. Whether single or married, let's uphold the sanctity of marriage by keeping ourselves pure and encouraging others to do the same. Our fidelity reflects the faithful love of Christ for His bride, the Church. In fact, according to recent surveys by the Institute for Family Studies:

"Regular church attendance is linked to higher rates of marriage, greater marital stability, and increased marital satisfaction. This is often attributed to shared values, communal support systems, and a greater sense of commitment that is reinforced by fellowship and biblical teaching." (<https://ifstudies.org/blog/regular-church-attenders-marry-more-and-divorce-less-than-their-less-devout-peers#>)

5. By being content in the Savior.

EXP: (5-6) The love of money (*philargyria*) stands in stark contrast to love of the brethren. True contentment comes not from possessions but from God's promise in Christ: "I will never leave you nor forsake you." (Quoting God to Moses and Israel in Deut 31:6,8 and God to Joshua in Josh. 1:5).

"Keep your life free" (5) (τρόπος, *tropos*) - a manner, way, fashion; manner of life, character, deportment

"Love of money" (5) (ἀφιλάργυρος, *aphilarguros*) - not loving money, not loving coin or silver.

"Be content with what you have" (5) (ἀρκέω, *arkeō*) (PPP) - lit., being content; to be satisfied.

"Never leave you" (5) (ἀνίημι, *aniēmi*) - will not give up, not leave, not to let sink.

"Forsake you" (5) (ἐγκαταλείπω, *egkataleipō*) - will not abandon, desert; leave in straits, leave helpless

"We can confidently say" (6) (θαρρέω, *tharreō*) - to be of good courage, be of good cheer, to be bold.

"Helper" (6) (βοηθός, *boēthos*) - helper, Lit., "one who runs to answer the call." A quotation of Psa. 118:6-7:

ARG: Paul learned to be content in Christ who gave him strength.

Philippians 4:11-13 (NLT) ...I have learned how to be content with whatever I have. ¹² I know how to live on almost nothing or with everything. I have learned the secret of living in every situation, whether it is with a full stomach or empty, with plenty or little. ¹³ For I can do everything through Christ, who gives me strength.

APP: We're called to love God and use money, not love money and use God! Let's loosen our grip on possessions and tighten our grip on the promises of God. When we are content in Christ, we can love others freely and fearlessly, knowing our security is not in what we have, but in who has us.

CONCLUSION: Christ's love is greater—greater than our selfishness, our fears, our culture's brokenness. As those who have received His greater love, let's demonstrate it in every relationship: in our fellowship, in our hospitality, in our compassion, in our purity, and in our contentment. How can we love like this?

1 John 4:19 (ESV) We love because He first loved us. Let's pray.