

UNBROKEN

"EVERY TIME I TURN AROUND"

HEBREWS 13:5-6

This Week's Core Competency

Peace – I am free from anxiety because things are right between God, others, and me. Philippians 4:6-7, *Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. 7 And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*

Two things conspire together to rob us of peace: *anxiety* and *dissatisfaction*. So why are we so worried; what do we have on our minds that keeps us up at night? In Jesus' day his disciples worried over the necessities of life, whether they would have enough to eat and drink and clothing to wear (Mt 6:25, 31). Nowadays, Christ followers in North America are more likely to worry over other things. Research done on the general population indicates that contemporary worry falls into various different "domains." The researcher who conducted this study into why people worry and what they worry about writes:

"In a study we conducted a number of years ago using a student population, it was clear that worries fell into what we call a number of different domains. These domains were relationships, work, financial, aimless future, and lack of confidence. Well, that probably covers the whole of a student's

The love of money and trust in God are mutually exclusive.

– William L. Lane

experiences and lifestyle! In community populations, these domains still remain important sources of worry, but we need to add health as a further significant factor. Health is perhaps not such an important source of worry for students, but it certainly becomes the dominant worry domain as people get older. Studies have shown that worry content in the general population varies as a function of age, gender, marital status, and educational attainment, and that health worries become increasingly important as old age approaches. However, perhaps surprisingly, the prevalence of worries reduces with age—although worrying in old age is more highly associated with diagnosable common mental health problems such as anxiety and depression. Compared with a young 16-24 year-old group, worries about relationships/family, finances/housing and work were significantly lower in a 55-75 year-old age group, but worries about health were slightly higher" (Graham C. L. Davey, "What Do We Worry About?" <http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/why-we-worry/201305/what-do-we-worry-about>).

When it comes to what to do about what we worry about, Paul tells the Philippians, "Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God" (4:6). A quick and dirty look at what we worry about and what we pray about implies that some of us, at least, get it. More often than not, the prayer requests I see pertain to one of the following four "domains" of worry: 1) relationships—"My son and I just don't see eye to eye anymore," 2) finances—"I don't have enough

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money to pay this month's rent," 3) employment—"I just lost my job after ten years with the company," 4) health—"The doctor tells me I'm going to need surgery." To Paul's advice, John Ortberg adds: "Never worry alone. When anxiety grabs my mind, it is self-perpetuating. Worrying thoughts reproduce faster than rabbits, so one of the most powerful ways to stop the spiral of worry is simply to disclose my worry to a friend . . . The simple act of reassurance from another human being [becomes] a tool of the Spirit to cast out fear—because peace and fear are both contagious" (*The Me I Want to Be: Becoming God's Best Version of You*).

Dissatisfaction, as well as anxiety, steals our peace. When we see what others have, we refuse to be content with what we have. It seems "luxury fever" is running rampant these days. One man has even written a book about it. In it he describes how we catch the fever from others:

"H. L. Mencken once defined a wealthy man as one who earns \$100 a year more than his wife's sister's husband, and considerable evidence strongly confirms the wisdom of his observation. People who earn \$40,000 a year may be happy or sad, but they are far more likely to be satisfied with their material standard of living if their associates earn \$35,000 rather than \$60,000" (Robert H. Frank, *Luxury Fever*, 10).

In our dissatisfaction we're not only driven to make more, but we're also driven to spend more. The same author goes on to explain how this works. He writes:

"Our individual spending decisions are often influenced by the fact that our menu of available choices is so strongly shaped by what others spend . . . In short, both the things we feel we need and the things available for us to buy depend largely—beyond some point, almost entirely—on the things that others choose to buy. When people at the top spend more, others just below them will inevitably spend more also, and so on all the way down the economic ladder. And as this happens, simpler versions of products that once served perfectly well often fall by the wayside" (11). This explains why Bill would consider replacing his old Weber charcoal grill with a new \$750 version of the same thing, or better yet, replace it with a state-of-the-art \$3500 outdoor kitchen.

One way to reduce the speed or get off the consumption treadmill entirely is to follow the advice found in Hebrews 13:5, "Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, 'Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.'" You might also consider shopping at Neiman's less often.

day 1 ENCOUNTER – read God's word to put yourself in touch with him.

Hebrews 13:5-6

5 *Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said,*

*"Never will I leave you;
never will I forsake you."*

6 *So we say with confidence,*

*"The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid.
What can man do to me?"*

Cf., other translations

5 *Your conduct must be free from the love of money and you must be content with what you have, for he has*

said, "I will never leave you and I will never abandon you." 6 So we can say with confidence, "The Lord is my helper, and I will not be afraid. What can people do to me?" (NET)

5-6 *Don't be obsessed with getting more material things. Be relaxed with what you have. Since God assured us, "I'll never let you down, never walk off and leave you," we can boldly quote,*

God is there, ready to help;

I'm fearless no matter what.

Who or what can get to me? (The Message)

EXAMINE – what the passage says before you decide what it means.

* Circle "the love of money" in v. 5.

* Underline "be content" in v. 5.

* Box "because" indicating *reason* in v. 5.

* Circle "leave" and "forsake" in v. 5.

* Box "so" indicating *result* in v. 6.

* Circle "helper" in v. 6.

* Bracket the *rhetorical* question in v. 6.

day 2

EXPLORE – the answer to these questions to better understand what the passage means.

Consult the explanation of the message and the notes to follow if you need help.

1. Read Hebrews 12:28. How would you describe the relationship of 13:5-6 to this verse?
2. What do *covetousness* and *contentment* have to do with one another?
3. How can you know if you love money; what does "the love of money" look like?
4. What makes you think you *are* or *are not* content with what you have?
5. Would your spouse and children agree? Explain.
6. Verse 5b explains the *reason* behind verse 5a. Put it in your own words.
7. Verse 6 explains the *results* of verse 5b. Put it in your own words.
8. Put what the *rhetorical* question in verse 6 means in a simple sentence.
9. **Discussion:** Answer one of the "living questions" listed on page 5.

day 3

EXAMINE – an explanation of the message to better understand the meaning of the passage.

The relationship of Hebrews 13 to the rest of the book has been debated by commentators. Some have argued that the abrupt break with chapter 12, the loose collection of general admonitions unlike anything else in the book, and the nature of those admonitions—in short, its coherence, form, and content—suggest that it doesn't belong with the rest of the book (see William L. Lane, *Word Biblical Commentary*, vol. 47b, *Hebrews 9-13*, 496). For the most part, these arguments have been debunked by others based largely on the significance of 12:28:

"Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe, for our 'God is a consuming fire.'" It is argued by them that this verse makes a general statement that gives rise to a list of particular behaviours implied by it. One of them puts it this way: "The connection of 13:1-21 to the preceding section, 12:14-29, is established through 12:28. There the community is summoned to be thankful, and through thanksgiving to serve God in an acceptable manner. At that climactic point in the homily, authentic worship is defined as grateful response to objective covenant blessings already experienced and to the certainty of the future reception of an unshakable kingdom . . . The concept of worship, however, is almost certainly to be expanded to include a lifestyle that is pleasing to God at every level" (497). That lifestyle is described in detail in chapter 13.

It's not hard to follow the author's flow of thought in 13:5-6. He gives his readers two commands in 5a; he explains the reason why they should obey them in 5b; and finally, he describes what results from doing so in verse 6. His commands aren't out of the blue; they make perfect sense in light of what his readers had been going through. They are given "in light of the many believers who had forfeited all their worldly possessions for Christ's sake." Apparently, many had been forced to give up property or material possessions (10:32-34). "It would be easy for these believers to be covetous and discontented with their lot in life. Therefore they are exhorted to bring their attitudes into

conformity with the mind of Christ so that they will not be covetous, but be content with what they have" (J. Dwight Pentecost, *A Faith that Endures*, 228-29). It's easy to understand how hardship, either the result of misfortune or, in the readers' case, persecution, might lead to a preoccupation with money and things. However, that preoccupation flies in the face of the life of worship believers are to live (cf. Ro 12:1). In the words of one writer, "Such greed amounts to accusing God of incompetence as a provider of one's most basic needs and, therefore, is incompatible with commitment to God himself (cf. Matt. 6:24)" (George H. Guthrie, *The NIV Application Commentary: Hebrews*, 437).

In 5b the author explains that his demands are more than reasonable in light of what God has said. The Old Testament makes it clear that security is found in God's promises and not in money or possessions. Therefore, it makes better sense for God's people to trust in their God rather than their wealth. The apostle Paul concurs. He tells Timothy, "Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment" (1Ti 6:17). What's more, Jesus warns his church against the deceitfulness of wealth (Rev 3:17-18).

In verse 6 the author presents the impact of what God has said on everyone who believes him. Each man confesses, "The Lord is my helper." And each woman boldly declares, "I will not be afraid." Each one boasts, "What can anyone do to me?" The quotation is from Psalm 118:6-7. In verses 8-9 of that psalm, the psalmist goes on to say,

"It is better to take refuge in the LORD than to trust in man.

It is better to take refuge in the LORD than to trust in princes."

To which we might add in the light of Hebrews 13:5, "It is better to take refuge in the LORD than to trust in money."

The Message of the Passage

Avoid the love of money and be content with what you have because God, your helper, will never leave you or abandon you.

day **4** **EMBRACE** – how God spoke to you in his word.

Our desire is to not be merely hearers of the word, but doers of the word as James teaches in James 1:22. Reflect on 3 "living questions" to apply what you have learned this week.

- **Journal your answers to the following *living* questions:**

–How is God making himself known to you?

–How does God want to change you?

–How is God calling you to change your world?

notes STUDY – the commentaries to answer the questions.

v. 5 **the love of money** Gk. *philarguros* (cf., 1Ti 3:3; 6:10) "pertaining to not being desirous or greedy for money-'not loving wealth, one who does not love money'" (L&N, s.v., *philarguros*, 25.109); cf., "covetousness" (NKJV); "avarice" (NJB). "The sins of sexual impurity [see v. 4] and covetousness are linked in several New Testament passages (e.g., 1 Cor. 5:10-11; Eph. 4:19; 1 Thess. 4:3-6) probably because their prohibitions are given side by side as the seventh and eighth of the Ten Commandments. Both the sexually immoral and those greedy for money pursue a myopic self-gratification that takes them outside the bound of God's provision. Such greed amounts to accusing God of incompetence as a provider of one's most basic needs and, therefore, is incompatible with commitment to God himself (cf. Matt. 6:24)" (Guthrie, 437). "The fact that the seventh and eighth commandments occur side by side in the Decalogue (Exod 20:14-15; Deut 5:18-19) encouraged Jewish writers to treat sexual offenses and greed in this order (so Spicq, 2:418). The writer is thoroughly Jewish in his arrangement of the catechetical precepts that have bearing on the pursuit of holiness (12:14)" (Lane, 518).

v. 5 **be content** Cf., "satisfied" (GNT, NLT). Gk. *arkeo*, which means "be enough, sufficient, adequate" in the active and "be satisfied" or "content" in the passive (cf., 1 Ti 6:8). "In Hebrew the injunction to contentment is a call to quietness in the situation, in confident reliance on the presence and provision of a faithful God" (519). "The greedy man can never be a happy man, but the opposite of covetousness is contentment" (F. F. Bruce, *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, NICNT, 394).

v. 5 **because** Gk., *gar* is "a conjunction used to express cause, inference, continuation, or to explain" (BAGD, s.v., *gar*).

v. 5 **has said** "The perfect tense of the verb indicates that the affirmations made continue to be in force" (Lane, 519).

v. 5 **never** The verse is emphatic; it reads literally, "never not you will I leave, nor never not you will I forsake."

v. 5 **leave, forsake** The use of synonymous parallelism in the quotation is marked by the use of these two synonyms. "Here the word *leave* communicates the idea of loosing a hold, withdrawing the support rendered by a sustaining grasp. The word *forsake* includes the idea of abandoning, deserting, or leaving one alone either in a battle or in an athletic contest. The one forsaken, then, would have no companion to stand beside him. God has promised that he will neither withdraw His sustaining grasp that supports us, nor will he abandon us in the conflict" (Pentecost, 229). "The basis for such contentment is God's promise of his ever-present help; 'Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.' No Old Testament quotation perfectly corresponds to this quote in Greek, although several approach correspondence (e.g., Gen. 28:15; Deut. 31:6-8; Josh. 1:5), and various theories have been offered as to how the author was using his source material. Perhaps he conflated two Old Testament passages or used a Greek translation no longer in existence" (Guthrie, 437).

v. 6 **so** Gk. *hoste* is "used w[ith] the inf[initive] to introduce a result clause" (Fritz Rienecker, *A Linguistic Key to the Greek New Testament*, 718). "The pledge of God's presence prompts the response of faith" (Lane, 520).

v. 6 **helper** "The citation of Ps 117[MT 118]:6 LXX consists of three lines that suggest the setting for confession is the experience of persecution: the first line brings into focus God and the confessor; the third line the oppressor and the confessor; and the intervening second line the confessor alone, who responds with confidence to a threatening situation. The quotation has the sobering effect of establishing a social context for the instruction in v 5a. The writer's concern is not limited to the provision of daily needs. It extends to the confrontation with hostility in society at large" (Lane 520).

v. 6 **can man do** Lit., "what will man do to me" (NASB); cf., "anyone" (GNT); "mere people" (NLT); "mere mortals" (NIV 2011). "The question is 'What will man do to me?' rather than 'What can man do to me?' as in NIV, JB, NEB, RSV, and TEV. It is performance rather than capacity the psalmist is speaking of. He is not thinking theoretically but of what will happen. Man will not succeed in anything he attempts to do against one who trusts in God" (Leon Morris, "Hebrews," in *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, 12:147).

Family Talk

Encouragement from one parent's heart to another

Separation anxiety is a normal stage of development for children. In most cases, by the early preschool years, this anxiety has resolved itself and children are confident being separated from their parents for short periods of time. Occasionally a school-aged child may experience anxious feelings when away from parents, especially if there are other issues on his mind. One thing a parent can do to help children adjust to being away from them is to assure them that they are coming back. As I was reading today's text, it reminded me of a beautiful truth - we never need to suffer separation anxiety from God. He will never leave us or forsake us. Here is an idea for all those leftover Easter eggs. Put one of each of these scripture references into a plastic egg: Deuteronomy 31:6, Deuteronomy 31:8, Joshua 1:5, 1 Kings 8:57, 1 Chronicles 28:20, Psalms 37:28, Psalms 94:14, Isaiah 41:17, Hebrews 13:5. Hide the eggs and then have one last egg hunt to find them. Grab a Bible, gather everyone together and take turns looking up and reading these verses. What a great promise to us! We are His. No matter what our present circumstance may be, we cannot escape the loving Presence of our Heavenly Father. Choose your favorite verse and post it near the door as a reminder to everyone that He is always with you even when you are apart.

What Does The Bible Say

Read: Read Hebrews 13:5-6

1. What does verse 5 say to keep your lives free from?
2. Fill in the blanks: "Never will I _____ you; never will I _____ you." (v. 5)
3. Why should we not be afraid? (v. 6)

What Do You Think

1. How does this promise help you when you are feeling alone or scared?
2. What might happen if a person began to trust in his money instead of God?
3. How does being content with what we have show our trust in God?

What R U Going To Do

Imagine you have a friend who is feeling lonely or scared. Ask your parent or sibling to pretend to be that friend. Share the truth of the promise we are learning with your "friend." Practicing what to say is a good exercise because one day you just may need it for real!

MEMORY TIME

Core Comp

Peace - I live without worry because things are good between God, myself and others

Memory Verse

Heb 13:5 - *Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.*

KIDPIX COUPON

I memorized CC _____ and Verse _____. Family completed **Say** _____ **Think** _____ **Do** _____

Child's name _____ Grade _____ Parent's signature _____

Earn tokens by completing the Bible study portion of this page.
Questions: Kids@pantego.org

30 CORE COMPETENCIES

10 CORE BELIEFS

Trinity 2 Corinthians 13:14

I believe the God of the Bible is the only true God - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Salvation By Grace Ephesians 2:8-9

I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by His grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.

Authority of the Bible 2 Timothy 3:16-17

I believe the Bible is the Word of God and has the right to command my belief and action.

Personal God Psalm 121:1-2

I believe God is involved in and cares about my daily life.

Identity in Christ John 1:12

I believe I am significant because of my position as a child of God.

Church Ephesians 4:15-16

I believe the church is God's primary way to accomplish His purposes on earth today.

Humanity John 3:16

I believe all people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior.

Compassion Psalm 82:3-4

I believe God calls all Christians to show compassion to those in need.

Eternity John 14:1-4

I believe there is a heaven and a hell and that Jesus Christ is returning to judge the earth and to establish His eternal kingdom.

Stewardship 1 Timothy 6:17-19

I believe that everything I am or own belongs to God.

10 CORE PRACTICES

Worship Psalm 95:1-7

I worship God for who He is and what He has done for me.

Prayer Psalm 66:16-20

I pray to God to know Him, to lay my request before Him and to find direction for my daily life.

Bible Study Hebrews 4:12

I read the Bible to know God, the truth, and to find direction for my daily life.

Single-mindedness Matthew 6:33

I focus on God and His priorities for my life.

Spiritual Gifts Romans 12:4-6

I know and use my spiritual gifts to accomplish God's purposes.

Biblical Community Acts 2:44-47

I fellowship with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in my life, others' lives, and in the world.

Giving Away My Time Colossians 3:17

I give away my time to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away My Money

2 Corinthians 8:7

I give away my money to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away My Faith Ephesians

6:19-20

I give away my faith to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away My Life Romans 12:1

I give away my life to fulfill God's purposes.

10 CORE VIRTUES

Joy John 15:11

I have inner contentment and purpose in spite of my circumstances.

Peace Philippians 4:6-7

I am free from anxiety because things are right between God, myself, and others.

Faithfulness Proverbs 3:3-4

I have established a good name with God and with others based on my long-term loyalty to those relationships.

Self-Control Titus 2:11-13

I have the power, through Christ, to control myself.

Humility Philippians 2:3, 4

I choose to esteem others above myself.

Love 1 John 4:10-12

I sacrificially and unconditionally love and forgive others.

Patience Proverbs 14:29

I take a long time to overheat and endure patiently under the unavoidable pressures of life.

Kindness/Goodness 1 Thess. 5:15

I choose to do the right things in my relationships with others.

Gentleness Philippians 4:5

I am thoughtful, considerate and calm in dealing with others.

Hope Hebrews 6:19-20

I can cope with the hardships of life and with death because of the hope I have in Jesus Christ.

About the Authors

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