

Hebrews 13:3 says, "Remember the prisoners as if chained with them- those who are mistreated- since you yourselves are in the body also". This scripture follows verses 1&2, which says to love your brother, and help (entertain) the strangers. Many people know of this idea, and can add an "amen" to it, but is it really being applied?

The action here is "remember", but I submit to you, this word isn't a passive word. It reminds me of the common- and worthless- saying that people use after a disaster, like a hurricane, or terrorist attack. They say, "our thoughts and prayers are with you".

Do you know what that means? That "thought" and 50 cents can buy you a can of soda out of the vending machine for 50 cents. It means nothing.

It's worthless.

Yet people pass off thoughts as if it helps those in need. The same with "remembering" those in prison.

Hebrews 13:3 is an active admonition to DO something for those in prison, especially those being mistreated. Inmates are abused by staff and officers daily, and may cry out to God for mercy and justice. But if all that is done is "remembering" by "our thoughts and prayers", then that person's aid is useless.

Christians have a charge- to go and show the power and mercy of God. Jesus said that we should do what He did (John 14:12). And what did Jesus do? Luke 4:18 says "preach the gospel to the poor..."

And apparently people stop there.

But the verse continues, "...heal the brokenhearted, proclaim liberty to the captives, and the recovery of sight to the blind; to set at liberty those who are oppressed...". Jesus was reading Isaiah 61:1, which says "... and the opening of the prison to those who are bound..." All this is more than "thoughts and prayers".

Here's my point; Hebrews tells us to love one another, even strangers. But to truly love isn't a passive, lazy idea. Jesus didn't think about us; He got ACTIVE, and DID something. Such ought to be the same for Christians.

There are thousands of prisoners that need help. It's not enough to say, "our thoughts and prayers are with you"; they must actively help those being mistreated by actively seeking God in prayer for them.

THAT is true brotherly love, as Hebrews 13:1 begins with...