

Hebrews Chapter 13 Epilogue

Verses 1-6 – Five Important Virtues to Cultivate

Verse 1 – Show brotherly love

Verse 2 – Entertain strangers (show hospitality)

Verse 3 – Remember the prisoners (put yourself in their shoes)

Verse 4 – Honor marriage (abstain from sexual immorality)

Verse 5 – Do not covet (free from the love of money)

Remember God's promises (Joshua 1:5, Deut. 31:6-7)

"I will never desert you, nor will I ever forsake you."

Also Psalm 118:6, *"The Lord is my helper, I will not be afraid.*

What shall man do to me?"

Verses 7-17 – The Importance of Leadership in the Church

Remembering past leadership and obeying present leadership is crucial for spiritual maturity.

Verse 7

We should *remember*...

We should *imitate*... (1 Cor. 4:16, 11:1, 1 Thess. 1:6, Heb. 6:12)

Verse 8

Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, yes and forever.

This truth is a key hinge between verse 7 and verse 9. Because Jesus is God and does not change, then the teachings (doctrines) about Him do not change.

Verses 9-13 The contrast of grace and law.

The eating of the flesh of the O.T. sacrifices was governed in the Law. *An altar, from which those who serve the tabernacle have no right to eat* – The O.T. priest could eat the meat of some sacrifices (Lev. 6:25-26). We, in contrast partake of the body of Christ in a spiritual sense.

The bodies of those animals...are burned outside the camp – On the day of Atonement, after the blood of an animal was sprinkled on the mercy seat, the body of that animal was taken outside the camp and burned. In a figurative sense the dead body of the animal bore the sins of the people and was taken to a place considered unclean (outside the camp).

Jesus also...suffered outside the gate – Jesus was crucified outside the city of Jerusalem. He was considered unholy and was rejected by the Jews. He was outside of what Judaism considered good.

Therefore, let us go out to Him outside the camp – The readers needed to

leave Judaism behind and uphold their commitment to Christ.

Here we do not have a lasting city, but we are seeking the city which is

to come. The Old Covenant of Law and the sacrificial system which took place in the tabernacle and eventually the temple in Jerusalem, was never meant to be ongoing. From Abraham on, all believers seek *the city which is to come.*

Through Him then, let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God... It is through Jesus, our great High Priest, that we now glorify and give praise to God.

And do not neglect doing good and sharing – This is part of our sacrifice of praise. Service springs forth from a heart of worship.

Obey your leaders, and submit to them – The author began this section reminding them about their past leaders and ends exhorting them to obey their current leaders.

They keep watch... as those who will give an account – Church leadership is a serious endeavor and leaders are held to a high standard by God (James 3:1).

Let them do this with joy – When God's order is followed with obedience and the proper attitude, everyone will be joyful in the use of his or her spiritual gifts. Not to submit to those whom God has placed over us makes our lives *unprofitable*.

The joy of leadership is to see others walking in the truth (3 John 4).

Verses 18-25 – Final Personal Words

Pray for us... All of the authors of the Scripture understood the power of prayer!

The God of peace – Romans 5:1, Phil. 4:7

The Great Shepherd of the sheep – John 10:11, 1 Peter 2:25.

The blood of the eternal covenant – Unlike the old covenant which was temporary, the new covenant is eternal because of the once-for-all sacrifice of Jesus.

Equip you in every good thing to do His will – The author's prayer is that God, based on the finished work of Christ, would equip the readers to serve Him and remain faithful to Him.

Bear with this word of exhortation – Hebrews contains some of the strongest warnings in the New Testament. The exhortation or encouragement was for them to remain faithful to Christ, run the race of life well, and obtain the promised eternal rewards.

Timothy – This is the only verse that alludes to Timothy having been in prison and being set free.

Those from Italy greet you – Probably the location from which the letter was composed.

Grace be with you all – Paul uses this exact phrase in Titus 3:15 and an extended version in Rom. 16:24, 2 Cor. 13:14, 2 Thess. 3:18. This may have been a common benediction.