

Past, Present, Future

HVFC

May 17, 2026

Jesus is Better Series

Hebrews 13:7-9

Good morning.

It is so good to be back home. Not only in our own house with our beds, but back in Montana, at our church, with our people, our schedules.

I had the opportunity to speak at the church my dad and mom attend in front of several members of my family who were attending the 50th celebration.

The only issue, I went to a men's breakfast on Saturday morning with my two sons and my dad and brother, and Pastor Val and I got to talking and he asked if I would like to share something for a few minutes on Sunday. I said sure I would be happy to greet the church. After the breakfast, we were setting up that room for the party the next day, and that afternoon, pastor Val walks in and tells my dad that I am preaching in the morning, which to me was not what I agreed to.

However, I did share and it was fun.

It was very good for us to get away and unplug as a whole family. And each time we do, we always think it could be the last time we go together as a whole family.

With basically three adult kids, and two teenagers, it was quite crowded at my parent's place, with kids sleeping everywhere.

With that, I want to give a big thank you to Bill and Peter for filling in, especially Peter, as I had a speaker lined up for Mother's Day that had to back out last minute. And to preach a Mother's Day message on short notice is a tall order.

Now, as we get back into the rhythm of things, I had hoped to finish up Hebrews next week, however that isn't going to happen.

I need more than two sermons to do that, and Pastor Jeff and Colleen will be here ministering on May 31. Mark your calendars for that, it will be good to see them and hear from them.

The last time I spoke from Hebrews we looked at marks or characteristics we should have as citizens of the unshakeable kingdom the writer closes chapter 12 speaking about.

As I read it, the writer begins his wrap up in our passages this morning, starting in verse 7 with closing reminders and encouragements.

If you have your Bible, open it to Hebrews 13 and we will start reading in verse 7.

Hebrews 13:7-9

7 Remember those who rule over you, who have spoken the word of God to you, whose faith follow, considering the outcome of their conduct. 8 Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever. 9 Do not be carried about with various and strange doctrines. For it is good that the heart be established by grace, not with foods which have not profited those who have been occupied with them.

NKJV

Let's Pray.

If you have been a part of any Foursquare church for any length of time, you recognized the heart of our passage this morning.

Most of us can quote it by heart, and use it often in various situations in life.

Having done the same, I thought I had an idea of what I was going to say, but as I read it in context, it blossomed before me.

And I hope to present that as we cover our scriptures this morning.

I want to look at Jesus in three directions this morning.

Past, present, and future.

And the most important words in our context this morning are these:

Jesus Christ IS the same...

Yesterday, the past.

Hebrews 13:7

Remember those who rule over you, who have spoken the word of God to you, whose faith follow, considering the outcome of their conduct.

NKJV

Remember those who lived out their faith and finished life well, completing the race of Faith we run. Chapter 11 is full of heroes who died in faith, those who finished well, who died believing and not walking away.

Tertullian who lived from 155-220 is credited for the saying:

The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church.

I believe you could tie that statement to this verse in Hebrews 13.

We are told to examine the behavior of those who have gone before (died), who spoke the word of God to us, that finished well.

In the world we live in, where everyone is out to get you to click the follow button on your social media screen because it makes them rich and famous, should make us cautious. There are so many people putting out 30 second theological theories

with nothing to back it up, just their opinion and a scripture to satisfy the itching ears of what people want to hear.

How many times has the church be rocked in our lifetime by preachers with large followings and mega churches, or famous Christian artists where it comes out about all kinds of sin in their life who end up abandoning the faith, and tarnishing the church. I grieve for what is coming with the rise of influencers, which we are already beginning to see, when we learn that they never lived out anything they proclaimed.

Matthew 24:10-13

10 And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another. 11 Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many. 12 And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold. 13 But he who endures to the end shall be saved.

NKJV

There is another passage in 1 Timothy I will use later that says some will depart the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons.

The writer here tells us there is something to examining the life of those who have gone before and have died in the faith enduring to the end.

When Hebrews was written, many of the original Church leaders in Jerusalem had died.

The ones we know of are Stephen, James Jesus's brother who led the church in Jerusalem, and James the brother of John, and probably many others we don't know about.

It also means the prophets who came before, as Jesus demonstrated on the road to Emmaus, using the OT scriptures to teach about himself.

This is important.

As a teenager, a very typical teenager, I would often start things, only to leave them when something more interesting came along. And mid-stream, I would abandon ship and start something else.

My dad sat me down when I was 18 or so and taught me a life lesson.

Here is the lesson.

In life it is easy to start something, anyone can do that.

But a good man is known by how he finishes what he started.

In life it is easy to start something, but it is extremely difficult to finish, and to finish well is even more difficult.

A man who finishes well is a rare man indeed.

Which is why the blood of the martyrs built the church.

It gave a powerful testimony which encouraged others to persevere and embrace the faith because they didn't give up during the difficult part, but finished well the race set before them. They preached and spoke of Jesus in their time and their faith in Him allowed them to finish well.

The Jesus that gave them strength to finish well in the past, is the same Jesus we have today.

Hebrews 13:8

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

NKJV

The heart of this scripture is Jesus Christ is.

That is a present statement, today, right now, it doesn't say was or will be, but today.

This is so important for us right now.

In a world where culture is working relentlessly to tell the church to get with the times, the Word of God says that Jesus is constant across all times.

Let's look at what Jesus Christ is through scripture.

If I was to read them all, we would be here a long time, so I encourage you to look up each of these attributes in scripture regarding Jesus.

Jesus Christ is Love.

Galatians 2:20

I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.

NKJV

John 15:13-14

13 Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends. 14 You are My friends if you do whatever I command you.

NKJV

Romans 5:8-9

But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

NKJV

Jesus Christ is Faithful.

2 Timothy 2:13

If we are faithless,

He remains faithful;

He cannot deny Himself.

NKJV

1 John 1:9

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

NKJV

Jesus Christ is Powerful.

John 1:3

All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.

NKJV

Matthew 28:18

And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.

NKJV

Philippians 4:13

I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

NKJV

Jesus Christ is Truth, Grace & Mercy, Life, Humility, and so many other things. And He is perfect in them, demonstrating them with perfect execution.

He does not change and these things are true of him in every generation of mankind, from the beginning until now.

He is the same, for those who have come before, for us, and for the future.

Hebrews 13:9

9 Do not be carried about with various and strange doctrines. For it is good that the heart be established by grace, not with foods which have not profited those who have been occupied with them.

NKJV

One of the things I have come to expect as I prepare sermons is the overlapping God brings as I study and listen and read several devotions from various areas not connected, yet highlighting the very scripture we are in Hebrews.

For example, I started a devotional study of the book of Colossians last Thursday. And it had a speaker that presented a short video explaining the purpose Paul had to write the book and it is the very thing verse 9 speaks about.

I love how in every generation, the Word of God has its finger on the pulse of the culture. We may be more “advanced”, but we are still human, and as Solomon wrote, there is nothing new under the sun. We struggle with the same struggles the early church struggled with, we ask the same questions, deal with the same issues.

And God in his faithfulness meets us with the truth of His word.

The writer says “Do not be carried about with various and strange doctrines...”.

And the church of Colossae, a fruitful and vibrant church, began to preach some strange doctrines about Jesus.

See if you recognize any of them?

They said things like he was only a prophet and an excellent teacher. They began to proclaim there was secret knowledge that could be learned for a deeper more meaningful “Christian” experience that was reserved for only the purest (actually the richest, who could line the pockets of the giver of secrets).

I don’t want to call anyone out, but the church and the world are rife with claims of secret knowledge and codes found in the bible that tell a “new revelation”.

A book came out called the Da Vinci Code and sold over 80 million copies, proclaiming a secret knowledge about the Bible and Jesus.

If you want my opinion, those codes and secret knowledge bits are straight demonic.

1 Timothy 4:1-3

1 Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, 2 speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron,

NKJV

Demons know the scripture, and just as satan used it to tempt Jesus, he can attempt to tempt us with things that promise divine knowledge by adding to the scripture.

The devotion makes this comment I want to quote.

Others claim a secret knowledge that would unlock a doorway into salvation outside of the redemptive power of Jesus, searching everywhere for a different thoroughfare into an eternity of enlightenment other than the clear teachings of scripture.

This includes horoscopes, energy readings, or anything that seeks to gain enlightening knowledge apart from the Word of God and the Holy Spirit, who speaks what Jesus says, and Jesus who only repeats what God tells him.

It is an attempt of satan to lead fools astray.

Jesus is the same at the creation of the world, as He is today, as He will be until the trumpet sounds and He returns.

Who knows what the strange new doctrine will be tomorrow or next year. What I do know is that if it preaches a different Jesus than Scripture presents, it is the enemy.

Jesus does not change. God has given us everything we need in the person of Jesus, he has provided everything we needed to know in the Scripture, there are no secrets, and he has filled us with the Holy Spirit to test the things of this world to see if it is of God or of the enemy.

Cling to Jesus

In closing.

Mankind has this insatiable desire for the unknowable; however, we are predictable from generation to generation.

That is why as a denomination we have Hebrews 13:8 as a foundational scripture. It is a Theological anchor. We are tied to Jesus who is unchanging from generation to generation.

Verse 7 calls us to remember those who have spoken the word of God and finished well.

The truth is Leaders pass away, Ministries change, circumstances shift, but Jesus Christ remains the same.

Verse 9 warns us of the waves of various and strange doctrines that will seek to destabilize the firm foundation of Jesus.

We are enticed by strange doctrines when our heart begins to drift away from Jesus because we doubt the sufficiency and the consistency of Jesus.

The Jesus we have today, the Jesus the world needs, the Jesus we preach and follow is the only Jesus.

He does change.

He is the same yesterday, today and forever.

I will pick back up in the middle of verse 9 next week speaking about being established in grace as it is connected to the following scriptures.

Let's pray.