

## INTRODUCTION:

**Heb. 12:28-29:** *Therefore let us be grateful FOR receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, AND THUS let us offer to God acceptable worship, WITH reverence and awe, 29 for our God is a consuming fire. —Because we're people of a new Kingdom, be grateful—showing it through acceptable worship!! —Rom. 12:1 ...present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Acceptable worship means there is unacceptable worship. **ILLUSTRATION:** Waiter at a restaurant in CDA—“sorry choked on my spit. Sweat is dripping down my back.” —What is acceptable? —The author is about to tell us what acceptable worship with reverence and awe looks like. —In the midst of suffering/trials; we love others and we stay grounded in Christian fellowship—be occupied with these things.*

## MOVEMENT 1:

**Heb. 13:1-5:** *Let brotherly love continue. 2 Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares. —Two actions: Love and hospitality. 1) family type love where you cherish the person and want the best for them, and 2) hospitality—seeing a need and meeting it in love (cf. Rom. 12:13—“contribute to needs of saints”). —This hospitality and love is genuine no matter who is in your midst: Abraham (Gen. 18), Lot (Gen. 19), and Gideon (Jdg. 6) all seemed to initially entertain angels unknowingly. —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. —**There is not the free church and the persecuted Church, but we are one body and one church;** therefore, remember your brothers and sisters in Christ and pray for them as though you were right there! —Get your focus solely off of yourselves and on others.*

—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. —A society is as healthy as the families that make up the society, and the families are as healthy as the marriages. How's your marriage? More important than your job, your parenting, your ministries, your financial portfolio is your marriage!!! —Marriage is a sacred and gracious gift to remind us of the sacrificial relationship between Christ and His Church...it's not only foundational to our society, but to our very church body!! Christ served by sacrificially laying down His life on a worthwhile mission; men we too need to serve by leading our families on a worthwhile mission for Christ! \*\*Maybe you're married, but are you living out your marriage in a way that honors God—mirroring Christ and His Church! —**Eph. 5:22-28:** *Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. 23 For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. 24 Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands. 25 Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, 26 that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, 27 so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. 28 In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself.* —Heterosexuality, homosexuality, and transexuality are all destructive to a society... as Christians we pursue “holy-sexuality,” understanding that sex is a gift of God between a man and woman in covenant marriage to God; outside of that it's wrong, broken, distorted, and destructive.

—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?” (Ps. 118:6; cf. Lk. 12:4) —The more our sights are focused on the riches of heaven, the less we are focused on the riches of earth; when we focus on riches, we can't help but focus on ourselves. **If we truly believe that the best is to come in the next life, we don't need to live as though we have to build our own heaven with earthly possessions in this life!** —Christ is the biggest blessing for any of us. —**Lk. 12:15:** *Take care, and be on your guard against all covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions. 1 Tim. 6:6: But godliness with contentment is great gain....”*

—**Acceptable worship to God is a sacrificial life of love.** Die doing things that produce life in others!

## **MOVEMENT 2:**

**Heb. 13:7-8:** *Remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the word of God. Consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith. 8 Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever. —In context, this isn't so much about remembering a specific church leader, but it's being mindful of their leadership and lifestyle. What did their life produce? Did they persevere through the trials as Christ did? With false teachers around, the call is to be perceptive of what's being taught and if they're living victoriously in Christ. If the outcome of the leader's life lines up with the message they teach, imitate their lives!! Remember leaders that were living sacrifices! —Equally as important is for leaders to consider how they lead their lives (Parents too). —**1 Cor. 11:1:** *Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ.* —Is your life in Christ at a place where you are worthy enough to follow... in your marriage, in your parenting, in your work, in your ministry? **ILLUSTRATION:** At my memorial, I hope people recognize Christ as the most important pursuit of my life!*

**Heb. 13:9-13:** *Do not be led away by diverse and strange teachings, for it is good for the heart to be strengthened by grace, not by foods, which have not benefited those devoted to them.*—Two sides identified: Grace vs. Meat. Christ vs. limited sacrificial system of the law that some Christians contemplated going back to. —The author reminded the believers that the sacrificial system of the law exposed the need for a greater sacrifice...one which would actually heal and perfect the consciousness of the worshipper. —**ILLUSTRATION:** People receiving Christ, and yet falling back into lifestyles of self-preservation.

*10 We have an altar from which those who serve the tent have no right to eat. 11 For the bodies of those animals whose blood is brought into the holy places by the high priest as a sacrifice for sin are burned outside the camp. 12 So Jesus also suffered outside the gate in order to sanctify the people through his own blood. 13 Therefore let us go to him outside the camp and bear the reproach he endured.* —When some were still attempting to find justification through the Mosaic law and temple rituals, the true altar was outside the city walls where Christ suffered. Therefore go out of the city to find salvation in Christ (*eklesia*—"the called out ones"). Stay surrounded by the community of believers anchored by our Savior! **Don't forsake the gathering!!** —For there is life in Christ who is found as a great sacrifice outside of the worldly systems and deceptive and hollow philosophies of man. Be found around His altar, by remaining connected to His bride!

**Heb. 13:14-19:** *For here we have no lasting city, but we seek the city that is to come. 15 Through him then let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge his name. 16 Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God. 17 Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you. 18 Pray for us, for we are sure that we have a clear conscience, desiring to act honorably in all things. 19 I urge you the more earnestly to do this in order that I may be restored to you the sooner.* —As the 1st century Christian Jews understood that there would be a coming destruction of Jerusalem, **the early Church focused on living as citizens of heaven as they looked forward to their future heavenly dwelling, despite persecution and tribulation!!!** —During testing times, the call of the Christian isn't to bicker, complain, fear, or push against godly leadership, but it's praising God, doing good, sharing, obeying your leaders and letting them lead, and to pray for honorable living!

—**Acceptable worship to God is done in charitable community anchored by Christ.**

## **CONCLUSION:**

**ILLUSTRATION:** Tell about the fastest runner who lost the race, because he got distracted and stumbled. He didn't lose because of his ability, but because of his lack of focus. —**To be effective, focus on the acceptable forms of worship.** —As those called out to assemble as the people of God, we're not to live as those in the world who are caught up in the rumors, the news, or the deceptive philosophies of the day. This doesn't mean passivity, but it means to not let these things dictate your life—robbing you of joy, stealing time from your family, filling you with fear! —Is your worship acceptable?