

TEXT- Hebrews 13:1-25

INTRO – Here we have the final appeals of this epistle. Doctrine has been covered. Now practical admonitions are given for all believers.

They were fearful they would lose everything —friends, material goods, standing in the temple, sacrifices, and priesthood!

But the believer loses nothing by getting saved.

You must turn your back on false religion.

You must fix your eyes on God. A believer has many spiritual blessings.

I. A Spiritual Fellowship of Love 1-4

Love for God's people is one of the marks of a true believer. John 13:35

By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

1 Th 4:9 *But as touching brotherly love ye need not that I write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another.*

John 15:17 *These things I command you, that ye love one another.*

Christians are hated by the world and need the love of the saints.

This love is expressed in practical ways:

Such as sympathizing with those in trials Heb 13:3, 1 Co 12:26 *And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it.*

True Christian love ought to be seen first in the home and family, so he warns about sexual sins that can destroy marriage.

In this day when marriage vows are taken so lightly, we need to remember that God judges all immoral people, whether believers or unbelievers.

II. Spiritual Treasures 5-6

It cost something to be a Christian in the first century.

How easy it is for Christians to be covetous and desire the things of the world (1Ti_6:6 and Luk_12:15). "Be content!"

True contentment never comes from possessing many things; it comes when we rest our lives wholly on Christ.

The writer quotes the OT promise that God gave to Moses Deu 31:6-8 *Be strong and of a good courage, fear not, nor be afraid of them: for the LORD thy God, he it is that doth go with thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee. 7 And Moses called unto Joshua, and said unto him in the sight of all Israel, Be strong and of a good courage: for thou must go with this people unto the land which the LORD hath sworn unto their fathers to give them; and thou*

shalt cause them to inherit it. 8 And the LORD, he it is that doth go before thee; he will be with thee, he will not fail thee, neither forsake thee: fear not, neither be dismayed.

Jos 1:5 *There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life: as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.*

Since Christ is always with us, we need never fear the attacks of people.

Christ is our Helper; we need never fear Psa 118:6 *The LORD is on my side; I will not fear: what can man do unto me?*

III. Spiritual Food in the Word 7-10

A. "Remember them which have the rule over you" 7

"Have the rule" means "to lead"; the pastor is expected to be the spiritual leader of the flock. How does he lead? Through the Word of God, which is the spiritual food for God's sheep. The believers are to follow the example of their faith, but the leaders are expected to point to Christ. Pastors come and go, but Christ remains the same.

B. "Obey them that have the rule over you" 7

Christians are to submit to the Word of God as taught and lived by their spiritual leaders. The pastor must give an account of his ministry to the Lord;

C. "Salute them that rule over you" 24

It is a tragedy when Christians become angry and refuse to talk with their pastor. This is disobedience to the Word of God.

Believers who do not feed on the Word will feed on "strange doctrines" Heb 13:9 and become "spiritually sick." The only way to grow to maturity and be established is through the Word of God Eph 4:14,

IV. Spiritual Sacrifices 11-16

In turning to Christ, these Hebrews lost the temple and its priesthood and sacrifices; but they gained in Christ far more than they lost.

- Christ rejected the temple and called it "a den of thieves";
- He rejected the city of Jerusalem by being crucified outside the gate

The two-fold message of Hebrews in the phrases "within the veil" (fellowship with Christ) and "without the camp" (witness for Christ).

Believers look to no earthly city; they have a heavenly city awaiting them, as did the heroes of faith of old (Heb_13:14; Heb_11:10; Heb_12:27).

A spiritual sacrifice is something done or given in the name of Christ and for His glory. In Heb_13:15, he states that praise is such a sacrifice; see Eph_5:18-19, Psa_27:6 and Psa_69:30-31. Good works and sharing material blessings are also spiritual sacrifices (Heb_13:16). Other spiritual sacrifices

include the believer's body (Rom_12:1-2); offerings (Php_4:18); prayer (Psa_141:2); a broken heart (Psa_51:17); and souls won to Christ (Rom_15:16).

V. Spiritual Power 17-24

The benediction of Heb_13:20-21 explains how the Christian is enabled to live for Christ in this wicked world:

Christ works in us from His throne in heaven.

There are three separate titles given to Christ,

(1) **The Good Shepherd**, who dies for the sheep — Joh_10:11

(2) **The Great Shepherd**, who perfects the sheep — Heb_13:20-21

(3) **The Chief Shepherd**, who will come for the sheep — 1Pe_5:4

Our High Priest is our Shepherd and Helper; He works in us and gives us the grace and power to live for Him and serve Him.

“Make you perfect” is the theme of Hebrews; “let us go on unto perfection [maturity]” (Heb_6:1). Maturity does not come through our striving in our own strength; it comes as we allow Christ to work in us through the Word of God. This parallels Php_2:12-16 and Eph_3:20-21. God cannot work through us until first He works in us, and He works in us through His Word (1Th_2:13).

The closing greetings show the love that bound believers together in the early church. The closing benediction of grace identifies Paul as the writer

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