

Jesus is Better – *Hebrews*

Hebrews 13:7-16

“Going to Jesus Outside the Camp” – August 19th, 2018



Introduction

Hebrews is written to strengthen weary and tired Christians as we run the Christian race. With encouragements *and* warnings, we are helped to fix our eyes on Jesus, the author, perfecter and prize of our faith. Thankfully, we don't run the race alone – God has blessed us with the local church. By loving each other in practical ways (exhortation – 3:13, encouragement – 10:24-25, hospitality – 13:2, or generosity – 13:5), we help to keep us going and to stay the course. So where do we find the strength to love like this? Where do we find strength when our hearts grow weary? By the grace that is available in Jesus Christ.

Pray

Before you begin, take some time to ask God to help you understand His word, to reveal what needs to change in you, and for the grace to follow Him in response. To help, use [Psalm 119:33-40](#) as a prayer for God to open His word up to you.

Sermon Outline

- I. Be strengthened by Christ (13:7-14)
- II. Praise God and serve each other (13:15-16)

Read & Discuss

- 1) Read [Hebrews 13:7-14](#)

The leaders who had taught this 1st century church God's word had trusted in God through hard times. As they struggled, they were encouraged to remember them and imitate their faith in Christ (v7). The theological bedrock of this encouragement is that Jesus is the same yesterday, today and forever (v8). Why difference does it make for us that Jesus is unchanging? What if He *did* change?

When our hearts are weak, we're called to be strengthened by grace, not by dead ends that lead us away from God and ultimately, to death. For the first readers, they were tempted to look to food (either rituals, ceremonies or Jewish laws pertaining to foods) that were thought to bring spiritual nourishment. What are you tempted to go to in the hopes of strengthening your weary, tired, discouraged, heart? Why is faith in Jesus and His promises harder to do than the well-worn paths this world takes?

In the Old Testament, when Moses was receiving the Law, the people of God got impatient and built a golden calf to strengthen *their* hearts (Exodus 33). When Moses came down from the mountain, he'd found a mob inside the camp who had rejected God for an idol. He had to go *outside* the camp to build a tent of meeting for himself and those who wanted to meet with God. In the same way, Jesus went outside the Jewish camp to die and rise again – showing *He* is the way for us to meet with God. What does it mean for us to go outside the camp to Jesus today?

Additional reading: Colossians 2:16-17, Romans 14:17, Hebrews 4:16

2) Read [Hebrews 13:15-16](#)

Being strengthened by grace *through faith* can be hard because it takes patience. We prefer something we can taste, see, touch or have some control over. Knowing this challenge, we are called to praise God and serve each other to keep us coming to God in faith rather than resorting to dead ends and empty cisterns that cannot satisfy. While praising God and doing good are both *results* of having experienced the love and grace of God in Christ, paradoxically, they are also the means for us to strengthen our hearts in Christ. How does the praise of God strengthen our hearts? Why is the praise of God defined as the *fruit of lips that acknowledge God*? How can serving others (or receiving help from other members) strengthen our faith?

Additional reading: Proverbs 11:25; John 14:21

Prayer of Response

- 1) After hearing God's Word, what sin do I need to *confess*? From what do I need to *repent*?
- 2) How should my life be lived this week based on what I have heard? What should I *understand, believe, desire, or do*?

Spend time praying together in response to God's word asking for His help and greater faith to follow Him in the week to come.

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