

Hebrews

Hebrews 13:10-14 – Words of Wisdom - Part 3

May 9, 2010

I. Words of Wisdom

A. **Hebrews 13:7-14** . . . Remember those who led you, who spoke the word of God to you; and considering the result of their conduct, imitate their faith. [8] Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever. [9] Do not be carried away by varied and strange teachings; for it is good for the heart to be strengthened by grace, not by foods, through which those who were so occupied were not benefited. [10] We have an altar from which those who serve the tabernacle have no right to eat. [11] For the bodies of those animals whose blood is brought into the holy place by the high priest as an offering for sin, are burned outside the camp. [12] Therefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people through His own blood, suffered outside the gate. [13] So, let us go out to Him outside the camp, bearing His reproach. [14] For here we do not have a lasting city, but we are seeking the city which is to come.

B. Prayer

II. Words of Wisdom – Cling to Jesus, His work, His words!

A. **Hebrews 13:10-11** . . . We have an altar from which those who serve the tabernacle have no right to eat. [11] For the bodies of those animals whose blood is brought into the holy place by the high priest as an offering for sin, are burned outside the camp.

1. History behind these verses: According to God's law as given to Moses, regardless of the kind of sacrifice the people brought or the type of sacrifice made – be it animal, bird, grain, oil, or wine, sin offering or thanks offering – the priests serving at the tabernacle were allowed to keep a portion of the sacrifice as food. This was one way God provided for the Levites.
2. But on the Day of Atonement, neither the priests nor the people were allowed to eat the meat of the sacrifices – a bullock which was offered for the sins of the High Priest and a goat which was offered for the sins of the people. The blood was taken from the slain animals and presented to the Lord in the Holy of Holies. Then, rather than burning the animal on the temple altar as a sweet smelling aroma to God, the entire animal was taken outside the camp and burned. You can read about this in **Leviticus 6**, and specifically **verse 30**:

- a. **Leviticus 6:30** . . . But no sin offering of which any of the blood is brought into the tent of meeting to make atonement in the holy place shall be eaten; it shall be burned with fire.
 - b. Picture / symbolism: The sins of the High Priest and the people were symbolically placed on the sacrificial animal, who was then led outside the camp – signifying the removal or carrying away of Israel’s sins. Then, the sacrificial animal was killed and burned with fire – signifying the total destruction of Israel’s sins – implying Israel’s sins have been forgiven and those sins will no longer be held against them.
3. Back to **Hebrews 13:10-11** – we have an altar – or to be more specific, a sacrifice – and he is the atonement sacrifice. Those who reject Christ as the means to being justified and counted righteous before God, cannot eat. However, we must eat of it to be born again. And every one of us who is a Christian has eaten of it, and continues to eat of it.
 - a. Regarding the eating of this sacrifice, turn to **John 6:53-58** . . . So Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in yourselves. [54] "He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day. [55] "For My flesh is true food, and My blood is true drink. [56] "He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him. [57] "As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who eats Me, he also will live because of Me. [58] "This is the bread which came down out of heaven; not as the fathers ate and died; he who eats this bread will live forever."
 - b. Regarding those who cannot eat of this sacrifice, that is, those who reject Christ as the only means of salvation, turn to **John 5:37-40** . . . "And the Father who sent Me, He has testified of Me. You have neither heard His voice at any time nor seen His form. [38] "You do not have His word abiding in you, for you do not believe Him whom He sent. [39] "You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; it is these that testify about Me; [40] and you are unwilling to come to Me so that you may have life.
 - (1) Not eating
4. **Refresher:** Salvation is only in and through Jesus Christ – not the Law, not good works, not the balance scales, not even God’s mercy.

- B. **Hebrews 13:12** . . . Therefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people through His own blood, suffered outside the gate.
1. Jesus was killed outside Jerusalem – the Holy City – as a symbol that **he carried our sins in his own body to the cross and bore them on the cross**, just as the sacrificial animals on the day of atonement carried the sins of the people outside the camp and were destroyed by fire.
 2. **But notice**, the reason given here for Christ's sacrifice goes beyond salvation to sanctification. This is not to say that this scripture minimizes salvation, but rather it combines and exalts sanctification with salvation.
 - a. Sometimes we Christians treat salvation and sanctification as two separate items offered to us by God.
 - b. When we separate them in this way, we often treat salvation as necessary and sanctification as optional – or at least as something that is far less important than salvation.
 - c. The truth is, salvation does not stand alone, as if we can receive the free gift of salvation apart from the process of sanctification. Salvation and sanctification are as inseparable as God bringing Israel out Egypt and Israel, by the empowerment of God, entering into and taking the Promised Land.
 3. There are a number of scriptures that connect salvation and sanctification as if they are a unified whole, but three of them connect salvation and sanctification in a unique way. These three scriptures include the words – in one way or another – “**and He died so that.**”
 - a. **II Corinthians 5:14-15** . . . For the love of Christ controls us, having concluded this, that one died for all, therefore all died; [15] and He died for all, so that they who live might no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died and rose again on their behalf.
 - b. **Romans 14:7-9** . . . For not one of us lives for himself, and not one dies for himself; [8] for if we live, we live for the Lord, or if we die, we die for the Lord; therefore whether we live or die, we are the Lord's. [9] For to this end Christ died and lived again, that He might be Lord both of the dead and of the living (*Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven*).
 - c. **I Thessalonians 5:9-11** . . . For God has not destined us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus

Christ, [10] who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep, we will live together with Him. [11] Therefore encourage one another and build up one another, just as you also are doing.

4. The point God is making here in **Hebrews 13:12** is that Jesus suffered, died, and rose again to both **save us** from our sin and to **change us** from lovers of self who willfully and even eagerly sin, into lovers of God and righteousness. And in case you are not yet convinced salvation and sanctification are a unified whole, I want to give you three more scriptures which affirm this truth.
 - a. **I Corinthians 1:30-31** . . . But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption, [31] so that, just as it is written, "Let him who boasts, boast in the Lord."
 - b. **Ephesians 5:25-27** . . . Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her, [26] so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, [27] that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be holy and blameless.
 - c. **Titus 2:11-14** . . . For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, [12] instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, [13] looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus, [14] who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds.

C. **Hebrews 13:13-14** . . . So, let us go out to Him outside the camp, bearing His reproach. [14] For here we do not have a lasting city, but we are seeking the city which is to come.

1. This statement follows the last one about Christ dying to sanctify us. Therefore, the essence of what God is saying here is that a sanctified life is the a life, and a holy life is a separated life, that is, a life separated from the flesh, the world, and the devil and lived like Christ unto Christ.
2. Now the sanctified life is not just for those who would be serious minded Christians. It is the standard for every Christian. However, it is a standard that comes with a price. You see, we

cannot leave behind what is un-Christ-like and taking on what is Christ-like without bearing the reproach (*i.e.*, *disapproval*) of those around us. In other words, we cannot go outside the camp to be with and identify with Christ without suffering as Christ suffered.

3. In our country today, such suffering includes being **condemned** or **criticized** for lacking understanding and mercy, or for being bigoted and intolerant, or for being narrow and prudish, or – when the disapproval comes from other church folks – for being against what God is doing in our day!
4. This reality is made clear in other scriptures beyond what we have here, and I will give you just three of them.
 - a. **John 15:18-20** . . . If the world hates you, you know that it has hated Me before it hated you. [19] "If you were of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, because of this the world hates you. [20] "Remember the word that I said to you, 'A slave is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you; if they kept My word, they will keep yours also.
 - b. **Mark 8:34-38** . . . And He summoned the crowd with His disciples, and said to them, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me. [35] "For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it. [36] "For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world, and forfeit his soul? [37] "For what will a man give in exchange for his soul? [38] "For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will also be ashamed of him when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels."
 - c. **II Timothy 3:12** . . . Indeed, all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.
5. Returning to **Hebrews 13:14**, the next point God makes has to do with our motivation or reasoning to join Christ in bearing the reproaches, criticism and condemnation for being Christ-like.
 - a. And what is God's stated motivation or reasoning? **Hebrews 13:14b** . . . For here we do not have a lasting city, but we are seeking the city which is to come.
 - b. In other words, this world is not our home. Our home is with God in His eternal kingdom, not here in this temporary,

corrupted earthly kingdom. Which means, **though living here, we are going someplace other than here, and that place where we are going is home – God’s home.**

- c. The fact that we Christians are travelers, we are temporary residents whose dwelling places are tents rather than homes on foundations, and we are aliens or foreigners is a fact that God says should establish in our thinking sufficient motivation and reasoning to identify with Christ and live like Christ – which will result in sharing in the sufferings of Christ.
- d. And why is this an important truth? Because the principle stated by Christ in **Matthew 6:21 . . . “for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also”** is an inescapable principle that true for all of us! Truly, if our treasure is in heaven, our heart will be in heaven and whatever suffering we must endure for Christ’s sake here on earth will seem minor in comparison to gaining the treasure we seek.

- D. I wish to make three more minor points about suffering with Christ.
 - 1. If we suffer for being obnoxious Christians, we are not suffering for Christ or with Christ. We are suffering because we are foolish – and our foolishness makes God look bad instead of holy. It is only as we suffer for the sake of righteousness that we make God look holy!
 - 2. The degree to which we suffer for Christ and with Christ is affected most by the amount of decadence in society, the sickness in the Church, and the degree or amount of our Christ-likeness (holiness).
 - 3. Finally, an unwillingness to suffer with Christ puts us in the category of those who live as if this world is their home – who treasure what is temporary more than what is eternal. And when we live as if this world is our home:
 - a. we move God somewhere lower than the top spot of priorities in our life,
 - b. we give our flesh, the world, and the devil greater influence over how we live than Christ,
 - c. and we invest energy, time, resources, and money into this world as if what we gain here will last forever.

III. Conclusion