

“Bearing Christ’s Reproach”  
Hebrews 13:7-14

March 15, 2015

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<sup>A</sup> 1 Corinthians 15:24-25; Revelation 21:1

<sup>B</sup> Acts 20:28

<sup>C</sup> Ephesians 4:11-13

<sup>D</sup> Hebrews 1:8-13, 7:25

<sup>E</sup> Romans 10:9, 13; Ephesians 2:8; Acts 16:31; John 1:12

<sup>F</sup> Ephesians 2:13-14

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<sup>G</sup> Galatians 2:20; 1 Corinthians 1:22-24

<sup>H</sup> Leviticus 4:11-12, 16:1-34, 17:11

<sup>I</sup> Hebrews 10:10

<sup>J</sup> Deuteronomy 21:23; Matthew 5:11-12

<sup>K</sup> Hebrews 11:10

## A. Introduction

### 1. The Kingdom View

- a. in looking last Sunday at the first 7 verses of this chapter, our focus was upon looking at our lives – our goals, our values, our priorities, our attitudes – in the context of the kingdom of God and His Christ
- b. that term, kingdom, is often used as equivalent to the church
- c. but while in the Bible the two are indistinguishable, there are others where there is a distinct difference
  - (A) the term, church, is literally those who have been called, and it refers to the people who have heard the gospel call and have received that call through faith – as such, it includes the saints of all ages – which Hebrews 11 makes quite clear
  - (B) the term, kingdom, has reference to the domain of God's rule
    - (1) in a present sense it means the church militant – the church residing on this earth
    - (2) in a future sense it means the rule of God that will be set up when Jesus Christ returns to this earth to rule – "24 then comes the end, when He hands over the kingdom to the God and Father, when He has abolished all rule and all authority and power. 25 For He must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet." (1 Corinthians 15:24-25)
    - (3) and this present world order will disappear when there shall be created a new heaven and a new earth, Revelation 21:1
- d. it is in light of this fact that Christians are to shape their lives – that is part of having a kingdom view

### 2. Looking to the King

- a. but another part of having a kingdom view is paying attention to our King: He is the Head of the church; He is Lord of our lives
- b. that is a truth that underlies the verses at which we shall be looking this morning – by His salvation He has purchased us as His own
- c. Paul told the Ephesian elders that they were responsible for watching over – for shepherding, for pastoring – 'the church of God which He purchased with His own blood' (Acts 20:28) – we belong to Christ

## B. The Word of Jesus Christ

## 1. Our Human Leaders

a. Verse 7: "Remember those who led you, who spoke the word of God to you; and considering the result of their conduct, imitate their faith."

### b. Temporary

- (A) this chapter has more to say about leaders in verses 17 and 24, and in those cases there is no doubt that the writer is speaking about the current spiritual leaders of the readers
- (B) and while this first part of verse 7 can be construed in the present tense – "Remember those leading you", the next, "who spoke", is more concerned with the past, while the last, 'the result of their conduct' encompasses the whole of their life
- (C) so we can see that they are told to remember those leaders that they had had and who had passed from this life or were then passing from the scene
- (D) we need to keep in mind, then, that our earthly, spiritual leaders are but temporary
- (E) so their faith is to be imitated in the light of the outcome of their conduct, their manner of life – and not as having special authority

### c. Changing

- (A) these human leaders that God has given to us will pass away
- (B) others will rise with different personalities, different spiritual gifts, different strengths and weaknesses
- (C) for they are given by God according to our need and His purpose: "11 And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, 12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; 13 until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ." (Ephesians 4:11-13)
- (D) earthly, spiritual leaders pass away but not so ...

## 2. Our Heavenly Leader

a. Verse 8: "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever."

### b. Eternal

- (A) the eternal nature of Christ Jesus our King, the Son of God reverberates through this book of Hebrews
  - (1) Hebrews 1:8-13 describe the Son, and there it says: "10 ... You, Lord, in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth, And the heavens ... 11 They will perish, but You remain; And they will all grow

old like a garment; 12 Like a cloak You will fold them up, And they will be changed. But You are the same, And Your years will not fail.” (Hebrews 1:10-12 NKJV)

(2) later we read, “Therefore He is able also to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.” (Hebrews 7:25)

(3) so in this verse that last word, ‘forever’, is emphasised: ‘Jesus Christ, yesterday and today the same; yes, even unto eternity!’

(B) because of His eternal nature, Jesus Christ is ...

#### c. Changeless

(A) the Jesus Christ who died on the cross and brought life-changing salvation to people across the known world, is the same Jesus Christ who brings life-changing salvation to people today

(B) the Jesus Christ who had fellowship with saints in NT times giving them power to change the world is the same Jesus Christ who has fellowship with His church giving power to change our world

(C) the Jesus Christ whom we met at the cross to find salvation is the same Jesus Christ who abides with us today

(D) and that same Jesus will be with us tomorrow at work, at home or at school; and the day after; and next month, year: forever

(E) as we sang ‘All may change but Jesus never – glory to His name!’<sup>{2}</sup>.

(F) so Jesus doesn’t change, so neither do His teachings

### 3. Stick to the Word!

a. Verse 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.”

#### b. Many False Teachings

(A) were facing the readers of this book of Hebrews

(B) taking different forms and subject

(C) in the first 2 or 3 centuries the church faced many false teachings

(D) the epistles or letters in the NT address some of these

(E) but the church gathered together in various councils to address others that arose after the close of the writing of the NT

(F) out of these arose some of the great, historic statements of faith

(G) the heresies differed but each in its own way was ...

c. Foreign to Gospel

- (A) that is what that word 'strange' means: something alien, foreign
- (B) in some fashion they added to or subtracted from God's grace shown in Christ Jesus in providing salvation through faith
- (C) there are in the Bible a number of different statements of the gospel: they are not additive giving different and more conditions for salvation; but differing ways of expressing the same truth
  - (1) "that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved;" (Romans 10:9)
  - (2) "for 'Whoever will call on the name of the lord will be saved.'" (Romans 10:13)
  - (3) "For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God;" (Ephesians 2:8)
  - (4) "They said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household."" (Acts 16:31)
  - (5) "But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name," (John 1:12)
- (D) but man thinks that free salvation through faith is not enough

d. Concern for the Material

- (A) the pagans in the times of the NT did not think Christianity was substantial enough: as F. F. Bruce expresses it,
  - (1) Christians had none of the visible apparatus which in those days was habitually associated with religion and worship – no sacred buildings, no altars, no sacrificing priest.
  - (2) Their pagan neighbours thought they had no God, and called them atheists;
  - (3) their Jewish neighbours too might criticise them for having no visible means of spiritual support. <sup>{3}</sup>.
- (B) so there was then, as there is today, pressure from outside to add ritual and material aspects to Christianity – visible additions to faith – (though we walk by faith and not by sight)
- (C) from this verse and the context, one of the additions that Jewish believers seemed prone to add to Christianity were the sacrificial meals that permeated Judaism, having their origin in the peace or fellowship offerings of the Mosaic system of worship
  - (1) adding these to Christianity ignored that the OT system was worship in type but Christ the antitype – He fulfilled the OT type – He had come and the type should vanish
  - (2) the OT portrayed fellowship with God through the peace offering – now Christ is our peace, Ephesians 2:13-14
  - (3) and, as this verse says, there is no benefit to those who engage in these sacrificial meals – rather it is

better that the believer's heart be strengthened by the grace of God.

- e. so the lesson of these verses is 'do not add to the gospel, for that is no gospel at all; stick fast to the gospel of God's gracious salvation'
  - (A) to counter those wanting such externals the writer now makes two arguments
    - (1) first, we do indeed have an altar at which to worship
    - (2) second, Christ's atoning work has done away with the need for material worship due to the very nature of atonement

## C. Our Spiritual Altar

13:10-14

### 1. The Two Altars

a. Verse 10: "We have an altar from which those who serve the tabernacle have no right to eat."

#### b. The Cross of Christ

- (A) the word altar, here in the Christian context, stands for all that an altar symbolises to us: it is the place where the sacrifice has been made – that final sacrifice that has brought salvation
- (B) it stands for the council of Jewish leaders who condemned Christ
- (C) it stands for the court of Pilate the Roman governor who gave him the death sentence
- (D) it stands for Golgotha, the place of the skull
- (E) it stands for the cross upon which that Sacrifice was nailed
- (F) it stands for the place of death; and also the place of life
- (G) "I have been crucified with Christ; and 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 up for me."  
(Galatians 2:20)
- (H) "22 For indeed Jews ask for signs and Greeks search for wisdom; 23 but we preach Christ crucified, to Jews a stumbling block and to Gentiles foolishness, 24 but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God." (1 Corinthians 1:22-24)
- (I) we do not worship the cross, but the One who died upon it and yet is alive: because He lives, we also live

#### c. Judaism Excluded

- (A) and it is impossible to come to that cross, if we bring along with us crutches to help us gain salvation
- (B) a recent and favourite hymn of mine starts with these words:

In Christ alone my hope is found  
He is my light, my strength, my song;  
This Cornerstone, this solid ground  
Firm through the fiercest drought and storm.<sup>—{4}</sup>

- (C) so Judaism – the Mosaic system of worship as compounded by the tradition from the rabbis – cannot be brought to the cross
- (D) Jews coming to Christ must leave behind their cultural baggage – not the truth and promises revealed to them through their long history – but their dependence upon their sacrificial and festal systems which were mere outward pictures of the reality which was brought about in Jesus Christ
- (E) that this is true is proven by the fact that

## 2. Atonement is Spiritual (11-12)

### a. Day of Atonement

- (A) Verse 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."
- (B) there were sacrifices of which the priests, and in some cases, the offeror, made a meal out of a part of the sacrifice
- (C) but of the sin-offering, after the sprinkling of the blood, Leviticus 4:11-12 says, "11 But the hide of the bull and all its flesh with its head and its legs and its entrails and its refuse, 12 that is, all the rest of the bull, he is to bring out to a clean place outside the camp where the ashes are poured out, and burn it on wood with fire; where the ashes are poured out it shall be burned."
- (D) Leviticus 16 describes the day of atonement
  - (1) after the high priest first offered a sacrifice for his own sin, then a special sin-offering for all the people, the whole nation
  - (2) again the blood was sprinkled in the tabernacle, on the altar
  - (3) again the hide, the flesh, etc was all burned outside the camp
- (E) so in this matter of atonement – the taking away from God's view the guilt and pollution of the people – only the blood mattered
- (F) the blood represented life given up in death as a substitute for the death that the sinner deserves: "For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you on the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood by reason of the life that makes atonement." (Leviticus 17:11) – the flesh itself was

nothing

b. Christ's Atonement

- (A) Verse 12: "Therefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people through His own blood, suffered outside the gate."
- (B) since the perfect sacrifice of Jesus upon the cross was accepted
  - (1) that the blood of the Lamb of God was shed for us
  - (2) it is not an exact parallel, but it was outside of the gate, outside of the city of Jerusalem, that Jesus gave up His life
- (C) then there is nothing that can be added
  - (1) the eating of the flesh of a Jewish sacrifice is nothing
  - (2) the observance of rituals and externals is nothing
  - (3) the adding of my own efforts to salvation is nothing
- (D) for atonement – the bearing away of the guilt and pollution of our sin in order to sanctify Christians as God's holy people – is not a physical, material action but a spiritual one
- (E) as Hebrews 10:10 has already recorded, "By this will (God's will made known in Christ, verse 9) we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all."
- (F) 'It is enough that Jesus died, and that He died for me.' –{5}.

3. Stick to the Lord! (13-14)

a. It Means Reproach

- (A) Verse 13: "So, let us go out to Him outside the camp, bearing His reproach."
- (B) outside the camp – was a place of reproach
  - (1) criminals were put to death outside the camp in the wilderness – outside of Jerusalem for Jesus Christ
  - (2) Jesus' death was on the cross – and since the OT says 'he who is hanged is accursed of God' (Deuteronomy 21:23) – Jesus was accursed of God, put outside the Jewish people; rejected
- (C) the greater part of the readers of this book would have been Jews
  - (1) and this rejection was a very real threat to them
  - (2) this great reproach they are called to bear along with Christ
- (D) this reproach has not gone away – the Greeks (the world around us) consider it foolish to believe in a man who died on the cross
  - (1) the Christian is still called upon to bear Christ's reproach

- (2) but, we have this promise from Jesus' own lips: "11 Blessed are you when people insult you and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me. 12 Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great; for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you." (Matthew 5:11-12)

b. It Means Heaven

- (A) Verse 14: "For here we do not have a lasting city, but we are seeking the city which is to come."
- (B) here is the secret of the kingdom view
  - (1) the secret of being steadfast in bearing His reproach
  - (2) the secret of the walk of faith
  - (3) it is having Abraham's eyes: "for he was looking for the city which has foundations, whose architect and builder is God." (Hebrews 11:10)
- (C) the Jew being thrust out of earthly Jerusalem, of the synagogue, of his earthly family – this was bearing Christ's reproach
  - (1) through the ages saints and martyrs have borne this reproach
  - (2) if you are faithful to the King, then undoubtedly you will bear His reproach, you will be set outside of the 'in crowd'
- (D) but in the end, we are promised, it is worth every bit of it.

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ASV	American Standard Version of 1901
AV	Authorized (King James) Version of 1769
NAS	New American Standard version © 1960, 1995 The Lockman Foundation (usually the 1995 edition)
NIV	New International Version © 1984 by the International Bible Society
NKJV	New King James Version © 1979 Thomas Nelson Inc., Publishers
WEY	The New Testament in Modern Speech © 1902, 1912 R. F. Weymouth

Some of the commentaries and resources used in the preparation of this message are identified as follow:

Barnes	– <i>Notes on the New Testament, et alia</i> , by Rev Albert Barnes, Gall & Inglis, Edinburgh
BM	– <i>Biblical Museum</i> , Editor James Comper Gray, ca 1870
EBC	– <i>The Expositor’s Bible Commentary</i> , © 1986 Zondervan, Grand Rapids, 49530, Michigan <i>Hebrews</i> , by Leon Morris
EGT	– <i>The Expositor’s Greek Testament</i> , Hodder & Stoughton <i>Hebrews</i> , by Marcus Dods
Gill	– <i>Exposition of the Old Testament, Exposition of the New Testament</i> , by John Gill, D.D.
Kerux	– The sermon & illustration data base compiled by Rev. David Holwick at the web-site, <a href="http://www.holwick.com">www.holwick.com</a> .
NICNT	– <i>The New International Commentary on the New Testament</i> <i>The Epistle to the Hebrew</i> , by F. F. Bruce
RWP	– <i>Robertson’s Word Pictures of the New Testament</i> , by Dr. A. T. Robertson
TYN	– <i>The Tyndale New Testament Commentaries</i> <i>Hebrews</i> , by Donald Guthrie

2. 'Yesterday, Today, Forever,' by Albert Benjamin Simpson (1843-1919)
3. NICNT, Hebrews 13:10
4. 'In Christ Alone,' by Keith Getty and Stuart Townend © 2001 Thankyou Music
5. 'My Faith Has Found a Resting Place,' by Lidie H. Edmunds (Eliza Edmunds Hewett, 1851-1920)