



worship at home

Sunday, March 29

Hebrews 13:7-16

7 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. 9 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. 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. 14 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.

Where we're at in Hebrews

Having encouraged the church to be committed to one another (13:1-6), the author now encourages them to stay committed to the gospel message (vv 7-16). They're to do this by emulating the examples of their leaders who first shared Jesus with them (v 7). Since Jesus never changes, they should resist the allure of false teaching (vv 8-10), follow Jesus (vv 11-14) and offer sacrifices to God of praise and generosity (vv 15-16).

Discuss

Going to Jesus involves leaving behind what is comfortable and socially acceptable (v 13). How have you seen that to be true in your life? What kinds of "reproach" come with being called a Christian in America today? How does having an eternal perspective help us bear that reproach? (v 14)

Because of Jesus' death on the cross, Christians don't offer sacrifices for sin. But there are other sacrifices we should offer God. One is "a sacrifice of praise" to him (v 15). How can you make praising him a more regular part of your life? What are three things that you can thank him for right now?

Another sacrifice Christians should regularly offer God is to do good to others and "share what [we] have" (v 16) to meet their needs. How can you offer this sacrifice to God in the midst of the current pandemic?



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Questions for preschoolers

When you're in trouble, who are the people you should ask for help? (Mom, dad, police, etc. These people also turn to God when they need help!)

What kinds of foods are healthy and make us stronger? (Fruits, vegetables, etc. Just like eating good food is healthy for our bodies, reading God's words and talking to God is good for our mind, soul and heart)

God made us to do good things for others because Jesus loves us (Eph 2:10). What good things can we do for people to show them God's love for his people?

Questions for elementary

Q: What do we learn about Jesus from verse 8? How does this knowledge bring comfort?

A: Jesus does not change. He is the same yesterday, today, and forever. He created the world, holds all things together, and is sovereign and in control. We can trust Jesus knowing that he never changes. We don't have to guess about how he feels about us or be worried that he will change his mind regarding his children - his love for his people endures forever.

Q: What strengthens our body? How do we strengthen our hearts?

A: Food strengthens our body, but the grace of God strengthens our hearts. As Christians, we rely fully on God and his strength to give us grace that overflows from our lives into the lives of others. When we trust in Jesus for our salvation, he gives us the free gift of grace and a relationship with God. When we grow in our relationship with God by worship, prayer, and studying his word, his grace in our hearts grows even more and is made evident in the peace that he gives us and to those around us.

Q: What does it mean to "seek the city that is to come" (v.14)? How can we do this today?

A: As Christians, we realize that our lives are temporary, and our life here on earth has an eternal purpose. Therefore, we shouldn't spend time and let our focus be on building things that are temporary (wealth, popularity, etc.), but we should live for things that are eternal (giving all of our worship and praise to God, growing in our personal relationship with him, spreading his kingdom by sharing the gospel and praying for the lost, doing good to others, etc). We can ask God to help us keep an eternal perspective, brainstorm ways that we can live "seeking the city that is to come", and ask God to help us be obedient to follow through in the ways he has laid on our hearts.



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Questions for students

There are two common responses to a time of crisis. One is to worry and grow anxious. The second is to distract yourself so you don't have to think about what is going on. Which way have you found yourself responding to the coronavirus pandemic? Why do you think that is?

Hebrews 13:9 tells us "it is good for the heart to be strengthened by grace." Rather than running to a temporary escape or growing anxious over the pandemic, what are some ways the grace of God can daily strengthen you during this time?

The author of Hebrews calls us to continually offer up sacrifices of praise to God. Romans 12:1 calls us to offer our bodies as a "living sacrifice." What sacrifices can you make that are honoring to the Lord? What sacrifices can you make today to love and serve those around you?