

HEBREWS

This lesson concludes our study of the Hebrews epistle. I apologize for not taking a more orthodox approach to the study of this great book, but in the end the purpose God intended has been accomplished. That is, that first and foremost, we have learned how important it is that Christ is our High Priest; and that when we come each week to worship, we are to lift him up as our Savior, our Intercessor, our Messiah.

As we have spent the last several lessons looking at Christ from before the manger at Bethlehem, we have seen that indeed he was the central figure in the creation of the world, and that he knew us before we were created. We have also observed the active role that he played throughout the Old Testament period, and how he chose to take on human flesh eternally so that we might know God.

Today we acknowledge Him as our Lord and Savior because of his sacrifice for us, and we acknowledge that, in His shed blood, our sins are forgiven. We are redeemed from the penalty of that death sin brings with it. As we have discussed, God reveals much about himself through His Holy Word and much more through the person of Jesus, who, as God, became flesh and blood for us. In the picture of the Tabernacle and the Temple, we see the triune God represented in physical form; so that God, who is spirit and must be worshipped in spirit and in truth, can be seen and known by us in this physical world.

In all these things we see Christ—the sacrificial lamb and the High Priest who sits at the right hand of God. The writer of the book of Hebrews wanted us to see that Christ is real, Christ is God, Christ is the only way to God, and that he stands before God today interceding for each of us. What a comfort and a joy we have in Him!

forms of apostasy. We know that regardless of man's false teachings about the role of angels, or the superiority of Moses or of any single religion or work, that Christ, our all-in-all, is the only way, the only truth, and the only light to be followed.

In summary then, we learned:

- That apostasy can occur based upon
 - Unbelief – Hebrews 3:12
 - Our conduct – Hebrews 5:13-14
 - Neglect of public worship – Hebrews 10:25
 - Weakness in prayer – Hebrews 12:12
 - Instability in doctrine – Hebrews 13:9
 - Refusal to teach others – Hebrews 5:12
 - And the neglect of the Scriptures – Hebrews 2:1
- That we have a great High Priest who makes access to God possible – Hebrews 4:14-16
- That Christ is the revealer of God – Hebrews 1:1
- That Christ was the agent of creation – Hebrews 1:1-4

Now, let's specifically examine Hebrews Chapter 13 more closely.

1. List all of the instructions for righteous living that are contained in this one chapter.
 - a. ANSWER 1: "Keep on loving one another as brothers and sisters."
 - b. ANSWER 2: Show hospitality to strangers.
 - c. ANSWER 3: Be mindful of those in prison, and those who are mistreated.
 - d. ANSWER 4: Honor the institution of marriage and keep it pure.
 - e. ANSWER 5: Don't allow the love of money to enter your life.
 - f. ANSWER 6: Be content.
 - g. ANSWER 7: Look at your leaders within the faith and imitate their faith.
 - h. ANSWER 8: Do not be misled by strange teachings.
 - i. ANSWER 9: Continually offer to God, through Jesus, a sacrifice of praise and openly profess his name.
 - j. ANSWER 10: "Have confidence in your leaders and submit to their authority."
2. Now read Hebrews 13:8-9. Can you determine what the writer is referring to? Why does he write that "Jesus Christ the same yesterday and today and forever," and then go on to warn about apostasy? Could it be that some apostate teaching at the time was about a different Jesus, or one that would change? What are some of the apostate teachings that surround us today? (Remember that apostasy is a falling away from the truth, or teaching a lie for the truth.) List some apostate teachings that some "mainstream" churches are now teaching as doctrine. It will surprise you how many there are. (For example, the teaching that Mary wasn't actually a virgin, or that it really doesn't matter if she was or not. Or how about that God's Word is not inerrant? There are others that I'm sure you have also heard of or seen as well.)
 - a. ANSWER 1: That when judgment comes, God is so loving and full of mercy that he will forgive everyone.
 - b. ANSWER 2: That there is no Hell—only Heaven; Hell is just an allegory for how much God hates sin.
 - c. ANSWER 3: Jesus is not the ONLY son of God.
 - d. ANSWER 4: Sexually immorality is okay. You don't have to be a virgin when you marry. You may have children out of wedlock.
 - e. ANSWER 5: Perverse sexual behavior is understood and accepted. No one is to judge anyone else's lifestyle.
 - f. ANSWER 6: God helps those who help themselves.
 - g. ANSWER 7: God wants me to have a life of pleasure. Being able to achieve such a lifestyle shows how much God loves me.
 - h. ANSWER 8: If your good deeds outweigh the bad ones, you can get to heaven. Doing good is very important in a person's life; it makes up for all of our sins.
 - i. ANSWER 9: There are many ways to heaven—not just one. Following any of the many spiritual paths leads to the same destination.
3. Finally, read Hebrews 13:13-16. What a joy and what a celebration, as we go outside the camp following Christ! As we have discussed during this study, there are sacrifices pleasing to God listed in many places within the Bible. There are two more listed in these verses. Can you identify them? Are you offering these sacrifices to God? Are you "worshipping God" with these sacrifices? Or is your group, your church, and/or your own activity so caught up in doing "church work" that you have forgotten "the [true] work of the Church?"
 - a. ANSWER: Two more sacrifices that are pleasing to God are
 - i. (1) Lifting up sacrifices of praise and doing good to others. As followers of Christ, and as his Church, we need to be focused on "outside the camp" as we follow Him.
 - ii. (2) Looking at the needs of others. We are compelled to be the hands and feet of Jesus to the world around us, as we sing praises to God for the sacrifice of his Son Jesus.

As we conclude our study of Hebrews let us all commit once again to put Christ first in our lives, in our church and in our worship. He is our High Priest, our Savior, and our Messiah.

May God richly bless you again this week as you study His Holy Word.

In Christ, **Wes**