

FINAL COUNSELS AND ADMONITIONS

Practical Demonstrations of New Covenant Faith

1. **Hebrews 13**, the final chapter in the book of Hebrews consists mainly of a series of practical admonitions dealing with the various aspects of day-to-day Christian living:
2. These are found in the first 19 verses of the chapter: **Verses 1-19**
3. Then follows Paul's final benediction and salutation in the remaining 6 verses of the chapter: **Verses 20-25**
4. Applying these admonitions and counsels in the life is meant to be the practical demonstration and proof of faith in Christ as atoning Sacrifice and High Priest in the heavenly sanctuary
5. How one lives will show whether he or she is living under the new covenant or living under the old covenant

The Superiority of the New Covenant Over the Old

6. Recall that the central purpose of the entire book of Hebrews was the show the superiority of the new covenant over the old covenant;
7. Paul accomplished this in a very systematic, masterful way in every chapter of the book
 - a. **Hebrews 1**—in old covenant times, God spoke to the people through prophets, while during new covenant times, God spoke to the Jews through His Son who has equal status with God the Father
 - b. **Hebrews 2**—Jesus, who was made lower than the angels when He assumed human nature, is still greater than the angels who brought the Law on Mount Sinai during the inauguration of the old covenant (**Acts 7:53**)
 - c. **Hebrews 3**—Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant, is better than Moses, the mediator of the old covenant, just as a son over God's house is superior to one who serves as a servant in God's house
 - d. **Hebrews 4**—the rest that Jesus offers is better than the rest that Joshua obtained for the Israelites who were able to enter the Promised land.
 - e. **Hebrews 5-7**—the priesthood of Jesus Christ is so much better than that of the priests who served in the sanctuary built by Moses
 - f. **Hebrews 8**--The sanctuary in which Jesus serves as High Priest is better than the earthly sanctuary and the covenant that Jesus mediates is better than the covenant that Moses mediated
 - g. **Hebrews 9**—The benefits derived from the new covenant surpass those derived from the old covenant (**Acts 13:38-39; Heb 9:15**)
 - i. The blood of animal sacrifices only brought ceremonial cleansing (purifying of the flesh, whereas the blood of Jesus purges the conscience of dead works
 - ii. Transgressions under the old covenant find forgiveness under the new covenant
 - iii. Sins that could not be forgiven under the old covenant are forgiven under the new (**Acts 13:38-39**)

- h. **Hebrews 10**--The Sacrifice that ratified the new covenant is so much better than the animal sacrifices that set the old covenant in place
 - i. **Hebrews 11**—none of the heroes of faith who lived under the old dispensation obtained what was promised; they all died in faith, waiting until the new covenant was ratified by the blood of Jesus, to receive what had been promised them—justification (perfection)
 - j. **Hebrews 12**--The ratification of the new covenant on Mt Zion in heaven surpasses the ratification of that of the old on Mt. Sinai in glory and majesty; the ratification of the old covenant was a dreadful, fearful event whereas the ratification of the new covenant was a glorious event
8. Embracing the new covenant faith therefore, in place of the old covenant faith, meant that there was now better and greater motivation to serve out of love; it is not possible to live the Christian life effectively while still bound to the old covenant with its emphasis on external forms and ceremonies

VERSES 1-4 Admonitions dealing with horizontal, human relationships

9. **Verse 1** deals with church relations
- a. **Let brotherly love continue**—the verse does not say love the brethren, but continue loving the brethren; continue doing the good things you are doing
10. **Verses 2 and 3** deal with social relations or relations with those outside church fellowship
11. **Verse 2**
- a. **Entertain strangers**—brotherly love to extend outside the confines of church fellowship, to strangers; inns were not common in those days, and wayfaring strangers often found it difficult to find lodging for the night; hospitality and liberality towards others were expressions of brotherly love; kindness to strangers considered in the final judgment (**Matt 25:35**)
 - b. **Entertained angels**--Abraham's and Lot's example of hospitality to strangers is noted in the bible (**Gen 18:1-8; Gen 19:1-3**), as well Gideon's (**Judg 6:11-20**)
12. **Verse 3**
- a. **Remember them that are in bonds**—ministry to people in prison is another consideration in the final judgment (**Matt 25:36**)
13. **Verse 4** deals with personal relations (marriage relations)
- a. **Marriage is honourable**—the marriage was instituted and designed by a wise and loving Creator to be a blessing to humanity; when God's purpose for marriage is carried out in the family, it yields great good;
 - i. it is only when marriage is perverted and misused that it is no longer honourable
 - ii. **1 Corinthians 7, Matt 5:28-32, Matt 19:5-10** deal with Christian ideals relating to marriage relations

VERSES 5-8 Admonitions dealing with one's personal, faith-based, vertical relationship with God

14. **Verse 5-8**
- a. **Let your conversation be without covetousness**--Warning against indulging a spirit of covetousness, which is a denial of faith in God's ability to provide

- b. **The Lord is my Helper**—taken from Ps 118:6 *“The Lord is on my side, what can man do to me?”*
- c. **Remember them that have rule over you. . .whose faith follow**—a call to imitate the faithfulness and example of those who rule by speaking the word of God (or feeding the flock), and not by lording it over God’s heritage
 - i. Paul an example of one who ruled and whose example is worthy of emulation
 - 1. *Be ye followers of me as I am also a follower of Christ (1 Cor 11:1)*
 - 2. *Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample (Phil 3:17)*
 - 3. *Wherefore I beseech you, be ye followers of me. (1 Cor 4:16)*
 - ii. Follow the example of these faithful guides to better one’s relationship with God
 - iii. The Pharisees in the time of Jesus did not feed the flock but only put them to work; Jesus called them blind guides leading the blind
 - iv. Their example must not be followed (Matt 23:1-3)
- d. **Jesus the same yesterday, today and forever**--What does this climactic declaration have to do with the previous verses which is an appeal to have a solid abiding faith and trust in God?
 - i. **Heb 1:10-12**—everything will pass, but Jesus Christ remains; He is the solid Rock a firm Foundation; we can always rely on Him because His power, His love and wisdom remain the same; they never fail
 - ii. **Heb 7:3**--He is a priest forever, after the order of Mechisedek who abides a priest continually
 - iii. **Heb 7:25**—He ever liveth to make intercession

VERSES 9-11 Warning against old covenant ceremonialism

15. Verse 9-11

- a. **Be not carried about with strange and diverse doctrines**—in the immediate context of the verse, these doctrines have to do with “meats” (or ceremonial foods); the Mosaic regulations concerning ceremonial foods had been done away with the death of Jesus and must not be regarded as still binding (**Heb 9:10**)
- b. **We have an altar. . .**-to demonstrate that the old Mosaic order regarding ceremonial foods had been done away with under the new covenant, he states that it was perfectly fine to eat the body of the sacrifice even though its blood is brought into the sanctuary; this was prohibited under the old covenant Mosaic system
 - i. **Heb 9:12**—Jesus brought His own blood into the heavenly sanctuary
 - ii. **John 6:53-58, 63; Matt 26:26; 1 Cor 11:24**—Jesus invites believers to eat His flesh
- c. **For the bodies of those beasts whose blood was brought into the sanctuary. . .burned without the camp**--Under the old covenant, the priests who served in the tabernacle could only eat the flesh of the sacrifice by the altar of burnt offering in the courtyard, if its blood was not brought into the sanctuary (**Lev 6:25-26; Lev 10:17-20**)
 - i. This altar is not literal, but spiritual, invisible altar; it is wherever we figuratively eat the flesh of the Son of God in reading His word

VERSES 12-14 A call to suffer reproach with Christ

16. Verse 12-14

- a. **Suffered without the gate**—to die outside the city as a common criminal signified total rejection by the community; but Jesus did not suffer without the gate on account of His own misdeed, but rather so that the people by His death may be sanctified and saved;
- b. **Let us go forth. . . bearing His reproach**-- Just as Jesus suffered outside the gate of the city of Jerusalem and was rejected, Christians should be willing to endure the same, rather than compromising one's unique faith and conforming to the status quo in order to gain acceptance and in order to belong
- c. **For we have to continuing city**—the old city of Jerusalem and everything that it represented, was not to be considered the real and permanent dwelling place of those who believe in Christ, but rather the Jerusalem that is above (**Heb 12:22-24**)

VERSES 15-16 A call to offer sacrifice

17. Verse 15-16

- a. **Let us offer the sacrifice of praise. . .**—"sacrifice" is used here metaphorically; since animal sacrifices are now obsolete under the new covenant, offering sacrifices takes on new meaning; praises to God and giving thanks is a form of sacrifice
- b. **Doing good and communicating**—in other words, doing good and sharing with others is offering sacrifice
 - i. **Phil 4:18**—generosity is sweet smelling sacrifice
 - ii. **Rom 12:1**—present our bodies as living sacrifice

VERSES 17-19 A call to submit to church order

18. Verse 17-19

- a. **Obey them that have rule over you**—
 - i. In **Verse 7**—remember them that have rule over you and follow their example of faith
 - ii. In **Verse 17**—obey them that have rule over you and submit
 - iii. In **Verse 24**—salute them that have rule over you
- b. **Pray for us**—a personal appeal for prayer

VERSES 20-21 Final Benediction. . .

19. May the blood of the everlasting covenant make you perfect in every good work to do His will
20. Parallel with **Heb 10:14**—for by one offering, He hath perfected forever them that are sanctified. . .
21. This was not possible with the blood of animal sacrifices even though they were offered continuously
22. Therefore, those who persist in living under the old covenant not only miss out on the great blessings of the new covenant, worse, they also "*tread underfoot the Son of God and count the blood of the covenant through they ae sanctified an unholy thing. . .*" (**Heb 10:29**)