

Hebrews 13:7-17

REVIEW...

- WHO – Jesus – who is BETTER than EVERYONE and EVERYTHING [NINE ways] ...
- HOW - the HALL of FAITH – NINETEEN EXAMPLES that PROVE the JUST shall LIVE by
- NOW – Because it is not just about those who came before – this is OUR race to run!
 - Like any good MARATHON – it is easy to START a RACE – but it is HARD to FINISH!
 - We were given SEVEN aids to help us ENDURE – and RUN to FINISH line!
- WHAT – as a RESULT of our WALK of FAITH – we are to LIVE in LOVE...
 - LOVING one another – LOVING strangers – LOVING marriage – LOVING the Lord [not money] ...
 - Because Jesus LOVES us and will NEVER leave us – so we have NOTHING to FEAR!
 - As the Author continues to look at WHAT the results of FAITH in our life...
 - He will go on to give us FOUR final COMMANDS that should define out Christian WALK!

THE LIFE OF FAITH... (4 POINTS)

- 1st – FOLLOW A GOOD EXAMPLE... vs. 7
 - 1st – Remember...
 - Remember those who rule over you...
 - REMEMBER [imperative] – we MUST continually [present] think about our LEADERS...
 - This does not appear to be a reference to the GOVERNMENT...
 - Although we are commanded to SUBMIT to the GOVERNMENT – **Romans 13:1**
 - [Remember those] who have spoken the word of God to you...
 - This is a COMMAND to continually think about our SPIRITUAL leaders – PASTORS...
 - The ONES who teach us the Bible – speak the WORD of God [τὸν λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ]!
 - I have a general rule – I call it the FIVE minute check...
 - If I am listening to a PASTOR – and in FIVE minutes do not know where in the Bible he is...
 - Then I stop listening – because we do not need to hear opinion or stories!
 - People are always willing to give us their opinions – their WORDS...
 - Many pastors have the tendency to quote BOOKS – rather than the Word of God...
 - But God does not promise to bless the words of men – He says His Word is powerful!
 - We are to REMEMBER those that teach the BIBLE - for TWO reasons!
 - 2nd – Follow...
 - Whose faith follow...
 - FOLLOW [imperative] – [μιμῶμαι] literally to MIMIC or duplicate what is seen!
 - How did we LEARN to walk – talk – swim – every other skill in life...
 - There is only ONE way – we FOLLOW the example of someone else!
 - We will LEARN from those we chose to FOLLOW – we WILL walk in their footsteps!
 - FOLLOW the PASTOR who teaches the WORD of God...
 - The assumption is that he is also LIVING what he is TEACHING...
 - Therefore he is a good EXAMPLE that we MUST follow – so we LEARN how to walk by FAITH!
 - **I Corinthians 11:1** – “Imitate [same root word] me - just as I also imitate Christ.”
 - Paul was living by FAITH – running his RACE – living for Jesus – **II Timothy 4:7**
 - Therefore anyone who IMITATED him would also be living by FAITH!
 - Since we all follow SOMEONE – who either leads us towards or away from God...
 - We need to be careful the EXAMPLE we chose – who we are influenced by...
 - Therefore we FOLLOW a leader who give the Word of God...

- Knowing then that their EXAMPLE will point us back to Jesus!

o 3rd – Consider...

- Considering the outcome of their conduct...
- CONSIDERING [present] – we are always to be LOOKING at the lives of PASTORS...
- Not just listening to their WORDS – but HOW they live their LIVES!
- Before we get into a CAR – you want to know where it is going...
- Before we FOLLOW a PASTOR – we want to CONSIDER how he is living his life!
- Unfortunately there are many PASTORS out there who are a BAD example...
- They may SAY all the right things – but they do not LIVE them!
- We are to avoid those whose lives do NOT reflect the WORD they teach...
- Because we might be tempted to follow their bad EXAMPLE!
- **II Thessalonians 3:6** – “We command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you withdraw from every brother who walks disorderly...”

● 2ND – HOLD ONTO THE WORD... vs. 8-9

o 1st – The Word is unchanging... vs. 8

- Jesus Christ is the same yesterday – today - and forever...
 - By far one of the MOST famous verses in the Bible – Jesus NEVER changes...
 - But note the CONTEXT – we are talking about teaching the WORD of God!
 - For that matter Jesus is the WORD [λόγος] – **John 1:1**
- The TRUTH is under attack...
 - There are numerous DOCTRINES from the Bible that are under attack today...
 - What does the Bible say about HOMOSEXUALITY – **Romans 1:26-27**
 - What does the Bible say about GENDER – **Genesis 1:27**
 - When the BIBLE disagrees with the CULTURE – people try and CHANGE the Bible!
 - The common argument today is the Bible was addressing CULTURAL issues...
 - In other words – it was ONLY for that CULTURE – not for ours!
 - Ignoring the plain meaning of a passage – by justifying it is just CULTURAL...
 - Is a very dangerous way to interpret the Bible!
 - We can negate almost any teaching of the Bible we do not like with this logic!
- The Bible does NOT change...
 - The question we need to ask is WHOSE doctrine or instructions are we following...
 - There are ONLY two sources of DOCTRINE – they either come from God or men!
 - It does not matter what MEN say – or what LAWS are passed - **Romans 3:4**
 - The Bible / Jesus - does NOT change – it is the ONLY source of TRUTH!
 - **Psalms 119:160 / John 17:17** - “Your word is truth.”

o 2nd – Avoid strange doctrines... vs. 9

- Do not be carried about with various and strange doctrines...
 - Do NOT be carried [imperative] – literally to be carried away...
 - What would carry us away from the Word of God – STRANGE doctrines...
 - STRANGE [ξένος] – something that is NEW – we have never heard before!
 - I know of a church that openly teaches people do NOT need to REPENT to be saved...
 - They DENY hell is real – claiming it is just an invention of men meant to control people!
 - God loves EVERYONE just as we are – EVERYONE is saved!
 - Sounds like a great message – just ONE problem – it is NOT the message of the Word!
 - Satan is not very creative – he tends to just copy what has worked in the past...
 - If satan deceived people in the past by telling them what they wanted to hear!

- Then we can be confident that he will continue to itch ears today - **II Timothy 4:3**

- With foods which have not profited those who have been occupied with them...
 - We are GIVEN an EXAMPLE of a STRANGE doctrine – restricting FOOD!
 - Food CANNOT make us holy - we are not more righteous because of what we eat...
 - It is not what goes in that makes us unholy – it is what comes out of our heart!
 - **Matthew 15:17-18** – “Do you not yet understand that whatever enters the mouth goes into the stomach and is eliminated? But those things which proceed out of the mouth come from the heart - and they defile a man.”
 - Whatever we eat – it just goes into our stomach – then into the CR...
 - No matter what we eat – it all ends up in the same place – obviously...
 - So we are not a better person if we do not eat certain food – or worse if we do!
 - **I Corinthians 8:8** – “Food does not commend us to God; for neither if we eat are we the better, nor if we do not eat are we the worse.”
- God created all FOOD to be received with thanksgiving...
 - EVERY animal was made by God – and they ALL are good to be eaten – **Genesis 9:3**
 - NOTHING is to be REFUSED - when it is received with THANKSGIVING – **I Timothy 4:4**
 - When someone heaps a plate of dinuguan or balut onto the plate – THANK YOU Jesus!
 - Because we can eat whatever we want to – food is meant to be eaten!
 - **I Corinthians 6:13** – “Food is for the stomach, and the stomach is for food.”

o 3rd – Established by Grace... 9

- For it is good that the heart be established by grace...
 - GRACE is a funny word – [χάρις] – used 156x in the NT [its important] ...
 - We toss it around and use it frequently in church - but what is it...
 - Why is it so important in our daily lives – what does it do for us!
 - It defines the source of our STRENGTH– the power to live for Christ...
 - So many Christians are under the deception they can live a good life on their OWN...
 - ASSUMING the more they read their Bible / go to church / pray / give...
 - The more God will accept them / bless them / love them...
 - THINKING the more they do for God - the more they will grow in God!
- The trailer does not push the car – the car pulls the trailer!
 - Reading our Bible - going to church - these things do not make us a Christian...
 - We are NOT the source of strength – we do NOT have the power change our lives...
 - It is when we are HUMBLE and realize we need Jesus – when we find His GRACE...
 - Then God gets a hold of our lives – He changes our heart - we are transformed!
 - **II Peter 3:18** – “Grow [through] the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus...”

● 3RD – DO NOT FORGET THE SACRIFICE... vs. 10-16

o 1st – Outside the gate... vs. 10-14

- We have an altar from which those who serve the tabernacle have no right to eat...
 - For the bodies of those animals - whose blood is brought into the sanctuary...
 - By the high priest for sin - are burned outside the camp!
 - There are FOUR kinds of OFFERINGS in Law of God...
 - The BURNT offering – dedication to God – **Leviticus 1:3-9**
 - The GRAIN offering – gift to God - **Leviticus 2:8-13**
 - The PEACE offering – fellowship with God - **Leviticus 3:1**
 - The SIN offering – forgiveness from God - **Leviticus 4:13-21**
 - The PRIESTS were allowed to eat PART of all the SACRIFICES – except for the SIN offering...

- The fat of the SIN offering would be burnt on the bronze Altar...
- But the rest of the animal was to be taken OUTSIDE the camp and burnt...
- The picture - sin causes separation from fellowship with God!
- Jesus also - that He might sanctify the people with His own blood - suffered outside the gate...
 - Jesus was taken to [Γολγοθα] – or in the Latin – CALVARY...
 - A hill on the north side of Jerusalem – OUTSIDE the city – next to the main highway...
 - A public place to execute criminals - displayed for all the people to see!
 - Jesus left the temple – the presence of God – and went OUTSIDE...
 - He suffered and died in our place – OUTSIDE - so He could bring us back...
 - To restore our relationship to God – to bring us back to presence of the Lord!
- Therefore let us go forth to Him - outside the camp - bearing His reproach...
 - For here we have no continuing city - but we seek the one to come!
 - Let us go [subjunctive] – OUTSIDE – and follow Jesus Christ by taking up OUR cross...
 - Do not MISS this – we are not just to FOLLOW pastors who teach the Word...
 - We are also to FOLLOW Jesus – because we do NOT have a continuing city here...
 - This LIFE is does NOT last – it is temporary – we are SEEKING a better HOME!
 - Far too often we get way to attached to things in this life and forget...
 - We are not HOME yet – our home is a place we have yet to see – our HOME is heaven...
 - We need to remember to keep a light touch on things here – ready to go OUTSIDE!
 - **Hebrews 11:13-16** - “[We are] strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For those who say such things declare plainly that they seek a home... that is - a heavenly country.”
- o 2nd – Sacrifice of praise... vs. 15
 - Therefore - by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God...
 - That is - the fruit of our lips - giving thanks to His name!
 - THEREFORE – in light of ALL that Jesus did for us - one way LIVE for Him...
 - Is with our WORDS – the FRUIT of our lips – what we SAY!
 - The author uses the phrase – the SACRIFICE of PRAISE...
 - GIVING THANKS - [ὁμολογέω] – literally SAYING TOGETHER – His name...
 - The picture is one of WORSHIPING God – no matter what happens in life!
 - When things go RIGHT – when everything in life is SMOOTH – we worship Jesus...
 - When things go WRONG – when everything is falling APART – we worship Jesus...
 - Even when we do NOT feel like it – we make the SACRIFICE – and worship the Lord together!
 - Because when we WORSHIP – it changes our PERSPECTIVE – puts our eyes on the Lord!
 - **Ephesians 5:19-20** - “Speaking... in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.”
- o 3rd – Sacrifice of giving... vs. 16
 - Do not forget to do good and to share - for with such sacrifices God is well pleased...
 - Do NOT forget [imperative] – a second way to LIVE for Jesus...
 - Is with our ACTIONS – doing GOOD – by SHARING with others...
 - SHARING – [κοινωνία] – to have fellowship with one another by taking care of the needs!
 - Taking care of one another...
 - In the FIRST church – all of the believers had all things in COMMON [κοινά] – **Acts 2:44**
 - Everyone took the responsibility of making sure the NEEDS of others were met!
 - Because we are the FAMILY of God – we are ONE body!
 - Not that we give everything we have away – but we do SACRIFICE for those in NEED...
 - GIVING to show we are more concerned about OTHERS than OURSELVES...
 - GIVING to show we are more concerned about the ETERNAL - than the TEMPORARY...
 - GIVING because it shows we are FOLLOWING the EXAMPLE of Jesus...

- Who GAVE everything to us – so that we could be forever with Him!
- **II Peter 1:3** – “God has given us everything we need for living a godly life.”

● **4TH – OBEY RULERS... VS. 17**

o 1st – Submit to rulers...

- Obey those who rule over you - and be submissive...
 - Going back to VERSE 7 – we are to OBEY our SPIRITUAL leaders...
 - OBEY [imperative] – commanded to continually [present] FOLLOW their instructions...
 - Be SUBMISSIVE [only here NT] – the word means to STOP resisting [assumes we are]!
 - What color should the wall of the church be painted...
 - Which worship songs should we sing – how long should the message be...
 - We all have opinions on how the church should RUN!
 - Imagine if everyone just did what they wanted to in church...
 - There was no one in charge – no one directing and organizing the believers...
 - No one to establish the time to have Bible Study / no one leading the service...
 - There would be chaos - and ministry cannot happen effectively in chaos!
 - **I Corinthians 14:33** - “For God is not the author of confusion but of peace... But be sure that everything is done properly and in order.”
- God is a God of order - He works through structure...
 - There is a balance - we are to be open to the Spirit - we are to be flexible...
 - But we are also to be wise - we are to make plans - we are to be organized...
 - That is why God has established order in His church – Pastors to LEAD them...
 - Not that we are organized by men – we look to the Word of God / Jesus to lead us...
 - But by the Grace of God leaders are appointed to lead us according to the Word!

o 2nd - Give an account...

- For they watch out for your souls...
 - WATCH OUT – to have sleepless night – constantly vigilant...
 - I can confess to this – I have LOST a lot of SLEEP because of the church...
 - Waking up at all hours – with a heart heavy for someone!
 - A PASTOR – is a SHEPHERD who is concerned for the SHEEP!
 - Satan wants to devour us - he wants more than anything to steal sheep - **I Peter 5:8**
 - The PASTOR is always watching sheep / protecting the sheep from the enemy!
- As those who must give account...
 - One day PASTORS are going to have to answer for HOW they WATCHED the SHEEP...
 - A rather HUMBLING thought – they have to ANSWER [λόγος] to God!
 - People do not HEAR the Lord - but they do listen to - pastors/leaders...
 - So pastors will receive greater judgment because of their influence on others...
 - Therefore pray for our leaders – pray they will be righteous God fearing men...
 - Pray because if they are not – they will be held accountable!
 - **James 3:1** – “Let not many of you become teachers... [they] shall receive a stricter judgment.”

o 3rd – Lead with Joy...

- Let them do so with joy and not with grief - for that would be unprofitable for you...
 - Do it with JOY [subjunctive] – a PASTOR is called by God to serve...
 - He does NOT have a choice – whether in JOY or GREIF – he is CALLED to WATCH...
 - But if it is a constant [present] GREIF – to groan or sigh because of the difficulty...
 - That would NOT be a PROFITABLE for the church – because it might BURN out the pastor!
- Instead help the PASTOR lead with JOY – by FOLLOWING Jesus!
 - Following a good EXAMPLE – HOLDING onto the Word of God...

- Giving a SACRIFICE of praise / fellowship – LIVING for the Lord!
- Because the greatest JOY of a PASTOR – is to see the SHEEP following the TRUTH!
- **III John 3:4** – “I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth.”