

Hebrews 13:7-16
Final Instructions
June 21, 2026

Happy Fathers Day! We are thankful for our earthly fathers and our spiritual fathers. Those that have planted seeds in our lives, nurtured us and helped us grow. Today we will consider those spiritual fathers who spoke the Word of God in our lives and will be challenged to be leaders to the next generation.

Chapter 13 is the closing remarks for the book of Hebrews. It is a strong word and concludes with challenging instructions to count the cost and follow Christ:

- A final word of exhortation given in specific instructions for the community. These are not additional instructions, but a review and emphasis on the instructions given in the first 12 chapters of the letter.
- A word of blessing for the community
- And final greetings for the community.

The author sets up his conclusion in the last verses of chapter 12, saying:

Hebrews 12:28-29 ²⁸Therefore let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, and thus let us offer to God **acceptable worship**, with reverence and awe, ²⁹for our God is a consuming fire.

- To you, the Jewish believers in Christ that are experiencing persecution for your faith. In light of all that I have written to encourage you in your faith.
- To show you and to tell you that Jesus is the fulfillment of all the promises to Abraham.
- To demonstrate through the writings and prophecies in Scripture that Jesus is better than angels, Jesus is superior to Moses. He is the perfect high priest and His work is complete and He is seated at the right hand of God.
- That your righteousness is not from the Law but your righteousness and your assurance comes through your faith.

- Since we have a kingdom that cannot be shaken. Let us offer to God acceptable worship with reverence and awe, for our God is a consuming fire. The author concludes his letter describing what it looks like to worship God in reverence and awe.
- In our culture, we think of worship as praying or singing praise to God. Certainly, that is acceptable and true, but listen to how the author of Hebrews describes “acceptable worship with reverence and awe” as we study chapter 13.

These are the concluding remarks and final instructions for how these Christians are to live out their faith, answering the question, **“So then, how are we to live?”** In consideration of all that he has written, the author concludes with 8 final instructions giving a vision or picture of what it looks like **to worship God**. Brett covered the first three and promised a sermon on each. I will cover three more today and the final two next week.

As I contemplated these instructions, the Spirit put on my heart that acceptable worship described in these instructions is centered around relationship. Here in chapter 13 the author speaks to every relationship that we experience in this life.

- Relationship with other people
- Relationship in our marriage and family
- Relationship with money and material things
- Relationship with God through faith and worship

Listen for these, and consider your relationships.

1. Verse 1. - Let brotherly love continue – show hospitality to strangers, remember those who are mistreated and have been imprisoned for their faith.

John 13:35 ³⁵By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”

- Loving one another is a form of worship acceptable to God.

2. Verse 4. - Let the marriage be held in honor among all. – Abstain from sexual sin and adultery.

Ephesians 5:31-33 ³¹ “Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.” ³² This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church. ³³ However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.

- Here marriage is portrayed as a living picture of Christ's sacrificial love for His people. When a husband and wife faithfully fulfill their God-given roles, they display the gospel itself. A God honoring marriage becomes an act of worship because it points others to God's redemptive work.

3. Verse 5. - Keep your life free from the love of money and be content with what you have. – God is your provider.

Matthew 6:19-21 ¹⁹ “Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. ²⁰ But store up for yourselves **treasures in heaven**, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹ For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

- Store up treasures in heaven. As Brett said, each of these can be their own sermon. Learning to build heavenly treasure will change our lives. Matthew continues saying:

Matthew 6:24 ²⁴ “No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money.

- The issue is not possessing wealth, but deciding whom we trust. Trusting God instead of money is an act of worship because worship ultimately involves where we place our trust.

The author gives us a vision of what it looks like to live in community.

- Striving to love others, having a God honoring marriage, and living to trust in God for our material needs are all ways we can be *distinctly different* in our culture and are acceptable forms of worship as given by our author in Hebrews.

Today we will cover verses 7 to 14 adding to the final words of exhortation and instruction given to these Jewish followers of Jesus. We will start in verse 7.

Hebrews 13:7 Remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the word of God. Consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith.

- **Remember** your leaders. Who are their leaders? The Scripture says they are: “those who spoke to you the Word of God.”
- Who is it who spoke the Word of God? During the time of the writing of Hebrews, many may have heard or even knew the Apostles. Only the Apostles were given the Word of God. So, they were being called to remember the Apostles or possibly other leaders who followed the Apostles and taught them the Word of God.
- On Father’s Day we can remember our “Spiritual Fathers,” those who spoke the Word of God to you. Those responsible for planting seeds or cultivating your faith through discipleship.
- So, they are being encouraged to remember their leaders and to:

“Consider the outcome of their way of life,

- **Recall:** What was the outcome of their way of life? “Outcome” is literally referring to their exit, departure or result of their way of life.
- We CAN “consider the achievements of the Apostles.” We can look to the book of Acts. Otherwise known as the “Acts of the Apostles” to consider the **outcome of their life.**
 - The Apostles devoted themselves to the teaching and to fellowship.
 - They broke bread together and prayed together.
 - We see them meeting together, sharing their possessions and giving to any who had need.
 - They bore witness to the resurrection of Christ
 - They were bold and called people to repentance and to baptism
 - They healed the sick and cast out demons
 - They were arrested, imprisoned, and Stephen was stoned.
 - In God’s sovereign will, the leaders of the “Jesus movement” were persecuted, executed and chased out of town by Saul.

- While chasing down the Christians in Damascus, Saul encountered Jesus, believed, and was saved. He became the greatest evangelist and the gospel spread from Jerusalem, to Samaria, and to the outer parts of the known world and eventually to me and to you.

We can remember the achievements of their lives.

But, the author didn't ask them to consider their achievements. He asked them to consider the how these leaders finished their lives. He points to the leaders who have already finished the race.

- Consider the faithfulness of God in their lives. But even more, consider the victory of their faith in their death.
- These Jewish Christians would certainly know the outcome of the Apostles.
 - James, leader of the church in Jerusalem, had been killed.
 - Peter may have recently been executed.
 - Paul was in prison or may have also been recently executed.

The readers were instructed to consider the vision for what it looked like to remain faithful to Christ to the very end.

- The "outcome" was not worldly success. Many lost possessions, they lost their freedom, their influence, and they even lost life itself. Yet they finished victoriously because they endured in faith.
- Their faith resulted in righteousness.
- Most importantly, their faith resulted in overcoming death.
- Their faith provided a perfect high priest who is sitting at the right hand of God. His work is complete and His grace is sufficient and He would be there for them at their end.

Who are the leaders and spiritual fathers that spoke the Word of God in our generation?

- Tim Keller – Engaged the modern culture with apologetics and teaching
- John MacArthur – His expository teaching and Masters seminary

- James Dobson – Focus on the Family
- Luis Palau – Global evangelist reaching millions in Latin America
- R.C. Sproul – Reformed theological teacher
- Charles Stanley – Bible teacher and mass media
- Voddie Bauchman – Expository apologetics, defense of Biblical worldview and equipping families.
- John Bisagno – First Baptist Church Houston

All of these men were the leaders or Fathers of faith in our generation. There are countless more and others that were influential leaders to you. They spoke the Word of God, and I am grateful for their lives and the legacy of faith that they left with us. May you and I be one of those leaders who spoke the Word of God and will have a faith that the next generation can consider and imitate.

Remember the leaders that spoke the Word of God to you. We have great examples to follow. Consider the outcome of their lives.

Considering the leaders of the early church, it is no small challenge to consider their outcome; and now, they are instructed to “imitate their faith.”

- Recall early on in Chapter 2, the author gave his first of five warnings to be careful not to “drift from our FAITH” saying,

Hebrews 2:3 How shall we escape if we neglect such a great salvation?

- In the author’s final instructions here in chapter 13, he is telling us that, in the end, FAITH is what matters. It is their faith that overcomes death, it is their faith that carries them through persecution, and it is their faith that results in salvation. It is no different today. It is the faith of the leaders that brought us to salvation that we are to imitate.

“Remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the word of God. Consider the outcome of their way of life, and **imitate their faith.**”

In verse 8, he now brings them back to Jesus, the object of their faith and their salvation. Verse 8 has been an encouragement and anchor in my faith and is one verse we could spend at least 3 weeks covering.

Hebrews 13:8 Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.

- Jesus the Messiah, He is the Christ and He is eternally trustworthy in His position as high priest and Son of God.
 - Jesus the Christ is the same **“yesterday”** – He created the world, He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of His nature. He is the one who upholds the universe by the Word of His power.
 - Jesus the Christ is the same **“today”** – Through His death and resurrection, Jesus offers salvation TODAY to those who believe.
 - Jesus the Christ is the same **“forever”** – Jesus’ work is completed and He is seated at the right hand of God and will FOREVER rule and reign.
 - Putting my faith in Jesus and trusting that His truth and His Word is absolute truth and unchanging is the foundation that provides assurance and confidence in my faith.
 - How many of you have seen the movie *Disclosure Day*? Stephen Spielberg said it would “shake the belief of religious people.” If we come to find out there are other created beings it changes nothing. Jesus created the world and everything in it. We already know that there are myriads of angels and demons in the spiritual realm. “Let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken.”

I think the author knew that teachers would come proclaiming a different truth.

- For **yesterday**, they would revise or seek to change the messages of Jesus’ teachings.
- For **Today**, they would say Jesus is not the only way to salvation and His teachings are not relevant for today
- And for the **future** they would seek to cast doubt on His claim to rule and reign forever. He warns them:

Hebrews 13:9⁹ 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.

- Here in verse 9, the author is predicting and warning against false teachings to come. Do not be “led away.” The enemy’s goal is to lead me and to lead you away from truth.
- False doctrines will always be at the top of his list. At this time, the Jewish believers in Christ experiencing persecution were being drawn back to following the Law and religious rituals.
- Our Scripture says, “For it is good for the heart to be strengthened by grace, not by foods.” He is saying, don’t return to the false teaching that righteousness is earned through works. No! It is God’s grace that strengthens our hearts, not by ceremonial works.
- For us today, be careful not to be led away by teachings that focus on cultural beliefs. In the early church, false teaching may be Jesus + Law or Jesus + circumcision, but today the enemy is working overtime to divide the church with far greater deceptions. Some of the false teaching in the protestant church today:
 - **Antinomianism** – Teaches because we are under grace, moral law is no longer a relevant standard. Morals become subjective to individual considerations, distorting any conviction of absolute truth.
 - **Progressive Reinterpretations** – Biblical Scholars often use a combination of literary, historical and textual method referred to as biblical criticism to test, analyze and interpret the Scriptures. These methods are used to understand the original meaning. However, many times the scholarly result has been reinterpretations of Scripture to challenge traditional doctrines such as creation, the virgin birth, same sex marriage, miracles in the Bible and even the resurrection.
 - **Syncretism** is the blending of different religious beliefs, practices, or ideas into a new, hybrid system that changes or compromises biblical truth. We see examples of this where eastern mysticism and new age spirituality that pursues spiritual experiences, altered states of consciousness and meditation incorporated into modern Christian worship. An

easy way to test these worship songs is to consider if the lyrics are grounded in Scripture and directed toward God and Jesus or if they are focused on our own feelings and experience.

- **Universalism** is a popular and convenient belief that teaches that all men will ultimately be saved. The logic goes: Jesus died for the whole world. God's love will triumph and ultimately all men will be reconciled with God and go heaven. While the catechisms of the Episcopal Church and Presbyterian USA do not teach universalism, there are many liberal theologians in these and other denominations that advocate forms of universalism.

These are emerging false doctrines competing against Biblical truth in the western church today.

The more common false teachings that we think of are:

- **Catholics** may pray to the saints and to Mary
- Some teach that salvation is achieved through **Infant Baptism**. We would argue that Scripture does NOT support salvation through infant baptism and that baptism is an outward expression and public testimony of the spiritual change that happened in your life when you came to faith in Christ.
- **Prosperity Gospel**. Teaching Name it, claim it. God guarantees health, wealth and success if you only have sufficient faith, make positive confessions and give financially.
- Many teach **Cessation**, that miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit ceased with the Apostles. We don't see that in Scripture or in our life experience.

We can find confidence and assurance in Hebrews 13:8 Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.

The author now compares and contrasts the old covenant with the new covenant through Jesus as our high priest.

Hebrews 13:10-12¹⁰ 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.

- Verse 10 - 12 are referring to the Day of Atonement. On the Day of Atonement, a sin offering would be presented. The life of the animal would be taken, and the blood would be poured out on the alter. The body is taken outside the camp or city to be burned completely. Symbolizing the complete cleansing of sin.
- Verse 10 says, “We have an altar from which those who serve the tent have no right to eat. “We have an alter,” what does that mean?
 - “We, the Christians” have an alter. The alter is the place where a sacrifice is offered. For Christians, the alter or the place where the sacrifice was made was the cross and Jesus was the sacrifice.
- So, We have an altar from which “those who serve the tent” Those who serve the tent is referring to those who serve the earthly alter. These would be the Levitical priests and others who rely on the Old Covenant sacrificial system. They have no right to eat.
- The point is that the Old Covenant altar and sacrificial system and the New Covenant of grace through Christ’s sacrifice are mutually exclusive. Those who insist on remaining under the Old Covenant sacrificial system have “no right to eat” or no claim to the blessings of grace under the New Covenant.
- Is everyone tracking? In simplified language, starting with verse 9, the author is saying, don’t be drawn to any teachings apart from Christ crucified. No rituals or sacrificial systems can compete with the grace available to those who believe.
- In verse 12, the ritual of taking the sin offering outside the city to be completely burned on the Day of Atonement is but a shadow of the once-for-all sacrifice that is made by Jesus. The author is reminding or emphasizing Jesus, **our “sin offering”** was taken outside of the city to suffer and die as it says, “to sanctify the people through His own blood.”
- Outside the city represented banishment from God’s Holy presence. By bearing our guilt and absorbing the penalty for our sin, Jesus our high priest, endured sin’s curse. We, those who believe in Him, are sanctified by His blood.

In chapter 9 we covered the once-for-all sacrifice.

Hebrews 9:24-26 ²⁴ For Christ has entered, not into holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true things, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf. ²⁵ Nor was it to offer himself repeatedly, as the high priest enters the holy places every year with blood not his own, ²⁶ for then he would have had to suffer repeatedly since the foundation of the world. But as it is, he has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.

No Rituals or Sacrifices can compete with the Grace Available to Those Who Believe. For Jewish believers who grew up in the Jewish tradition and followed the law and cultural practice of the of the old covenant, you can really see the need and value for the doctrinal teaching of Paul's letters and Hebrews

Hebrews 13:13 ¹³ Therefore let us GO TO HIM outside the camp and bear the reproach he endured.

Throughout all of Jesus' ministry we see Him going to the person in need.

- Jesus goes to the leper, touches him and heals him.
- He goes to the blind man, spits in the dirt, rubs the mud on his eyes and restores his sight.
- He goes to the bleeding woman who touched the hem of his robe and heals her.
- Jesus goes to the crazy, naked demon possessed man and casts out the demons
- Jesus spots the tax collector Zacchaeus amongst the crowd in a tree and goes to him and invites him to dinner
- He initiates conversation with the Samaritan women at the well
- Jesus goes to Lazarus' tomb and raises him from the dead

Luke 19:10 For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.”

But now the Author says, “Therefore, let us go to Him.” The Hebrew Christians knew what it was like to be persecuted and suffer. The author is now calling them to go to Him outside the camp. To count the cost. To bear the reproach that Jesus endured.

Hebrews 13:14 ¹⁴ For here we have no lasting city, but we seek the city that is to come.

- Do not put your hope in Jerusalem, the temple or the earthly religious order.
- They may never be welcome in Jerusalem’s temple, and they may be expelled from the synagogues, but they have **gained Christ, become heirs of God and citizens of “the city that is to come.”**
- I want to repeat and remind you of what Paul says it means to gain Christ?

Philippians 3:9-10 ...that I may **gain Christ**, and be found in Him...the righteousness from God that depends on faith— ¹⁰ that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and may share His sufferings, becoming like Him in His death,

- “That I may know Him.” – That we may know Him personally.
- That we may know the POWER of His resurrection – Through Christ’s resurrection we also have overcome death and have strength to resist sin.
- That we may share in His sufferings – that we also may be sanctified through hardships conforming to His righteousness.
- That we may become like Him in His death. – To die to self and submit to the will of God.

This is what it means to gain Christ.

Therefore, Let us go to Him.

- Let us join Him outside the gates.
- Let us know Him and the power of His resurrection.
- Let us share in His sufferings. Let us die to our self.

Let me take us back to where we started:

Hebrews 12:28-29 ²⁸Therefore let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, and thus let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe, ²⁹for our God is a consuming fire.

What are the six instructions for acceptable worship that we can take with us today?

1. Worship by loving one another
2. Worship by honoring your marriage
3. Worship by putting your trust in God, keeping your life free from the love of money
4. Consider the outcome of the lives of leaders that spoke the word of God to you and imitate their faith – It is by faith that we are made righteous. It is by faith that we overcome death. It is by faith that we have a perfect high priest.
5. Do not be led away by false teaching. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.
6. Go to Him. Count the cost and gain Christ.

We will pick up the last 2 next week.