

*Redemption and Reproach Outside the Camp*

Hebrews 13:9-14

Reading: Mark 15:20-39

Bethany Baptist Church  
September 1, 2019

*...pray...*

*The fishermen.* Peter and Andrew and James and John. *Ordinary, untrained men.*

*The tax collectors.* Levi and Zaccheus. *Wealthy, unscrupulous.*

*Adulteresses and prostitutes.* Woman at the Well and the Immoral Intruder who Anointed Jesus' feet. *Sinful, notorious, despised.*

*Pharisees and teachers.* Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea and Saul of Tarsus. *Highly educated, legalistically orthodox, powerful, respected.*

*Young Christians.* John Mark and Timothy. *Safe in their Christian homes.*

*First century church* of true believers and seekers and silent sceptics. The first audience of the NT *Epistle to the Hebrews*. **One foot still in their Jewish traditions. One step away from persecution.**

*Jesus called them out – all of them!* He summoned them to *leave* their lives behind, ordinary or powerful or religious or worldly, ...

...and to *go out* to Him, regardless of the *sacrifices* and the *shame*.

**Let's turn to Hebrews 13 together and pick up its closing instructions in v.7 (read vv. 7-16; our focus this morning will be on vv.9-14).**

*This is that early church!*

Time and again, our letter calls them to put their *Jewish traditions* behind them and go to *Jesus*, regardless of the *reproach*, *seeking* the New Jerusalem.

**Three reasons to *leave the world* and *suffer scorn* for your Savior.**

1. **His grace is our *food* (v.9).**
2. **His cross is our *altar* (vv.10-12).**
3. **His reproach is our *glory* (vv.13-14).**

**God's grace is all the *spiritual nourishment* you need!**

1. **Read v.9.** This is the **seventh** instruction in Chap.13: a warning against getting *caught up* in “*varied and strange teachings.*”
2. Specifically, Hebrews warns against being *carried away by varied and strange teachings* concerning what you *eat!*
3. Many of you know that I've become somewhat of a *con-nois-seur* of *unorthodox diets* in the past year!
  - a. But I've noticed that I'm **not** alone! Everywhere I *go (shop)* I hear talk of *keto diets*, *plant-based diets*, *wholefood diets*, *caveman diets!*
  - b. Some **do** sound pretty *strange!*
  - c. But the author's concern in v.9 is **not** about your *physical* health, it's about your *spiritual* health.
    - i. The *topic on the table* is the relationship between *diet* and *spirituality*. I guess you could call it “*heart health*”!
    - ii. **I.e.**, can your *calorie content* and *cooking style* make you more acceptable to God?
  - d. Apparently **not**, because Hebrews indicates that these *diets* reflect *varied and strange* teachings.
    - i. Perhaps he is referring to *Jewish dietary laws*, embellished by decades of *rabbinical* and *Pharisaical* tradition.
    - ii. Perhaps he is referring to *mystical pagan influences*, as seen elsewhere in the **NT** in texts like 1 Cor 8 and Col 2.

4. Will these diets *work*...? Will teachings that promote *your diet* as a *path to God* provide any *spiritual benefit*...?
- a. Based on Hebrews' warning...**no!** These *various* ideas are *strange!*
  - b. In fact, don't miss that the *various and strange* teachings of **v.9** stand in immediate & direct contrast to the "word of God" (7) and esp. our *immutable* and *eternal* Savior and King, Jesus Christ (8); the *same yesterday and today – indeed, forever!*
  - c. So our author says as *plain* and *simple* as a *bread & butter sandwich* (9b): *those who were carried away by spiritual diets were not benefitted.* Your *diet* might get you into a *new pair of slacks*, but it **won't** get you into *God's favor!*
  - d. Let's look at another powerful **NT** warning against trying *to eat your way* into God's good graces; **turn w/ me to Col 2:20-23.**
    - i. Notice how these religious diets *appear* (23): *wise* because they involve *self-abasement* and *severe self-treatment.* In other words, **asceticism** - the religion of *self-disciplined self-denial.*
    - ii. Notice, however, the *foundation* of religious dieting (20): *fundamental worldly principles*; (21) *doctrines of men*; in fact (21) food is *perishable*, not *eternal!*
      1. How can something w/ a **30 day** expiration date on the label give you *eternal life!?!*
    - iii. Paul just clearly and forcefully *serves it up* like this (23): **no value!** Read the label: *...no value against fleshly indulgence.*
5. So *why* do these ever-popular spiritual diets **not** work?
- a. They *don't* work because they **are works** – *man's* spiritual works. *Our* human efforts, according to *our* wisdom, to satisfy a holy God.

- b. Pastor Kent Hughes writes that *works* (e.g. *spiritual diets*) **don't** work because they make us vulnerable to our *pride*.
    - i. **Eph 2:8-9** – *For by grace you are saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, **not as a result of works, so that no man may boast.** If **I** did it, I get **proud/boastful!***
    - ii. What does God think about your *pride*? The answer to *that* is *all over your Bible!* E.g., **1 Pt 5:5** -...*clothe yourselves w/ humility toward one another, for God is **opposed to the proud,** but gives **grace** to the humble.*
  - c. It's just a **bad** recipe: your *personal philosophy* & your *rituals* & your *works* & your *pride* & your *boasting!* God's **not** having it...!
6. So if *our works* are a *bad diet*, what is a *good diet*? **Grace!** V.9 – *it is good for the heart to be strengthened by grace.*
- a. Our Lord Jesus once said: *"I have food to eat that you know not of."*
  - b. Let me remind you of the def'n of *grace*: *"God giving you the desire and the power to do His will, first in salvation, then in every day of the Christian life."* **2X**
  - c. So the **NT** promises every Christian that *God is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure* (Ph 2:13). That's *grace!*
7. Okay, so maybe for the sake of your *cholesterol* and *weight* you **do** need to *put down the pie* and *pick up the celery sticks!*
- a. But your *relationship with God* **can't** be based on various and strange *spiritual fads*, nor even your own *hard work*.
  - b. God's *grace*, expressed through your *faith* in the death & resurrection of Jesus Christ, is the only thing that will *rescue your heart!*

**God's grace is our food!**

**Jesus' cross is our altar (read vv.10-12).**

1. You can't miss the "*us vs. them*": *we have an altar*, in clear contrast to *those who serve the tabernacle* (all present tense!). And, of course, the *tabernacle* included **two altars**, the *altar of burnt offering* and the *incense altar*.
  - a. The *second reference* is to the Jewish *priesthood*, serving in the *tabernacle (temple)*.
  - b. The *first* – "*we*," are followers of Jesus Christ thru *faith* in His *sin-paying death/resurrection* – and who, it seems, *also* have an altar.
  
2. If you read the **OT**, you might recognize an *altar* as a place of *sacrifices*. The priests *slaughtered* animals *feast* after *feast*, *year* after *year*, to *symbolize* payments for the peoples' sins. And sometimes (not always), the people and the priests *ate* a portion of their sacrifices.
  - a. Let's see an example in **Exodus 29:10-14 (turn/read)**.
    - i. This is a *sin offering* for priests, a *bull* killed in front of the *tabernacle (tent of meeting)*.
    - ii. The *blood* is then taken into the *tabernacle*, *sprinkled 7X* before the *veil*. Blood was then *smear*ed on the *altar of incense*, still inside the tabernacle.
    - iii. Whatever blood was left was *poured out* at the base of the *altar of burnt offering*, back **outside** the *tabernacle* but still in its *courtyard*.
    - iv. Portions of the *sacrifice* were then *burned up* on that same altar.
    - v. Then whatever was left was *wrapped up* in the bull's hide, *taken outside* Israel's camp, and *burned w/fire*.
  - b. Yet this *offering*, as w/ all Old Cov *offerings*, was only *symbolic*, so the offerings were **never final** – sacrificing was **never finished**.

3. *But now, our* Jesus Christ has provided the *final offering* and He is exalted as the *new* and *better* high priest. He is both the *Lamb of God* (“*who takes away the sins of the world*”) and our *Great High Priest!*
  - a. But as we think about **v.10** (*we have an altar*), in what sense does the *death* of God’s Son involve an *altar*?
  - b. What did Christ’s *altar* accomplish?
  - c. And in what way do His people *eat* from that *altar*? **Let’s read v.12 and answer those three questions.**
  
4. Christian, what is your *altar*? It is the place of *sacrifice*, of *death*, and of *sin paying*. A place where *your sins* are placed on the *Lamb’s sinless shoulders* and payed for in His *suffering* and *dying*.
  - a. The *altar* might be thought of as the *cross*, but more exactly, our *altar* is Jesus’ *death* in the place of His *people*.
  - b. As the **OT** *sacrifices* here both (*remind* us of)/(but also *contrast* with) the gospel’s *sacrifice*, don’t miss the **one** Old Cov detail our writer picks out of the Law in order to emphasize (v.11): the *sin offering* ends *outside the camp*.
  - c. Jesus’ *altar*, *His death on Golgotha*, was *outside the gates of Jerusalem*. And as we’ll soon see (vv.13, 14) the *message* is one of *rejection* and *separation*.

5. Jesus' *altar* accomplished its task w/just **one use, one sacrifice!** And what did the cross *accomplish*?
- a. **V.12** – *His own blood* (emphatic) **sanctified** *His own people!*
  - b. “Sanctify” (Gr. ‘**αγιαζω** – *make holy, set apart*). Beloved, you're not just *forgiven*, you are *accounted 100% righteous!* Jesus got the *punishment for your sins*, you received His *sinless righteousness*. We call that “*Substitutionary Atonement*” – *for our sins, in our place*.
  - c. And as we've noted time and again in Hebrews: the **v.10 OT priests** **never sat down** because their work was **never done**, because symbolic sacrifices only **picture** final forgiveness, they **can't** *secure* it.
  - d. But Jesus' sacrifice accomplished “*once and for all forgiveness*” for **all** who *turn* to Him and *trust* in Him: *all* the sins of *all* His followers for *all* time ... *once and for all!*
6. And **that's** how His people *eat* from His *altar!* Our *right* to eat from the gospel's *altar* is by *faith!*
- a. Eph 2:8 – *By grace you are saved through faith.*
  - b. Jesus said that *saving faith* is such a *powerful conviction* it can best be pictured as *eating & drinking*.
  - c. **Turn w/ me to John 6:51-58.**
    - i. **V.51** – *the bread also which I will give for the life of the world is My flesh*. Even here, Jesus has the *cross* on His *radar!*
    - ii. **V.53,54 (etc)** – only *eating* and *drinking* the Son of Man's *flesh* promise *eternal life*. That's *strong stuff* – the Jews *grumbled!*
    - iii. **V.58** – this is **not** the way of the **OT fathers**, it's *new!* Thus, those who depend on *Jewish ritual* have **no** place at Golgotha's altar because they have **no** faith in Jesus' death.



7. So friend, I **must** ask you: is this **your** faith...? Are you so *dependent* on Jesus for *eternal life* and *today's life* that His *life* is your soul's very *sustenance*!
- a. Because if you came to Jesus simply looking for *fire insurance*, I'm **not** sure you got *anything at all*! Jesus warned (John 6:64) – “*But there are some of you who do not believe.*”
  - b. Have you come, *repenting* of your sins, to Golgotha's altar, and have you *eaten* its sacrifice?

**Is Jesus' cross is your altar?**

**Jesus' cross is our altar and His reproach is our glory (read vv.13-14).**

1. *Sin offerings were burned **outside** the camp. Jesus also...suffered **outside** the gate.*
  - a. I can't help but notice that our author could have said *Jesus also died*, but instead we are reminded , much more graphically, *Jesus **suffered***.
  - b. But the point here is "*outside.*" *Outside the camp....outside the gate.*
  - c. *Outside Jerusalem, w/ its Temple and sacrifices and priests. All that was 1<sup>st</sup> century Judaism was *inside* Jerusalem.*
  - d. Yet in **Mk 15:20** we read: *And they led Him **out** to crucify Him.*
2. Christians, the Holy Spirit is calling **us** to *out to Him, outside the camp*. And the *point* is still *separation*.
3. *Where* are we going, and *what* are we leaving behind?
  - a. You've sung that gospel ballad: *I have decided to follow Jesus, I have decided to follow Jesus, I have decided to follow Jesus, no turning back, no turning back.*
  - b. You are following Jesus, *through* the gates of this world, until you are *outside* its camp.
  - c. Jesus said (Mk 8): *"If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever wishes to save his life, must lose it. And whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it."*
  - d. *The cross before me, the world behind me, The cross before me, the world behind me, The cross before me, the world behind, no turning back, I'll follow Him.*

4. *How will we go? In some measure, like Jesus went. Do you see it in v.12 – Jesus **suffered** outside the gate. And so for us in v.13 – we will bear **His** reproach.*
- a. Isaiah wrote, “*He was despised and rejected by men.*”
  - b. Then Jesus (Jn 15:20) warned us that, “*a servant is **not** greater than His master. If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you.*”
  - c. We’ve already seen that the first readers of Hebrews were familiar w/ *persecution*; we just read in **13:3** that they were to *remember the prisoners...and the ill-treated, since you yourselves also are in the body.*
  - d. Beloved, these are not just 1<sup>st</sup> century headlines!
    - i. I’ve read this week of a *young Syrian shop owner* who was *kidnapped* by Islamic extremists, *threatened* w/death, *freed*, then *fled* his country.
    - ii. Last Sunday, a *Cameroonian Bible translator* (W. Africa) was *pulled out* of his home in the night, and *martyred* by machete, along w/ **six** others. His persecutors *hacked off* the arm of his wife! Last Sunday!
  - e. The apostle Paul wrote (1Tim3:12): *All who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.*

5. So why leave worldly safety if reproach follows? Perhaps we should read these verses again: vv.13,14.
- a. In John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, Christian heard of a remedy for his sins, and fled his home – *The City of Destruction*. He narrowly escaped *Vanity Fair*. But Christian was on the *narrow path* to the *Celestial City*! **What path are you on?**
  - b. David, Israel's *Poet-King*, concluded most beloved psalm w/this hope: *"I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever."* **Is that your hope?**
  - c. The *Greater David* promised His friends: *"In My Father's house are many dwelling places. If it were not so I would have told you, for I go to prepare a place for you. If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again to receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may also be. And you know the way where I am going."* **Do you know the way?**
  - d. To leave behind and look ahead is one of Hebrews' evidences of true faith.
    - i. **Step back** w/me for a moment back into Ch.11's *Faith Hall of Fame*...
    - ii. Remember *Abraham*, having left his home (9-10); and the *Patriarchs*, dwelling in tents in the Promised Land (13-16); and *Moses*, renouncing Pharaoh's courts for Christ's reward(24-27). All seeking a *better city*—one whose *architect & builder* is God!
    - iii. **Beloved**, it takes *faith* to **go out of the World's gate** and **pursue the Heavenly gates** is **faith: 11:1** – *Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.* The *Celestial City* is **not seen** – but only as in, **not seen yet!** PAUSE

*My cross I'll carry, till I see Jesus, no turning back, no turning back.*

**Will you go? His grace is our soul's food, His cross is our altar, His reproach will be our glory, His Father's house will be our home. Will you go?**

*...pray...*

Father, place **this** in our hearts: to leave the world, to exit its gates, to follow Jesus. We need great grace, we need strong faith. You have a fountain w/o limit! In Jesus' name, Savior & King. Amen!

As we worship in song, I have a **challenge** for our:

*deacons, Sunday School teachers, ushers, musicians, senior men & women, our long standing members, our young adults, our young students...(our guests).*

Which *side of the world's gate* are you on?

Which *city* has your heart?

*As we sing, will you tell Jesus that you are committed to **come** to Him, **follow** Him, **bearing** His reproach, **seeking** His city?*

And if I can pray w/ you, help you – will you find me and tell me?

**# 490 – Lead Me to Calvary**