

SERIES: **BETTER**

TEXT: **Hebrews 13:8-25**

Hook- when going on a trip you pack the suitcase until you can hardly close it.

“does it fit?” “make it fit”

That’s essentially what the author is doing here- ‘let’s cram whatever fits’

The theme of the book is that Jesus is supreme

Confronting Thought- The supremacy of Christ calls for our surrender and submission

Has the Word taken root these last 25 weeks?

If not, pray today God opens the floodgates of heaven and overwhelms our souls

TITLE: **Supremacy that leads to surrender**

⁸ Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

C: this is a concept that Theologians recognize as one of God’s attributes (characteristics):

The Immutability of God- *God is unchanging in his character, will, and covenant promises.*

Jesus cannot change... not for the better since He cannot improve,
not for the worse since he cannot worsen

Even if/when people change, even if/when circumstances change, Jesus does not change

A: this is our hope:

Our circumstances may change, but He never changes.

Our feelings towards him may change, but his faithfulness never changes.

Our leaders may change, but he never changes.

Our dedication may waver, his disposition never changes.

H.B. Charles- *People change. Some people seem to change with each encounter with them. It is almost better to ask them, “Who are you today?” rather than “How are you today?” Thank God we never have to ask Jesus, “Who are you today?” Jesus never changes. Jesus never wavers. Jesus never vacillates.*

There is no need to fear Christ is different now or will be different in the future than what he has been in the past. Past, present, future make no difference to the eternal Savior. The Lord Jesus Christ is immutable.

- ***His holy character will not change.***
- ***His righteous standards will not change.***
- ***His eternal purpose will not change.***
- ***His living word will not change.***
- ***His saving power will not change.***
- ***His steadfast love will not change.***
- ***His sovereign authority will not change.***

I: some of us had to walk on thin ice because we had unstable parents (maybe your boss is that way, or spouse)

You never have to worry about how Jesus will react- He has made Himself predictable unto us

⁹ Don’t be led astray by various kinds of strange teachings; for it is good for the heart to be established by grace and not by food regulations, since those who observe them have not benefited.

C: Back in **2:1** the warning was to pay attention to good doctrine so that we will not drift away
Now the exhortation is to not pay attention to bad doctrine that will carry us away

This verse is anchored to **v.8** (God doesn't change and His Gospel doesn't either)

Jude 3 Dear friends, although I was eager to write you about the salvation we share, I found it necessary to write, appealing to you to contend for the faith that was delivered to the saints once for all. **“various”** and **“strange”** teachings- in their context it was mixing a little true gospel with a little Judaism

Be wary of any teacher or teaching that lures you away from grace

A: What does that look like for us?

A little bit of Christianity mixed with:

Horoscopes, worldliness, individualism, feminism, toxic masculinity, toxic nationalism, sexual

God is pleased with you because of Christ, not you balancing out karma, or vibing at the right “frequency”

We're not established by what we eat (**Matthew 15**) but by grace alone

¹⁰We have an altar from which those who worship at the tabernacle do not have a right to eat.

C: The priests that served in the tabernacle would eat from most of those sacrifices offered- exclusive to Levites

This text is saying- “don't think you're missing out, what you have in Christ is better”

A: I want to make a 2-fold application concerning this verse:

1- Religious FOMO is real, but be reminded: you're not missing out!

2- **As long as you continue to live as though you have something to bargain with, you have no place at God's table**

we come in poverty of spirit, offering only the sin we need forgiveness for

there is no “lamb” to offer because THE Lamb has offered Himself on our behalf

¹¹For the bodies of those animals whose blood is brought into the most holy place by the high priest as a sin offering are burned outside the camp. ¹²Therefore, Jesus also suffered outside the gate, so that he might sanctify the people by his own blood.

C: there's 2 specific sacrifices that were burned outside the camp, as opposed to the altar of sacrifice

The High Priest's sin offering & the sin offering for the people

The idea was that the sin was cut off from the people and completely consumed

Jesus offered His own body as a sin offering, was taken outside the city gates

Then settlement for our sin came through the slaughtering of the Son

A: Never ever lose the sense of weight of horror that brought about our salvation (*“Oh precious is the blood”?!?*)

You're having doubts? Remember the cost of this sin offering- HE was cut off

You're having temptations? remember the cost of this sin offering – HE was cut off

Now watch this but don't get it turned around: v8-12 speak of what Jesus did to save us from sin, but v.13-19 shift into our work as saved and redeemed people

it's calling us to action...not FOR a place in salvation, but FROM a place of salvation

¹³Let us, then, go to him outside the camp, bearing his disgrace.

If we are to find Jesus it is outside the camp- Let me give you a word that will come in handy:

Embrace the disgrace that comes with following Jesus

If you are on a journey **to** Jesus, know this: choosing Him will bring disgrace on you from those who rejected Him. Do not be surprised.

If you are on a journey **with** Jesus, let's spend less time trying to shake off the disgrace; Christianity will never be fully accepted in this world of darkness, it will never be cool enough.

Here's our motivation: **Our grace comes through His disgrace**

¹⁴For we do not have an enduring city here; instead, we seek the one to come.

'seek'- Greek meaning to *desire*, to *crave*

It's that longing within we always speak of. It's the best prove of God for the skeptic- that "incompleteness" within them, that unexplained sense for purpose

The home we seek is near but it's not here

this "city" isn't enduring (this world...this life)

What's keeping you attached to it, as Lot's wife who looked back?

What is so precious, what is so valuable that is preventing you from going deeper with God, from setting your eyes on the heavenly city?

What could possibly be worth not leaving behind?

NOTHING! Seek the one to come- believe far better things lie ahead!

¹⁵Therefore, through him let us continually offer up to God a sacrifice of praise, that is, the fruit of lips that confess his name. ¹⁶Don't neglect to do what is good and to share, for God is pleased with such sacrifices.

¹⁷Obeys your leaders and submit to them, since they keep watch over your souls as those who will give an account, so that they can do this with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you.

¹⁸Pray for us, for we are convinced that we have a clear conscience, wanting to conduct ourselves honorably in everything. ¹⁹And I urge you all the more to pray that I may be restored to you very soon.

The sacrifice of our lives isn't grace replacement, it's a grace response

Romans 12:1Therefore, brothers and sisters, in view of the mercies of God, I urge you to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God; this is your true worship.

We no longer offer dead animals to God, since God died in our place and he lives forever more, we offer our lives!

v.15 Praise

v.16 do good

share

v.17 follow your leaders appointed by God

v.18 be honorable in everything

v.19 be a people of prayer

ingratitude

do bad or do nothing

be greedy

fly solo

abuse your freedom

be people of gossip, complaining & critique

²⁰ Now may the God of peace, who brought up from the dead our Lord Jesus—the great Shepherd of the sheep—through the blood of the everlasting covenant, ²¹ equip you with everything good to do his will, working in us what is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.

C: this is a common way to end a letter- “benediction”

This is who God is:

God of peace- understand the monumental shift that has happened here

God is holy, we are sinful, we declared war, we are his enemies- he made peace

From the dead our Lord Jesus- the resurrection of Christ changes everything because it validates Him

Great Shepherded- He cares, He protects, He provides, He’s present

Blood of everlasting...-He made up His mind long ago about you

v.21 **equip**- Greek: complete thoroughly/ repair

Believer, are you a mess? Do you often feel like you’re not very good at this Christianity thing?

If you still feel like a disaster, it’s because He’s not yet done

HE will equip you with everything good to do his will, working in us what is pleasing in his sight

Let Him work in you, He’s not done, He’s not deterred, He’s not exhausted, He’s not fed up

WHY? Because it’s **through Jesus Christ**

²² Brothers and sisters, I urge you to receive this message of exhortation, for I have written to you briefly.

²³ Be aware that our brother Timothy has been released. If he comes soon enough, he will be with me when I see you. ²⁴ Greet all your leaders and all the saints. Those who are from Italy send you greetings. ²⁵ Grace be with you all.

It may be tempting to finish off this book and still feel detached from our brothers and sisters in the 1st century to whom this was written

The book of Hebrews is a book of real people with real struggles and a real hope

God saw them, and God sees you- wherever you may be on this journey of life

Parting Thought: The message of this letter is that Jesus is better

REFLECT:

Christians:

Q: How can I be a living sacrifice?

Not-yet-Christians:

Q: What is keeping me from surrendering my life to Jesus today?

The book of Hebrews is God’s assertion that His response to guilty sinners is not hasty reactive condemnation, but thoughtful humbling of Himself unto the point of disgrace and death in order to bring us near not cast us far, in order to give us grace not judgement, in order to know Him not just know of Him.

BULPEN-

V17 everyone has to give an account for themselves, but leaders must also give an account for those under their care

Acts 20:28

V8-12

A relationship with Jesus will always be predicated on grace

For every truth of God, the devil counters with anti-truth, almost-truths, and half-truths

V13-19

V20-25

V20 is the only direct reference in the book to the resurrection of Jesus

V18 do you desire this? To live in every part of your life with moral courage and integrity?

Could we be so bold to write that we have a clear conscience?

V8 Jesus is our better foundation

V9-12 Jesus is our better sacrifice

V13-17 our sacrifices are now spiritual rather than physical ; not animals, but ourselves

Praising

Doing good

Sharing

Following

V18-24 real people, real struggles, real hope!

V25 GRACE!

V16 the alternative is to do evil, or to do nothing

V8-14 Beware “new” teachings, God never changes

One question I always pose to grey areas or to ‘new’ revelations is: “has the bible already said anything about this, and if so what?”

One teaching to look out for is anything other than grace (V9)

God is pleased with you, not because of your performance, but because of Jesus’ sacrifice. Are you saved? Then God is pleased with you as much as He can ever be! Yes He will discipline you to mold you, but all displeasing emotions have been settled on the cross of Christ.

Certain animals for sacrifice would be taken outside the camp and slaughtered, in a way the judgment for sin had been put on them and diverted from the people in the camp so they could remain near God. When Jesus was crucified, he was taken outside of the city, a fulfillment of what the animal sacrifices represented. He was rejected and crushed for us. V13 calls us to go outside the camp to meet him there at the cross, what to the world is disgrace, we gladly wear since we know it is God’s glory

V14 our city is Zion, not of this world, so what does it matter that we march out of the camp

V15-16 sacrifice of Praise, Doing good & Sharing

The NT describes worship as sacrifice (Romans 12:1, 1 Peter 2:5) . under the N.C. we no longer offer physical sacrifices, but spiritual ones . we don't offer animals or grains, we offer ourselves.

V18-25 not just a distant sermon, but a loving plea from someone who knows them

Grace properly ends this letter

Matthw 15:10-20 Summoning the crowd, he told them, "Listen and understand: ¹¹It's not what goes into the mouth that defiles a person, but what comes out of the mouth—this defiles a person."

¹²Then the disciples came up and told him, "Do you know that the Pharisees took offense when they heard what you said?"¹³He replied, "Every plant that my heavenly Father didn't plant will be uprooted. ¹⁴Leave them alone! They are blind guides. And if the blind guide the blind, both will fall into a pit."¹⁵Then Peter said, "Explain this parable to us."¹⁶"Do you still lack understanding?" he asked. ¹⁷"Don't you realize that whatever goes into the mouth passes into the stomach and is eliminated? ¹⁸But what comes out of the mouth comes from the heart, and this defiles a person. ¹⁹For from the heart come evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, sexual immoralities, thefts, false testimonies, slander. ²⁰These are the things that defile a person; but eating with unwashed hands does not defile a person."

One of the things the book of Hebrews does for us is give us this exhortation:

Any text of the bible that you read, read it in light of Jesus

V24 Italy- such a small detail, but its implications are encouraging: despite the harsh persecution, the church is spreading, it's growing