



HEBREWS

Jesus is GREATER THAN...SO STAND FIRM

THEREFORE...

OFFER ACCEPTABLE SACRIFICES—CHAPTER 13

FACILITATOR'S NOTE

Last week's lesson focused on running the race of faith as that great cloud of witnesses surrounds us. The way we keep going is by looking to Jesus as our true example of faith and endurance. Any discipline we may encounter from God on the way is based on His deep love for us, as He wants to help us grow and carry on. This week, the Hebrews author concludes with ways in which the audience is to conduct themselves as Christians and a fellowship of believers. Some say (and we agree) that verses 1-19 should be considered as ways in which we worship God (from 12:28-29) as living sacrifices (Romans 12:1-2). The author then prays for the believers and sends greetings.

IMPORTANT: As always, we encourage you to begin preparing for each lesson by committing the class and the teaching to God in prayer. After this, we encourage you to dig into not only the specific chapter in Hebrews for this week (Chapter 13), but also the book of Hebrews as a whole and the Scriptures at large. As you move through your readings, jot down any thoughts that come to you and particular passages that stand out and speak to you. We assure you that these will come into play as you facilitate this discussion. It is **ONLY AFTER DOING THESE THINGS** that you should approach this lesson plan and perhaps use it as a guide. Your group is different than all the rest and so your lessons should be adapted accordingly.

PRAYER

Begin your time praying that we live a life that is pleasing to God and for His glory.

FOCUS

- How we are to live as Christians.
- God makes us complete as we live a life that honors Him.

- Recognize that JESUS IS GREATER THAN, THEREFORE...OFFER ACCEPTABLE SACRIFICES!

LESSON

Discussion Starters (OPTIONAL)

- Briefly define "Worship".
- Is worship limited to what we do on Sunday mornings in the Worship Center? Explain.
- What would you say the elements of worship are?
- How does daily living connect with worship?
- In the 1988 Olympics in Seoul, Ben Johnson of Canada was stripped of the gold medals he won because he violated the rules concerning drug use. The Christian race is much more than a sprint to the finish line to get the prize (at all costs). It's a marathon that takes time and brings God glory by HOW the runners run. The Hebrews' writer lays out ways in which Christians can run the race in order to honor God. These are more than a list of moral obligations, but instead are more accurately *acts of daily worship to God*.

FROM GOD'S WORD

- This lesson on chapter 13 will focus on a series of questions based on the text for the purpose of class discussion:
 - Read the chapter starting with 12:28-29.
 - Consider that the verses of chapter 13 follow 12:28-29 as a continuation. Therefore, what you read is how we worship God in reverence and awe. Tie that with "bookend" verses 13:14-16. Consider this in light of Paul's statement in Romans 12:1-2.
 - Connect verse 1-3 with 16. How are loving others, doing good, sharing, entertaining strangers and helping the prisoners and the mistreated considered "sacrifices" to God?
 - List out all the exhortations in verses 1-19:
 - Let brotherly love continue
 - Entertain strangers
 - Remember the prisoners
 - Honor marriage
 - Remain sexually pure
 - Do not covet money
 - Be content
 - Remember your leaders
 - Don't be led away by diverse and strange teachings
 - Bear reproach with Jesus
 - Offer up sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving
 - Do good and share
 - Obey your leaders
 - Pray for others

- Sexual purity is one of God's absolutes (v. 4). How have we allowed our culture to influence our view of sex, sexual identity, sexual practices, etc.? How do you account for sexual impurity among disciples of Christ?
- Do we struggle with the love of money (especially in our area)? Do we struggle with contentment even as Christians? Why? What facts about God should help to keep us from loving money (vv. 5-6)?
- What can we confidently say in knowing that God will never leave us or forsake us?
 - THE LORD IS MY HELPER; I WILL NOT FEAR; WHAT CAN MAN DO TO ME?!!!
- Respect and obedience to our spiritual leaders are laid out in verses 7, 17-18. What specifics are we asked to do in regards to our leaders? What do we struggle with in these verses and why?
- Consider verses 10-14. What do these verses mean to you?
 - Jesus went outside the gate (Calvary) to the place of sacrificial animals. This sacrifice through His blood rendered us HOLY. To go outside the camp addresses leaving the love of this world (and its approval of us) behind and embrace how Jesus responded to His shameful sufferings by sharing in those sufferings. This world is not our home and is just temporary (no lasting city) as we await a more perfect home. The kingdom of heaven/God is "Already, but not yet..." and we get to join Jesus there.
- In what sense is everything that has been mentioned thus far a sacrifice of praise to God (v. 15)?
- What else has stood out to you in this final chapter?

REFLECTION

- How do you look at God's law? Do you consider it a burden? A list of moral obligations to be carried out in order to get to heaven? Or are they your daily acts of worship to God?
- Of the list of exhortations, which one or ones are most difficult to keep? Why?
- What do you think God is "working in you" in order to please Him? This will be specific to individuals, but could be as a church family as well.

PRAYER

Pray the final prayer as a class:

"Now may the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, equip us with everything good that we may do His will, working in us that which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. AMEN!"

LESSON OUTLINE – Here are the lessons we will be studying the weeks to come.

- INTRODUCTION (January 5)
- JESUS IS GREATER THAN...Angelic Beings–Chapter 1 (January 12)
- JESUS IS GREATER THAN...Angelic Beings–Chapter 1 (January 19)
- JESUS IS GREATER THAN...But Still Human–Chapter 2 (January 26)
- JESUS IS GREATER THAN...Moses–Chapter 3 (February 2)
- JESUS IS GREATER THAN...The High Priest–Chapter 4 (February 9)
- JESUS IS GREATER THAN...The High Priest–Chapter 5 (February 16)
- THEREFORE, Don't Fall Away–Chapter 6 (February 23)
- JESUS IS GREATER THAN...Melchizedek–Chapter 7 (March 2)
- JESUS IS GREATER THAN...The Law–Chapter 8 (March 9)
- JESUS IS GREATER THAN...The Tabernacle–Chapter 9 (March 16)
- JESUS IS GREATER THAN...Sacrifices–Chapter 10 (March 23)
- THEREFORE, Have Faith–Chapter 11 (March 30)
- THEREFORE, Stand Firm–Chapter 12 (April 6)
- THEREFORE, Offer Acceptable Sacrifices–Chapter 13 (April 13)
- CONCLUSION (April 27)