

# Hebrews 13

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Preacher: Pastor Dave Thompson

[ 0 : 00 ] Hebrews chapter 13. Hebrews chapter 13.

Some of the things that we'll allude to have reference back to what's in verses 9 and 10 and 11. So follow along as I read from verse 9 through the end of the chapter.

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.

We have an altar from which those who serve the tent have no right to eat. The bodies of those animals whose blood is brought into the holy place by the high priest as a sacrifice for sin are burned outside the camp.

So Jesus also suffered outside the gate in order to sanctify the people through his own blood.

Therefore, let us go out to him outside the camp and bear the reproach he endured.

[ 1 : 35 ] For here we have no lasting city, but we seek the city that is to come. Through him, then, let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God.

That is the fruit of lips that acknowledge his name. Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.

Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls as those who will give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you.

Pray for us, for we are sure that we have a clear conscience desiring to act honorably in all things. I urge you the more earnestly to do this in order that I may be restored to you sooner.

And 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 you with every good work that you may do his will, working in us that which is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever.

[ 2 : 46 ] Amen. I appeal to you, brothers, bear with my word of exhortation, for I have written to you briefly. You should know that our brother Timothy has been released, with whom I shall see you if he comes soon.

Greet all your leaders and all the saints. Those who come from Italy send you greetings. Grace be with you all. Let's pray together.

Father, I thank you for this epistle, and I thank you for the boatload of help, instruction, teaching, doctrine, encouragement, warning that is in this epistle.

I pray that you would be with us as we go through some of these exhortations. I pray that your name would be glorified, that we'd be equipped. We would be exhorted.

We would be encouraged in the life battle, or whatever you want to call it, that we face. I pray that you would help us to be found true to you because of the grace of Christ, and by means also of the work of one another, encouraging one another.

[ 3 : 58 ] I pray that you would help us to hear the exhortations that are here, and that you would bless it. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. Amen. It is my desire to finish the book of Hebrews today, and only because we have, I only preach occasionally.

It has been almost three years. Ha, ha, ha. I laugh. Preachers always boast, how long have you preached a book? Well, because I only preach once in a while.

It's been three years. Amen. But it's been my endeavor to run through this book. And my burden has been that you get a sense of the argument.

The writer of the book of Hebrews, we don't know who he was. We have a lot of guests, and the end of the book makes us want to say who it was, but it doesn't, and it won't prove.

But the writer of the book of Hebrews sees these people who are under persecution, and they have this tremendous desire to go back to the ways of the Old Covenant because the Romans didn't persecute the Jews for being in the ways of the Old Covenant.

[ 5 : 15 ] And the writer of the book of Hebrews has such a burden to say, folks, you need to stand true. What you have is so much better. And so he spends 12 chapters speaking about the wonder of what we as Christians have in Christ.

The wonder of a better priest, a better sacrifice, entrance into a better temple, fellowship with God unhindered. And he goes through so many things.

And his idea is to ground them in the doctrine that they can say, no matter what comes, this is the truth, and this is where I'm going to stand, even though it costs me because this is truth.

This is what will get me through. And so he built that argument. And we ran through 12 chapters, and we came to the 13th, and I broke my standard of running fast because there were so many things that were ending exhortations.

It was like him saying, okay, I've taught you all this, and these are the things I want you to take away from it. These are the ways I want you to apply it. And I have succumbed to my weaker whatever and have slowed down, but it is my endeavor to finish today.

[ 6 : 34 ] Okay, we have been looking in chapter 13 at a list of exhortations that Christians needed. They needed them to remember that when their reproach and persecutions tempted them to turn from their faith and walk in a less costly religion, they needed these exhortations to remember to stand true.

And so I picture this man, whoever he is, who wrote the book of Hebrews, looking at these people, saying, okay, I'm just going to summarize and tell you these things.

And we've looked at several things. And he's reminded them, as they think about the persecutions they're going through, that they needed to love one another and be hospitable.

You can finger your way down through chapter 13, and you'll see what I'm talking about. They need to remember those in prison, minister to them, care for them, suffer for them. They need to protect their marriages in the midst of trials and persecutions.

They need to keep themselves free from the love of money and to be content with what they have, because it all could be gone. They need to remember how the Lord is always their helper.

[ 7 : 49 ] They needed to remember that those who spoke the word of God to them lived their lives before them. And that passage speaks of how they had already died. And so you can look at their whole life, and you can be encouraged by how they served the Lord, what they went through, how they stood in the midst of persecution.

So remember those who spoke the word of God to them. Remember that Christ, Jesus Christ, is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

And when things were not as difficult, it is the same Jesus who is with you now when things are more difficult. And so he wanted them to remember that.

He wanted them to be careful, and we mentioned this as we read today, that they should be careful not to be led astray by diverse and false teachings, such as finding strength in being under the Old Testament ceremonial food laws, or any of the covenantal ceremonial laws of the Old Testament. People today often do that. Oh, I'll just not eat pork, because that'll make me a better Christian. Meat doesn't commend you to God. The not eating of meat does not commend you to God. He summarizes, or the last one that we've mentioned before, is that we're to follow Christ in reproach and suffering.

[ 9 : 09 ] It's what we should expect, and I'm going to hit on that just a little bit today. So what we're looking at today, we'll kind of start in verse 13.

The setting where we pick up is that in verse 12, the writer of the book of Hebrews has been speaking of how the burnt offering was offered outside the camp, and how Jesus suffered outside the gate in order to sanctify the people through his own blood.

Those are things you need to keep in mind. He's kind of referencing back. It's not going to be direct, but he's building from that point. Verse 13 starts with the word, Therefore, and signals that what he's about to state should be a response to Christ's suffering outside the gate to sanctify us.

So he's holding up Christ, saying, remember how he suffered on the tree, on Calvary's tree, on Golgotha's tree. He's saying, I want you to remember that he suffered there for you.

Remember how he suffered. Remember to the extent he suffered. Therefore, he's saying, I want you to remember some things. And so, let's start in verse 13.

[10:23] We have covered this, but I'm just going to go over it quickly as a couple things, because it builds well into where we're going. Our response to Christ's suffering should be to go to him and bear the reproach he bore.

You can see this in verse 13. Why? Why go to Christ and be willing to bear all the sufferings? First of all, it's because he suffered for you.

He bore all those sufferings for you. He was willing to die naked on the cross. He was willing to suffer all the wrath of man that they could muster against God.

He was willing to suffer the wrath of God against sinners there, naked on the cross for you. When suffering comes, and brothers and sisters, all of us are kind of wondering, if it isn't coming a whole lot closer than we've ever seen in America.

In Nigeria, Christians are dying by the hundreds for the sake of Christ. literally. In many other Muslim countries, in many other countries, communist countries, many other places, people are dying for Christ.

[11:42] They're suffering for Christ. They're living difficult lives because of Christ. And because we have a Savior who is willing to go outside the camp, hang on a tree naked, bear the shame and reproach of being there, suffer the wrath of God, and die for us, we should be people who are willing to go to him and be careful not to forsake him in the midst of suffering.

As days may or may not become more difficult, we should look to Christ and his example. But he goes on here, in verse 13, in answering the question why we should go to him and bear the reproach he endured.

One of those things is because the world with all its sufferings will not last. Christian, if it becomes an issue of whether you stand for Christ or suffer, stand for Christ.

Because no matter what, Christ is coming. This world will not last forever. We seek a city, like Abraham mentioned, whose builder and foundations were made by God.

We seek that city. We seek a city to come. A city where there's no night. Nothing to defile.

[13:10] A city where every single person there for all eternity will be joined with you in the utmost desire of serving God and worshiping God.

Should suffering arise in greater and greater peril here, know that our affliction lasts but for a moment. The longest suffering can last for you as a child of God is for as long as you live.

What's to come will last forever. Never stop. One of the things that unfortunately unfortunately, I think this pandemic has put in people in this day and age is for there to be in their minds a mentality that there is absolutely nothing worse than dying.

Can't die. It all costs. We can't die. This is borne out because of this you only go around once in life so grab all the gusto you can.

We can't die or we lose out on the gusto. But brothers and sisters this life is not all there is. We seek a city to come and there will be no sin there.

[14:45] There will be perfect fellowship with God there for all eternity. There will be no suffering there. Never again when we get to that city with Christ will anyone challenge you try to get you to keep from serving Christ.

No one will ever lift a finger against you for all eternity. And I can just picture this writer of the book of Hebrews looking towards these people in his mind saying oh don't you know that what you're suffering is just but for a moment and we're looking for a city where it will all be gone.

Here here we should expect suffering. And I think that's something else that we in our day and age haven't come to grips with. We here should expect suffering.

Jesus said they persecuted me they will persecute you. And he never says if but when you will suffer. Christians should expect that people in this world who don't want God reigning over them are not going to be happy with those who are satisfied with God and want God to reign over everyone. We should expect suffering. What we have experienced in America has been an unusual situation for 200 years. Now sure we're experiencing more but what Christian of Nigeria wouldn't love to be in our situation?

[16:25] What suffering Christian in China wouldn't love to be in our situation? What suffering Christian in Russia or in the 1040 window wouldn't love to say I'll take your place.

You think it's bad. Come to where I am. It will end. But we should expect what's here and we really should expect worse.

Not saying it's because of this or that. The normal course of things are that Christians suffer. So in relation to as he's looking to these people and he's wrapping up his arguments he's saying go to Christ.

He suffered for you. Be willing to suffer with him for him because we look for a place where there will be no suffering and you should expect suffering here. As he wraps up his thinking he also tells them that we're to respond to Christ's suffering and his sacrifice with not just the mentality but the practice of continually offering up to God a sacrifice of praise.

It is our responsibility as brothers and sisters in Christ and you might in just a minute I'll tie this together because you might be saying wait a minute he's been talking about suffering why the switch to talking about a sacrifice of praise and we'll see that in just a minute.

[ 17 : 53 ] I just say that because I don't want you to think I've lost the connection here. Let me point out that through the whole book of Hebrews we've seen the wonder of what Christ has done and the wonder of the salvation he's provided.

He's satisfied God's wrath he's paid for our sins he's lived a perfect life of righteousness and he's given that righteousness to us he's provided a way that we as his children those who are trusting in him have the privilege spiritually right now and literally in the future will be able to walk into the very holy of holies of God and be able to converse with him be able to seek grace to help in time of need the wonder of some of the things that Christ has done are just elaborated throughout the whole book of Hebrews he's brought us this wonderful salvation in Hebrews 11 or 12 I'm forgetting the reference I think it's chapter 12 he talks about how Christ's work is so great he's purged our conscience from dead works to serve a living God I can live with a clear conscience before God the work of

God is amazing and we stop there and we think I should be the kind of person who praises God all the time now I think one of the ties that are here we mentioned back in 11 and 12 verses 11 and 12 that he speaks about the Old Testament sacrifice and how it was done and carried outside the camp and so he's carrying forward this idea of sacrifices our sacrifice the main sacrifice was done by Christ outside the gate and so we don't do anything as far as sacrifices in relation to saving ourselves or helping to save ourselves we're having any part in that salvation we don't make any sacrifices to try to make ourselves have brownie points with God to make ourselves more acceptable to God we don't do anything to bolster our position but he does mention here that there is this sacrifice that we can give in fact he mentions too there is this sacrifice that is right and appropriate for us to give and that's a sacrifice of praise we're to come before

God and lift up our praises and we we're to extol him for the wonders of what he's done we're and we have all this fodder from the whole book of Hebrews we can just think back through how Christ took my place he represents me he's gained me access before God he's totally washed away my sins my conscience is clear and more and then you can go outside the book of Hebrews and see so many other things that speak about the wonder of Christ sacrifices brothers and sisters you and I have an obligation to bring the sacrifice of praise to God for what Christ has done Christ has died to provide you salvation right now we struggle with it but we ought to be people who sing his praise all the time you look at the book of Revelation it looks like it's not going to be hard in heaven it looks like it will be something we would have to work to stop but we never stop and it's sad that we have to be reminded that because

Christ suffered outside the gate for us therefore we ought to be people who offer the sacrifice of praise continually the fruit of our lips giving thanks to God praise but he's encouraged us to do that the proper response for undeserving sinners who have benefited so graciously from Christ suffering outside the camp is for us to continually offer up the sacrifice of praise to God for what he's done but this is what I think is a tie together I want you to remember that this call to give continual sacrifice of praise we're in the midst of exhortations that were given to a people in his closing thoughts as he's trying to get these people not to turn away from Christ in the midst of persecution and I want to point out to you that the sacrifice of praise isn't just a responsibility and a privilege based on the and please don't think I'm cheapening this even as I say it

[ 22 : 45 ] I'm like oh I don't this sounds cheapening but I'm not trying to make anyway I'll say it and you'll see where I'm going the sacrifice of praise should not be diminished in the midst of persecution because one because God deserves praise regardless of whether we're being

persecuted or not he's still done great things for us if they march in here today and take away our building and keep us from meeting put us all in prison we suffer at the hands of those who would persecute us with all kinds of trials Jesus Christ is worthy of all praise God is worthy of all praise regardless if we do that because Jesus Christ has died for us he's lived and died for us but I think that the writer of Hebrews is pointing out that in the midst of suffering offering the sacrifice to praise to

God for the work of Christ is a very effective balm for suffering for your suffering I can give testimony to that one of the greatest things my family experienced was the Sunday after our son died being with you folks lifting up praise to God was such a balm to our soul and as you go forward and if God allows you to suffer for him one of the things you need to remember is to give the sacrifice of praise to God because he's worthy whether your life is easy or hard whether you're on the payroll or in the jail with no food God is good but as this man has his heart for people and he sees what they're going through he wants them to remember that the sacrifice of praise God is not only worthy of it it is such a help to those who suffer what did Paul and Silas do when they were in jail and had been whipped and their backs were bleeding because of their stand for Christ they sang and were refreshed by singing praise to God brothers and sisters as the days go forward no matter what we face let the exhortation to you be it ought always to be that your mouth offers the sacrifice to praise sacrifice of praise to God no matter the cost because God is worth it because God ministers to you in that kind of situation and that's why I'm saying I don't mean to cheapen the worship of God it's not a tool for my for my getting along but oh it is such a means of God ministering how is it that we can sing praise to

God and he ministers to us but he does and so brothers and sisters let the sacrifice of praise be on your lips let it encourage you in the midst of suffering let it be that effective bolster to your faith let me ask this how often do you praise God that Christ suffered to purchase you for himself only you can answer that and I pretty much answer for you in a sense if you're anything like me it's nothing like it should be some days some weeks dare I say sometimes months go by before we offer the sacrifice of praise that is meaningless meaningful to God I think our sacrifice of praise to God can be fanned to flame to use a phrase from one of our hymns by remembering how God saw us in our sin vile putrid garment when we remember our rebellion against God

I'm thinking of Romans 3 we didn't want God we hated God do everything we could against him and yet in that situation the great cost that God paid to provide for our salvation and the wonder that God has provided of what God has provided in our salvation we've already mentioned it access to God clear conscience oh brothers and sisters we have a responsibility to offer the sacrifice of praise to God in response to Christ's sacrifice for us the writer of Hebrews also exhorts us this is verse 16 he also exhorts us not to neglect to do good and to share now we've seen this exhortation several times through the book of Hebrews just even at the beginning of this chapter we saw it we saw it just a chapter or two before it's important for God's people to remember to do good and to share with one another it's how we meet one another's needs so again remember the situation

[ 28 : 46 ] Christians in persecution actually it's regardless of whether Christians are in persecution or not this is a mentality that's for all of the Christian life but as I'm focusing it in the thought of Christians who are suffering persecution who are being discouraged by their persecution we need to be people who are careful to remember to encourage to do good and to share it is how we meet each other's needs it's how we encourage one another and help each other some of the examples that were here that I've made reference to is how people went to prison for their faith other Christians brought them food clothes took their waste away other Christians still brought their family food defended them met their needs that was part of how they did good to one another and they shared and in summation this writer of the book of Hebrews is pointing this back to Christ and the wonder of what God did for us and how he shared we need to be that kind of people one another he says that is a sacrifice that is well pleasing that's where he's tying us back to that sacrifice of Christ

Christ did this for us we can't do anything to earn anything but one of the appropriate responses one of the acts of worship one of the things he's pleased with is for us to do good and to share one another that is a sacrifice pleasing to God God is glorified when we do good and share to one another in fact you may be thinking of Matthew chapter 25 verse 40 actually it's several verses there our sacrificing for others is a sacrifice unto Christ Jesus said this this teaching where he's saying you know I was naked and you did not clothe me and I was hungry and you did not feed me and I was this and you did not do that and then he goes on to say and to this other group he says I

was hungry and you fed me I was naked and you clothed me I was desolate and you took me in and they said Lord when did we ever do this and Jesus says when you've done it unto the least of these you've done it to me and so that fits is saying here we need to do good and to share one another because that's a sacrifice of praise to God as we continue and as the writer begins to draw this epistle to a close he reminds them of their duties to their leaders

I'm not going to spend a lot of time on this several months ago I took time and looked at verse 7 and 17 together talking about the looking to leaders chapter 13 verse 7 is speaking remembering those leaders who have died probably lost their life because of suffering for Christ and you're to look to them as examples let them be an encouragement to you of how a person is to suffer and how a person is to stand true for Christ verse 18 17 rather we mentioned that this is probably in reference to the leaders that they have at that present time and we mentioned that he exhorts them to obey your leaders and submit to them I'm only going to give a couple of things just by way of reminder I'm redoing this because I'm tying it back to the sacrifice of

Christ and the way he sums up this epistle so he reminds those people and these people in the epistle that God has charged the leaders that God has given them with the responsibility to watch for their souls they're to work to equip they work the leaders work to equip the people in the church for ministry they work to keep people in the body from forsaking the way he's saying be submissive because they have a job they're there to equip you they're there to watch that you don't go out of the way they're there to encourage you during trials they're there to keep you moving forward for Christ these are speaking about good leaders and so he tells them to obey them and submit to them we talked in the message when I dealt with a couple months ago in the difference between good leaders and bad leaders and all

I'm going to talk about today is good leaders you can ask me questions about that later but anyway so he's put good leaders there and they're for these reasons and you're to obey and to submit to them let me mention also that God has put in all good leaders a desire to watch for people's soul good leaders want to watch or to help you grow in your faith good leaders want you to succeed spiritually they want to help you to walk in the way for Christ so that's why he's encouraging them requiring them to obey and submit again the whole topic of wrong leaders we can talk about that personally but let me say that even though God has put good leaders put in good leaders a desire to watch for your souls he's also required that they give an account for their work and

[ 34 : 53 ] I think that's important I think it's important because it's a warning to those who would be leaders the work you do you're going to give an account for but as I I like to help people there's no binding situation there to obey and submit to them but since God has called leaders to give an account now we're talking in this situation about people who've been called by God recognized by the church put into the positions that God has called them to be in since

God has called leaders to give an account for keeping watch over your souls he's also required that you obey and submit do you understand what I'm getting at here it's a reason why I mean why should we say you need to listen to me and you need to submit to me we have no right to do that but I think God is building in this passage here a reasoning that says since he put leaders in a position to lead and he's going to ask them to give an account for their leading that's why he can say to the people in the church you need to obey and submit because God put them there and God will ask them to give an account now leaders cannot require that people obey and submit and consequently the lives of those who lose faith and turn away are a great grief we joke sometimes I've heard this for years you wish you could fire people and they didn't obey didn't follow your leadership but you can't do that that's not the way God made it and so leaders are called to lead and people it's just like the husband and wife relationship the husband is called to the wife is asked to submit and follow the husband never makes the wife submit and follow that is never God's calling same thing is true in a church but in that relationship in a church the husband the leader is called to lead and the people are called to submit and obey but the leader has no way of making them submit and obey now I understand you might be thinking about church discipline but that's the work of the church it's not the work of the leader and so when a leader leads and wants people to go in the way of the Lord whenever people refuse to obey to go in the way of the Lord whenever he's been leading rightly and he's been shepherding properly and people choose to say no I won't follow and I won't obey that's a grief he can't do it and he and he encourages people to and he encourages people to be obedient and submissive so that they don't bring leaders grief and he's been doing it to be a good leader and he's been doing it to be a good leader and he's been doing it to be a good

leader and he's getting at this idea there's no greater joy for a person who has the burden who has the responsibility before God to keep watch over someone's soul and everybody is excited to be a good leader and he's been doing it to be a good leader and people are dwelling and he's doing it to be a good leader and whoever he's doing it to be a great leader and ihe as a gives ukelig i kind of see aber willing cost avoiding it to be a good leader and i should wir together. You need to be with other people. You need to be doing these things. And people are saying either no, and they go off on their own. That's a grief. Or they say yes, and they're encouraged.

That's a joy. And I like how the writer of the book of Hebrews goes on to say, pray for us. Because all we can do is encourage.

We can speak the word. We can teach. We can exhort. We can even rebuke. But we have no authority to make people submit. Now, I think he's talking about praying for those who keep watching for their soul. The work of the leaders heavy. Pray for them. He goes on to mention how he feels like they've been faithful to their calling.

[ 40 : 55 ] Their consciences were clean. But they still desired that those who they served would pray for them. Because I don't know where I've messed up. Sometimes I'm blind to where I mess up.

And as leaders, it is our burden that you pray for us. We're in an unusual situation. We're sheep who are leading.

That's an oxymoron. Thank God. God is helping the sheep who are leading to lead sheep. Pray for us. We're just as bad off as you are.

We're the same. Pray for us. Even though they felt they had been faithful, they desired that people would pray that they would indeed be faithful and have a clear conscience.

I beg of you to do that for your elders and deacons. Pray for us. You've seen how we've failed.

Would you like to walk in?

[ 42 : 00 ] Maybe you would like to walk in our shoes. Praise God if you would like to walk in our shoes. Pray for us. And then as we wrap things up, the next thing here is a benediction.

Benediction is where you call down good things upon people. The word means to pronounce good. And here is one of the benedictions of the Bible. It's where the writer calls down God's goodness and help upon his people.

He describes God a bit in the benediction. God of peace who brought again. He describes the character of God, part of the character of God.

He describes the power of God. He describes part of the work of God, the shepherding of the great shepherd of the sheep. He describes the work of God and establishing an eternal covenant.

He's saying that God, that God who's done everything you need. We ask that he would rain down upon you. He would call good down upon you. Or he would bring good down upon you to equip you with every good work.

[ 43 : 12 ] That you may do his will. So he gives this benediction desiring that these people would have God's help to do what God wanted them to do.

To equip you with every good work that you may do his will, working in us that which is pleasing in his sight. He's including himself there through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen. And so he calls down that good upon this people. I picture this man who has been with these people.

And he loves them. And he hurts for those who are tempted to turn away. And he just, his heart aches. And he wants to be with them. And as he ends, he says, I appeal to you, brothers, bear with my word of exhortation, for I've written to you briefly.

Now it's taken me three years to write, to speak what he said briefly. And really it is. You could read the book of Hebrews in what, 20, 25 minutes?

[ 44 : 18 ] It's not a long book. Wouldn't take a lot of your time. He's got this huge burden. He's saying, oh, brothers, please listen to this. I so want you to continue.

I don't want persecutions to overcome you. I don't want what you're going through to keep you from following the Lord. I want you to be established. I want you to be strong. I'm calling God's blessing down on you.

And so he says, bear with this exhortation. And he finishes, like so many of the epistles.

And I know you're tempted to say it had to be Paul. But we don't know that it was. He says, you should know that our brother Timothy has been released, with whom I shall see you if he comes

soon.

We just know that he was part of those who God had called to lead the church. And he goes on to say, greet all your leaders and all the saints.

[ 45 : 24 ] Tell everybody we said hi. This is him conveying his heart. I love you guys. I want you to know I miss you. I'll come as soon as I can.

Tell everybody I said hi. And by the way, those people around me, those people from Italy, they've heard about what's going on there. And they send their greeting.

And he ends by saying, grace to you. God's unmerited favor to you. Those of you who have been suffering and are tempted to quit.

Oh, may you know God's grace. Hang in there. Those of you who have lost everything. Hang in there. Not on your own strength, but by God's undeserved enabling power.

Grace be to you. And so it's been my burden since the beginning of this. In my mind, I'm no prophet, nor am I a doomsday sayer.

[ 46 : 26 ] But from the beginning, I've had the burden that since persecution is normal for Christians, and since the way our country has been has not been normal for Christians for over 250 years, and unfortunately, the situation we're in is sliding more and more towards normal, it is my desire that you take the book of Hebrews to heart.

That you take the doctrines that are listed there and stand on them. Recognize there's nothing better than the work of Christ and how perfectly he's completed it for you.

That you take the exhortations to not turn away to something easier. There is a better day coming. There is a glorious day coming.

Christ is worthy of all praise now whether your life is good or awful. You're going to have to work together. You're going to have to watch for one another. You're going to have to share with one another and do good.

You're going to have to work in the church organism as we're called to work in that organism. We're to be the body going forward. Now, I hope I prove to not see the circumstance very well.

[ 47 : 57 ] And I hope that the next year, five years, we see a revival in America. And I'm not holding up America. I'm just talking about the place where we live. The place where we live becomes a place where the gospel goes out in power.

And we see amazing things like the world has seen a couple times in the past. But brothers and sisters, take this to heart. You're going to need this.

You're going to need to know this. And so, I appeal to you brothers, bear with my word of exhortation. Let's pray.

Father, I thank you that you've put this book in scripture. And I thank you that it's dealt with all the things that it's dealt with. I pray that you would equip us for the work of service.

I pray that you would be with us. That we would remember the doctrine that we need to remember. There's nothing better than the work of Christ. There's no other way.

[ 49 : 00 ] And even though turning from Christ at some point might alleviate suffering, it won't fix our situation. I pray that you would give us grace as Christians.

Be willing to stand true no matter the cost. To watch for one another. To care for one another. To work in the body that Christ has put us in. And I pray that you would bring down your blessings upon us.

That we might be equipped in every good work to do your will. Lord, it is my heart's desire and prayer that that be our case.

And Lord, even as we're gathered here together, I pray that it would be such that those who are here who don't know you, who are trusting and trying to work their own way to heaven, and calling themselves a Christian.

Or are only trusting in what they try to do to get to heaven. I've done more good works than bad. Lord, all those things will take a person to hell. I pray that you would cause those here who don't know you to be willing to say, I give up on trying everything of my own to get to heaven.

[ 50 : 17 ] I recognize that Christ has done the work for me, and I trust that only. Pray that you would be with us. Draw us close to yourself and glorify yourself in Jesus' name.

Amen. Amen.