Crossroads International Church Dr. Rick Griffith

10 May 2015 Message 12 of 12

NLT 40 Minutes

**Press On!**

Title

***Hebrews 13***

**Topic:** Endurance

**Subject:** How can we show that Jesus is better than any other belief system?

**Complement:** Jesus looks good when love others.

**Purpose:** The listeners will see that we show that Jesus is better than any religious system by loving relationships.

# Introduction

Engaging Atheists

### Interest: What is the best apologetic for Jesus in an anti-God world?

#### That is the question that I have been asked to address in this coming Saturday’s seminar called “Engaging the Atheists.” I hope you can go, especially since it will be in Hawaii.

#### So what advice would you give me in facilitating a seminar like this? How do you address atheists?

##### Should we focus on proving the existence of God?

##### Should we emphasize the reliability of the Bible? I don’t want to be like the guy pleading before the judge, “Can we, just for a moment, Your Honor, ignore the facts?” I want to deal with facts to help atheists to see the truth of God, but how?

Ignore the facts?

##### Should we tell them that the justice that they so ardently seek is indeed coming?

Letter to Hebrews

###### In our study of Hebrews, we saw last week that Hebrews 12 finished with a final warning to these believers who were close to defecting from the faith.

###### The author concluded the previous section in 12:29 that “our God is a consuming fire” in that he will judge them for their response.

Jesus as High Priest

Consuming Fire

### Need: How are you doing at showing Christ’s superiority?

#### Too often we think this is through winning arguments.

#### But we can win the argument and lose the person, so…

### Subject: How can we show that Jesus is better than any other belief system?

Jesus Teaching

### [Background: The author has already given all his arguments that Jesus is better than Judaism, so now he shows how to support these arguments with their lifestyle.]

Backgrd

#### The author gives many arguments that Jesus is better [explain book chart].

Book
Chart

#### We can tend to think that the best apologetic is an argument rather than a lifestyle.

The Better Things

Unknown

#### But the final chapter of Hebrews 13 notes very practical ways to show that Jesus is better than any other belief system.

##### We don’t know the author, recipients, origin and destination of this book.

##### However, in 13:19 he prays that he will see them soon—so a specific community is addressed.

Summary Statement

Specific Group

##### And he tells them in the book not to defect.

##### In short, they need to “Press On!” which is the title of this message. But how?

Press On

### Preview: We will see two ways to show that Jesus is better than any other belief system.

Two ways

### Text: Hebrews 13 gives these two ways.

(The first way to show that Jesus is better than any other belief system is to...)

# I. Love in practical ways (13:1-17).

MP

[We show how great Christ is by giving ourselves to others and to him in hands-on ways.]

[There is no such thing as theoretical love.]

## Love people to show the supremacy of Christ (13:1-6).

Supremacy

### Show hospitality to all the saints, to strangers, and to prisoners (13:1-3).

Hospitality

1-3

#### Our love for one another is our best apologetic for our faith (1).

1

Graduation
(6 slides)

##### We show love for one another by attending important events—yesterday’s SBC graduation which had the highest attendance of church members ever.

##### The best human examples of love we can find is a mother. Happy Mother’s Day!

Mothers Day
(2 slides)

#### Hospitality is required for believers—not optional (2).

Hospitality
(20 slides)

2

##### Show hospitality to strangers (2a).

##### Show hospitality as if you were doing it to angels (2b).

###### The Bible has many texts encouraging hospitality.

###### Did the author mean that people *in their midst* had been hospitable towards strangers (2)?

This is possible but not required by the text.

He is just giving an amazing motivation for hospitality. How great it would be to give housing to or feed an angel!

#### Show hospitality to prisoners (3a).

3a

#### Show hospitality to those mistreated (3b).

3b

### Be pure in marriage to avoid God’s judgment (13:4).

#### Give honor to marriage—like this couple on their 75th anniversary!

4a

#### That faithfulness begins at the honeymoon, where the husband said to his new wife on their wedding night…

Honeymoon (2 slides)

#### More seriously, Hebrews is telling us that when we do not commit to keep ourselves pure sexually, we incur God’s judgment.

4b

#### In this regard, I fear that the US Supreme Court that struck down DOMA in 2013 will rule against marriage next month—and God will further judge the USA.

5

Supreme Court

### Realize that God is with us so we don’t seek refuge in money (13:5-6).

#### Greed is a sign that our trust is not in God to supply our needs.

6

#### Rather, we should find comfort in Christ’s abiding presence.

7

## Love God to show the supremacy of Christ (13:7-17).

### Honor church leaders because they teach and live out God’s word, which is as changeless as is Christ Himself (13:7-8).

#### Honoring leaders starts with honoring our first leader—our mother! We have given much honor to women in the marketplace since Rosie the Riveter took women out of the homes to build WWII ships, tanks, planes, and other war weapons. Our problem is that we haven’t duly honored “Rosie the Rearer” who brought us up.

Rosie the Riveter

• Rearer

##### One son expressed his love this way: “Mom, thanks for bringing me into a world where love can be expressed electronically.” A good reminder to us!

Electronic

##### So once again, Happy Mothers Day!

Mothers Day

#### Has Jesus always been the same (8)?

8

##### His incarnation forever changed him in that he took on a body that he will keep for eternity.

##### Unlike the leaders of verse 7 who may have passed away, Jesus remained with them and was unchanging.

##### The contrast is also seen in verse 9 with ideas that constantly change.

### Doctrinal purity comes by separation from legalism and obeying church leaders (13:9-17).

9

#### Find strength in God’s grace instead of in legalistic food laws (13:9).

#### Trust in Christ’s new covenant by leaving Jerusalem under siege (13:10-14).

##### What is this altar for believers (10-11)?

10

###### The old sacrificial system was soon to disappear (cf. 8:13). Sadly, priests associated with that system were rejecting Jesus.

###### But, as believers in the new way, our “altar” provides refuge in the most unlikely places—like outside the camp, which actually provides protection instead rejection!

11

##### Why do we have this exhortation to go “outside the camp” (12-14)?

Leave

###### The believers probably were finding refuge in Jerusalem during the Jewish-Roman War of AD 66-73. But Jesus found no refuge in Jerusalem, where he was condemned to die outside the city.

• 13

12

###### Likewise, the author was telling them to leave Jerusalem to find their real refuge in Pella, as recorded by the fourth century church historian, Eusebius. No Roman army would attack them there!

Pella

The Fire

###### I shared in chapters 6 and 10 that the fiery judgment soon to come was the Roman fires of Jerusalem.

###### As Jeremiah told the Jews 600 years earlier to leave the city under judgment, so the author of Hebrews told them of a better place in verse 14.

Jer. 24

#### Praise Jesus through helping believers and obeying leaders (13:15-17).

###### Jesus is better than any other leader, so we should honor God through him (13:15).

15

16

###### God seeks sacrifices of good deeds (13:16).

17

###### We also praise Christ by obeying our leaders (13:17).

MPI

(So the first way to show that Jesus is better than any other belief system is to love in practical ways. How else can we demonstrate Christ as better than atheism or any other “ism”?)

# II. Relate to others personably (13:18-25).

MP

[We show how great Christ is by an individualized, caring approach.]

[We live in an impersonal age—as seen in the advent of the computerized “care-giver,” the Care-O-Bot 4, the Service Robot: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3n42WbbYGZI#t=15]

## The author requests prayer, especially that he could join the Hebrews soon to exhort them face-to-face (13:18-19).

20-21

18-19

## A doxology of God’s enablement reminds them that only through God’s power could they please him (13:20-21).

### What is the “eternal covenant” (20)?

#### This is new covenant that replaced the old covenant given to Moses at Mt. Sinai.

#### It is eternal because it is rooted in the blood of Jesus, which lasts forever.

### The focus here is not *what we believe*—though that is crucial—but what we *do about what we believe.*

## A final exhortation to obedience and greetings from those with him in Italy ends the letter affectionately (13:22-25).

22-25
(4 slides)

Subject

(How do we show that Jesus is better than any other belief system?)

# Conclusion

### Jesus looks good when we love others (MI).

MI

MPII

### We show that Jesus is better than any other belief system when we:

MPI

#### Love in practical ways (13:1-17).

#### Relate to others personably (13:18-25).

### Today we draw this 12-week study in Hebrews to a close. Has it changed you? Our focus has been Christ Himself—the superiority of Jesus over any other “ism.” Essentially we have asked this question…

Grads

### How can you make Jesus look good? It is through your love, but *how* through your love?

#### In what specific way can you better love those in need?

Help those in need

#### In what specific way can you better love God?

Rom 5:8

Love God

# Preliminary Questions

**Verses Questions**

# Context: What did the author record just prior to this passage?

### Hebrews 12 finished with the final warning to these believers who were close to defecting from the faith.

### The author concluded, noting that God is a “consuming fire” in that he will judge them for their response.

# Purpose: Why is this passage in the Bible?

### We can tend to think that the best apologetic is an argument rather than a lifestyle.

### But the final chapter of Hebrews 13 notes very practical ways to show that Jesus is better than any other belief system.

# Background: What historical context helps us understand this passage?

### During the Jewish War against the Romans from AD 66-70, the lives of everyone in Israel totally turned upside down. Cities were destroyed and the financial situation demolished.

### Many people were out of work and out of money, so hospitality became very important with so many people traveling around without a home.

# Questions

### Did the author mean that people *in their midst* had been hospitable towards strangers (2)?

#### This is possible but not required by the text.

#### He is just giving an amazing motivation for hospitality. How great it would be to give housing to or feed an angel!

### What is the relationship between greed and God’s presence (5)?

#### When we realize that God is with us, we don’t seek refuge in money.

#### Greed is a sign that our trust is not in God to supply our needs.

### Has Jesus always been the same (8)?

#### His incarnation forever changed him in that he took on a body that he will keep for eternity.

#### Unlike the leaders of verse 7 who may have passed away, Jesus remained with them and was unchanging.

### What is this altar for believers (10-11)?

#### The old sacrificial system was soon to disappear (cf. 8:13). Sadly, priests associated with that system were rejecting Jesus.

#### But, as believers in the new way, our “altar” provides refuge in the most unlikely places—like outside the camp, which actually provides protection instead rejection!

### Why do we have this exhortation to go “outside the camp” (12-14)?

#### The believers probably were finding refuge in Jerusalem during the Jewish-Roman War of AD 66-73.

#### The author was telling them to leave Jerusalem to find their real refuge in Pella, as recorded by the fourth century church historian, Eusebius. No Roman army would attack them there!

### What is the “eternal covenant” (20)?

#### This is new covenant that replaced the old covenant given through Moses at Mt. Sinai.

#### It is eternal because it is rooted in the blood of Jesus, which lasts forever.

# Tentative Subject/Complement Statements

Don’t give up!

# Possible Illustrations

### The average tenure of Southern Baptist pastors at a church is 18 months—about the same time as a US dollar bill is in circulation!

# Possible Applications

### In what area of your life are you tempted to throw in the towel?

## The epilogue gives practical ways the believers could continue to serve God and others (Ch. 13).

### Exhortations to love show Christ’s supremacy (13:1-17).

#### Love for people shows the supremacy of Christ (13:1-6).

##### Show hospitality to all the saints, to strangers, and to prisoners (13:1-3).

##### Be pure in marriage to avoid God’s judgment (13:4).

##### Realize that God is with us so we don’t seek refuge in money (13:5-6).

#### Love for God shows the supremacy of Christ (13:7-17).

##### Honor church leaders because they teach and live out God’s word, which is as changeless as is Christ Himself (13:7-8).

##### Doctrinal purity will result from separation from Judaism and obedience to church leaders (13:9-17).

### The personal conclusion tempers the strong exhortations in the body of the letter (13:18-25).

#### The author requests prayer, especially that he could join the Hebrews soon to exhort them face-to-face (13:18-19).

#### A doxology of God’s enablement reminds them that only through God’s power could they please him (13:20-21).

#### Concluding remarks, especially greetings from those with him in Italy, end the letter on an affectionate note (13:22-25).

**Press On!**

***Hebrews 13***

**Exegetical Outline (Steps 2-3)**

# *Exegetical Idea*: The ways the believers could continue to show Christ’s supremacy was by lovingly relating to others and God (Ch. 13).

# I. The ways the believers could continue to show Christ’s supremacy was by loving people and God in practical ways (13:1-17).

## Love for people shows the supremacy of Christ (13:1-6).

### Show hospitality to all the saints, to strangers, and to prisoners (13:1-3).

### Be pure in marriage to avoid God’s judgment (13:4).

### Realize that God is with us so we don’t seek refuge in money (13:5-6).

## Love for God shows the supremacy of Christ (13:7-17).

### Honor church leaders because they teach and live out God’s word, which is as changeless as is Christ Himself (13:7-8).

### Doctrinal purity comes by separation from legalism and obeying church leaders (13:9-17).

#### Find strength in God’s grace instead of in legalistic food laws (13:9).

#### Trust in Christ’s new covenant by leaving Jerusalem under siege (13:10-14).

#### Praise Jesus through helping believers and obeying leaders (13:15-17).

# II. The ways the believers could continue to show Christ’s supremacy was by relating to others (13:18-25).

## The author requests prayer, especially that he could join the Hebrews soon to exhort them face-to-face (13:18-19).

## A doxology of God’s enablement reminds them that only through God’s power could they please him (13:20-21).

## A final exhortation to obedience and greetings from those with him in Italy ends the letter affectionately (13:22-25).

**Purpose or Desired Listener Response (Step 4)**

The listeners will see that we show that Jesus is better than any religious system by loving relationships.

**Homiletical Outline** (Cyclical inductive form)

# Introduction

### Interest: What is the best apologetic for Jesus in an anti-God world?

### Need: How are you doing at showing Christ’s superiority?

### Subject: How can we show that Jesus is better than any other belief system?

### Background: The author has already given all his arguments that Jesus is better than Judaism, so now he shows how to support these arguments with their lifestyle.

### Preview: We will see two ways to show that Jesus is better than any other belief system.

### Text: Hebrews 13 gives these two ways.

# I. Love in practical ways (13:1-17).

## Love people to show the supremacy of Christ (13:1-6).

### Show hospitality to all the saints, to strangers, and to prisoners (13:1-3).

### Be pure in marriage to avoid God’s judgment (13:4).

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## The author requests prayer, especially that he could join the Hebrews soon to exhort them face-to-face (13:18-19).

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# Conclusion

### Jesus looks good when we love others (MI).

### We show that Jesus is better than any other belief system when we:

#### Love in practical ways (13:1-17).

#### Relate to others personably (13:18-25).

### How can you make Jesus look good?

#### In what specific way can you better love others?

#### In what specific way can you better love God?



**Rick Griffith**

10 May 2015

Message 12 of 12

**Press On!**

***Hebrews 13***

# Introduction

### What is the best apologetic for Jesus in an anti-God world?

### How are you doing at showing Christ’s superiority?

### How can we show that Jesus is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ than any other belief system?

# I. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in practical ways (13:1-17).

## Love people to show the supremacy of Christ (13:1-6).

### Show hospitality to all the saints, to strangers, and to prisoners (13:1-3).

### Be pure in marriage to avoid God’s judgment (13:4).

### Realize that God is with us so we don’t seek refuge in money (13:5-6).

## Love God to show the supremacy of Christ (13:7-17).

### Honor church leaders because they teach and live out God’s word, which is as changeless as is Christ Himself (13:7-8).

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#### Praise Jesus through helping believers and obeying leaders (13:15-17).

# II. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to others personably (13:18-25).

## The author requests prayer, especially that he could join the Hebrews soon to exhort them face-to-face (13:18-19).

## A doxology of God’s enablement reminds them that only through God’s power could they please him (13:20-21).

## A final exhortation to obedience and greetings from those with him in Italy ends the letter affectionately (13:22-25).

# Conclusion

### Jesus looks good when we \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ others (Main Idea).

### How can you make Jesus look good?

#### In what specific way can you better love others?

#### In what specific way can you better love God?

**Thought Questions**

1. Read Hebrews 13 aloud. List every command you find in this chapter.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Verse** | **Command** |
| Text | Text |
| Text | Text |
| Text | Text |
| Text | Text |
| Text | Text |
| Text | Text |
| Text | Text |
| Text | Text |
| Text | Text |

1. In which of the commands you listed above are you strongest? Weakest? What should you do about these?

Text

Text

Text

Text

1. How has this 12-week series in Hebrews changed you?

Text

Text