

**Round Top Church Christian Fellowship**

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**Sermon – “It all starts with Love”**

**Hebrews 13:1 - 6**

**August 21, 2016**

**All Scripture quoted from New American Standard Bible**

**Some Overview points in Hebrews**

We have received several months of God’s Word in the book of Hebrews. Recapping the overall message from God, in the book of Hebrews, we see the work of the His Holy Spirit through the agency of man. We must keep in mind that the book or letter was written to an audience who was steeped in Hebrew religion, history, culture and particularly the Law of Moses and the Temple Priest system. Yes it helps the modern reader to be familiar with this same Hebrew background. Understanding the role of the High Priest, particularly on the Day of Atonement, is paramount in order for today’s reader to comprehend the message in the book of Hebrews. Through the book, we have been presented with the full knowledge that God, as Jesus Christ, is a superior High Priest, and supersedes the Law of Moses, any previous Temple High Priest, and sacrificial system, and is associated with Melchizedek, who was the king of Salem. Salem is the ancient site of Jerusalem.

**Genesis 14:18-19** 18 And Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; now he was a priest of God Most High. 19 And he blessed him (Abram) and said, "Blessed be Abram of God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth;

This is relationship is referenced again about one thousand years later in Psalm 110:4. God has the same message over time.

**Psalm 110:1-7** 1 *A Psalm of David*. The LORD says to my Lord: "Sit at My right hand, Until I make Thine enemies a footstool for Thy feet."

(See also Matthew 22:21-46 below)

<sup>2</sup> The LORD will stretch forth Thy strong scepter from Zion, *saying*, "Rule in the midst of Thine enemies."

<sup>3</sup> Thy people will volunteer freely in the day of Thy power; In holy array, from the womb of the dawn, Thy youth are to Thee *as* the dew.

<sup>4</sup> The LORD has sworn and will not change His mind, "Thou art a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek."

<sup>5</sup> The Lord is at Thy right hand; He will shatter kings in the day of His wrath.

<sup>6</sup> He will judge among the nations, He will fill *them* with corpses, He will shatter the chief men over a broad country.

<sup>7</sup> He will drink from the brook by the wayside; Therefore He will lift up *His* head.

And about 900 years after David writes Psalm 110, God speaks in the book of Hebrews:

Hebrews 5:5-6; 9,10 <sup>5</sup> So also Christ did not glorify Himself so as to become a high priest, but He who said to Him, "Thou art My Son, Today I have begotten Thee"; <sup>6</sup> just as He says also in another *passage*, "Thou art a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek." . . . . <sup>9</sup> And having been made perfect, He became to all those who obey Him the source of eternal salvation, <sup>10</sup> being designated by God as a high priest according to the order of Melchizedek.

This is important to the Jewish people, because Abraham, considered the founding father and head patriarch of the Hebrew people, received a blessing from Melchizedek (Gen. 14). And in Psalm 110, the Messiah is referenced as **Lord**; He is tied directly to being a priest forever in the order of **Melchizedek**. This points to Christ as **judge** (Psalm 110:6) as written about in Revelation 19:11. Therefore, from Genesis to Revelation, God as Jesus Christ and High Priest is presented as superior to any temporal system. This is simply stating that Jesus Christ is God and He will return again to bring final judgment to this fallen creation, taking with Him to heaven those who have surrendered to Him (Heb. 5:9).

Psalm 110 is referenced in the New Testament in the words and teachings of Jesus, to the Jewish people, and their leaders.

Matthew 22:36-46

<sup>36</sup> "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?"

<sup>37</sup> And He said to him, "'You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.'

<sup>38</sup> "This is the great and foremost commandment.

<sup>39</sup> "The second is like it, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'

<sup>40</sup> "On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets."

<sup>41</sup> Now while the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them a question,  
<sup>42</sup> saying, "What do you think about the Christ, whose son is He?" They said to Him,  
"The son of David."

<sup>43</sup> He said to them, "Then how does David in the Spirit call Him 'Lord,' saying,  
<sup>44</sup> 'The Lord said to my LORD, "Sit at My right hand, Until I put Thine enemies  
beneath Thy feet "'? (Psalm 110)

<sup>45</sup> "If David then calls Him 'Lord,' how is He his son?"

<sup>46</sup> And no one was able to answer Him a word, nor did anyone dare from that day  
on to ask Him another question.

This is the main message delivered in the book of Hebrews. Jesus Christ is God and therefore, superior to any High Priest. The Jewish audience hearing the message is presented with a life-changing truth to change their heart away from their practice of the Law to make them righteous and turn to the Cross of Christ and His grace (Rom. 3:24). The Cross of Christ demonstrates and makes possible the gift of faith. Jesus showed that His faith as a man was accurate, because God raised Him from the dead. Understanding, that what the Bible, and eye witnesses report to us, is that God as Jesus, raised himself from the dead. This is the main point of the incarnation. God has superior power over this physical existence. In addition, God has created us to live another life. The faith-life of Jesus demonstrates to us that we too can follow the same path. Again, this takes faith. As we know, "Faith," is the key to salvation. Faith is received and turned on, if you will, by surrendering to God's Holy Spirit. Last week we reviewed how the Jews in Acts 2, came to be saved. They surrendered, when they fell under conviction of God's Holy Spirit, and then received the ability to repent and be baptized. This is a demonstration of faith; **which is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen (Heb 11:1)**. They surrendered to a power they could not physically see. However, they had assurance God would take them in and they would receive forgiveness. Faith is a gift from God like all things are. For by faith the Gospel is transferred from one person to another.

### Romans 1:16-17

For I am not ashamed of the gospel,  
for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes,  
to the Jew first and also to the Greek. <sup>1</sup>

<sup>17</sup> For in it *the* righteousness of God is revealed

from faith to faith; as it is written,  
"But the righteous *man* shall live by faith."

This is also the main message in the Book of Hebrews. In Hebrews 11, the manifestation of faith is witnessed in the lives of many people. Which, in turn the righteousness of God is revealed and lived out.

Hebrews 11:2-4

<sup>2</sup> For by it (faith) the men of old gained approval.

<sup>3</sup> By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things which are visible.

<sup>4</sup> By faith Abel offered to God a better sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained the testimony that he was righteous, God testifying about his gifts, and through faith, though he is dead, he still speaks.

Hebrews 13

We come to Hebrews 13, the last chapter in the book. What is the first item in God's vocabulary brought to the attention of the audience? After all the history and theology what is God going to talk about? Love. Love is as reported in 1 Corinthians 13. Without love we have nothing. Love is the glue, the one inseparable element in God's creation keeping the Gospel flowing. For God so loved the world! Most of the world knows these words. They may not know them from John 3:16. However, they know the truth, the message in these words. The world cannot survive without love. Love is foundational to life as God intended.

What is the next item in Hebrews 13? This concerns how we treat strangers. That means how we treat someone who is not like ourselves or we do not know. The two great commandments direct us to love God and our neighbor. We cannot love our neighbor as God wants us to unless He is in us, unless His love is in us first.

Hebrews 13:1

<sup>1</sup> Let love of the brethren continue.

<sup>2</sup> Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by this some have entertained angels without knowing it.

Let us examine this teaching. We shall go back to the Old Testament.

**Genesis 18:1-3** provides the account of where the Lord as three unknown men came to Abraham and Abraham prepares food for them.

**Genesis 18:1-3** Now the LORD appeared to him by the oaks of Mamre, while he was sitting at the tent door in the heat of the day. <sup>2</sup> And when he lifted up his eyes and looked, behold, three men were standing opposite him; and when he saw *them*, he ran from the tent door to meet them, and bowed himself to the earth, <sup>3</sup> and said, "My lord, if now I have found favor in your sight, please do not pass your servant by.

These are the men who announced Sarah would have a child. In addition, in the next chapter, two angels as men appeared to Lot at Sodom.

Both accounts provide insight that God can send messengers (angels) to our homes. Obviously this does not take place often and in fact we have just a few occurrences here reported to us.

In the first century the accommodations for travelers, at times, could be sparse. Remember, Mary and Joseph looking for a place and there was no room at the inn. However, there came a space open.

Verse 3 continues our attention to address the needs of our neighbor even if they are in prison.

Hebrews 13:3

Remember the **prisoners**,  
as though in prison with them,  
and those who are ill-treated,  
since you yourselves also are in the body.

Note that these prisoners are most likely fellow believers who have been arrested and imprisoned for witnessing Jesus. Historians tell us that prisoners in the first century were not well taken care of. In fact, their families and friends had

to provide clothes and food for them. So, if a family member or friend did not bring them food or basic provision they could die. Today, we have tax support safeguards in place for prisoners in order to clothe and feed them. However, prisoners have spiritual needs. I have visited people in prison. It is not a pleasant place to go. Today, prisoners need spiritual food. If you have a chance to go and visit someone in prison, take the opportunity. You will impact someone's life.

Hebrews 13:4

*Let marriage be held in honor among all,  
and let the marriage bed be undefiled;  
for fornicators and adulterers God will judge.*

Like today, the godly plan for marriage was by-in-large not followed in the first century. However, in this cultural setting the Church grew. We must keep in mind that God designed the Gospel to be planted in perverse cultures and grow.

Hebrews 13:5

Let your character be **free from the love of money,**  
**being content with what you have;**  
for He Himself has said,  
"I will never desert you,  
nor will I ever forsake you,"

This is one of the most miss quoted verse (phrases) in the entire Bible. Often times you hear that "money is the root of all evil." Sarcastically stating . . . "Great, and I mean, great Bible scholars proclaim this!" So what does sustain us? The Word of God does. Man cannot eat bread alone, but men live by everything that proceeds out of the mouth of the LORD (Deut 8:3).

To survive in this world, what do we need the most? It is hard to take one more breath without knowing God, or someone, cares and loves you.

Money cannot love you. God can. Your parents, family, friends and neighbors can.

Money can desert and forsake you. Love can be there when you are broke. Love can be there when the money is gone.

Love transcends. You cannot take a wheelbarrow full of money to heaven, but you can take love. We have heard before, you do not see a hearse driving down the road with a U-Haul behind it. Remember it was the angels who came for Lazarus. The angels did not come for the rich man (Luke 16:22). God loves us and comes for us at our passing.

Love transcends this life. Love is ever-present here in this life and in the life to come. In contrast, love is absent in Hell. Where God is absent, love is absent.

1John 4:17-18

<sup>17</sup> By this, love is perfected with us, that we may have confidence in the day of judgment; because as He is, so also are we in this world.

<sup>18</sup> There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves punishment, and the one who fears is not perfected in love.

There is fear in Hell. There is no fear in heaven. There is no love in hell, because that is where punishment and fear reside.

Hebrews 13:6

so that we confidently say,

"The Lord is my helper, I will not be afraid.

What shall man do to me?"

We end today's sermon with "the Lord is my helper, I will not be afraid." This is close to the "Lord is my shepherd" from the 23 Psalm. Even though we walk through dark valleys and one day we will walk through the valley of death. But the Lord and His love are with us and we go through. Neither man, nor fallen angel can stop this.

**Psalm 23:1**

*A Psalm of David*

**The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want.**

<sup>2</sup> **He makes me lie down in green pastures;**

**He leads me beside quiet waters.**

**<sup>3</sup> He restores my soul;**

**He guides me in the paths of righteousness For His name's sake.**

**<sup>4</sup> Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,**

**I fear no evil;**

**for Thou art with me;**

**Thy rod and Thy staff, they comfort me.**

**<sup>5</sup> Thou dost prepare a table before me**

**in the presence of my enemies;**

**Thou hast anointed my head with oil; My cup overflows.**

**<sup>6</sup> Surely goodness and lovingkindness**

**will follow me all the days of my life,**

**And I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.**

AMEN



## Additional Text from Hebrews 13

<sup>7</sup> Remember those who **led you**,  
who **spoke the word** of God to you;  
and considering the result of their **conduct**,  
**imitate their faith**.

<sup>8</sup> **Jesus Christ is the same** yesterday and today,  
yes and forever.

<sup>9</sup> Do not be carried away by varied and strange teachings;  
for it is good for the **heart to be strengthened by grace**,  
not by foods,  
through which those who were thus occupied were not benefited.

<sup>10</sup> We have an altar,  
from which those who serve the tabernacle have no right to eat.

<sup>11</sup> **For the bodies** of those animals **whose blood**  
**is brought into the holy place**  
by the high priest  
*as an offering* for sin,  
**are burned outside the camp**.

<sup>12</sup> **Therefore Jesus also**,  
that He might sanctify the people  
through His own blood,  
**suffered outside the gate**.

<sup>13</sup> Hence,  
**let us go out to Him outside the camp**,  
bearing His reproach.

<sup>14</sup> For here we do not have a lasting city,  
**but we are seeking *the city* which is to come**.

<sup>15</sup> Through Him then,

let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God,  
that is, the fruit of lips that give thanks to His name.

<sup>16</sup> And do not neglect doing good and sharing;  
for with such sacrifices God is pleased.

<sup>17</sup> Obey your leaders,  
and submit *to them*;  
for they keep watch over your souls,  
as those who will give an account.  
Let them do this with joy and not with grief,  
for this would be unprofitable for you.

<sup>18</sup> Pray for us,  
for we are sure that we have a good conscience,  
desiring to conduct ourselves honorably in all things.

<sup>19</sup> And I urge *you* all the more to do this,  
that I may be restored to you the sooner.

<sup>20</sup> Now the God of peace,  
who brought up from the dead  
the great Shepherd of the sheep  
through the blood of the eternal covenant,  
*even* Jesus our Lord,

<sup>21</sup> equip you in every good thing to do His will,  
working in us that which is pleasing in His sight,  
through Jesus Christ,  
to whom *be* the glory forever and ever.  
Amen.

<sup>22</sup> But I urge you, brethren,  
bear with this word of exhortation,  
for I have written to you briefly.

<sup>23</sup> Take notice that our brother Timothy has been released,  
with whom, if he comes soon, I shall see you.

<sup>24</sup> Greet all of your leaders and all the saints.  
Those from Italy greet you.

<sup>25</sup> Grace be with you all.

(Heb 13:1-25 NAS)