# Christian Behavior in Relation to God

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 25 March 2024

Preacher: Tom Holland

[0:00] There is a flow to the final chapter of the book of Hebrews.

As it relates to others. When I say Christian behavior, I'm talking about our behavior individually. From there, we examine Christian behavior as it relates to ourselves.
Well, tonight we're going to finish up this book by looking at Christian behavior in relation to God. But that's a way of putting it.
What does God expect from us? And we really need to be attuned to that, don't we? John MacArthur points out four things that God desires for His children that are contained in these closing verses.
In our relationship to Him, God wants separation, sacrifice, submission, and supplication.
[1:33] And the first thing we're going to look at is separation. And that's in Hebrews chapter 13, beginning in verse 10 and going through verse 14.

We have an altar from which those who serve the tent have no right to eat. For the bodies of those animals whose blood is brought into the holy places 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 to Him outside the camp and bear the reproach He endured.
For here we have no lasting city, but we seek the city that is to come. For here we should make no bones about the fact that sometimes passages in Hebrews are difficult.
And I think these are some. But we see right at the outset this evening, the first thing God desires for His people is separation.
[3:00] And theologians agree that these are four difficult verses to understand. And they've been subjected to a variety of interpretations.

Since this book is directed at Jews, both saved and unsaved, in a Christian church somewhere near Greece, it appears that the we referred to here are the fellow Jews that made up this congregation.
Now the Jews in this congregation would have been very familiar with the tabernacle and the temple. They would have understood Leviticus, which I've grown to appreciate.
It's a great book. Just don't read it at night when you lay down in bed because you get a nosebleed from the... But it's a great book to study. Interestingly, the priests were allowed to eat what remained of the sacrifices except on the Day of Atonement.
And you'll remember that's Yom Kippur. That only happened one day a year when the high priest went into the Holy of Holies to make atonement for himself, his family, and the nation.
[4:35] On that day, if there was anything left over, the sacrifices that were left over were taken outside the camp and burned.

And when I say burned, I mean really burned. They were reduced to ashes. Our existence, though, is talked about as being outside the camp.
That is to say that believers are no longer part of the world system. Jesus was separated from the world system, both the world system of Israel and the world system of Rome and the Roman Empire.
And He was taken outside the city of Jerusalem and crucified. And it is there in the crucifixion which we will be celebrating in a few days.
It is there that He sanctified His people by His blood. We are to separate ourselves from the things of sin.
[5:59] Spiritually speaking, we are to be outside the walls of sinning people. Therefore, let us go to Him outside the camp and bear the reproach He endured.

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host

And as Christians, we must be willing to separate, which is a word which means to go out. But we are to go out from the world system.
And there bear the reproach and the shame that Christ bore. And I'll tell you, when we do that, you're going to be rejected by the world.
Jesus said several times, but the world is going to hate you. Because it hated me first. I saw a deal today, it's hard to even believe.
This guy, I don't even know his name, he claims to be the greatest woke pastor in the world.
[7:11] He's calling for the FCC, Federal Communications Commission, for the president, for governors, to ban John MacArthur from television and radio.

Amazing. But the Jews would be quite familiar with the tabernacle and temple service.
And our existence is outside the camp. We're to separate ourselves. We've got to be willing to separate.
To go out from world systems to be the pattern of Christian living. Moses considered the riches of Christ to be infinitely more valuable than all of the accumulated wealth of Egypt.
I mean, he could have had anything he wanted in Egypt. Just say the word. He would have been number two just behind the Pharaoh. Paul came along and he said, don't bind yourself together with unbelievers.
[8:36] Now in the context of the book of Hebrews, the Jews of the congregation were to separate from the world meaning, and this was what was so hard for them, Judaism.

They were to separate themselves. They'd been in that system for 1,600 years. And they're told God is now outside the camp of Judaism.
And He's now working through the church made up of both Jew and Gentile. The New Covenant invalidated the ceremonies, the customs, the regulations, and the standards that had been the very life of the Jew.
Unlike the Jew of the Old Covenant, for instance, we now have direct access to God.
You ever think about that at three o'clock in the morning when you wake up and you're kind of lonely in the morning? We have direct access to God. How?
[9:55] Through the torn veil. Well, what's that a reference to? The curtain? Well, yeah. That's the physical veil. But it's talking about the torn flesh of the Lord Jesus Christ.

We enter through His sacrifice, through His blood. Now, when we say we're to be separated, I'll put you at ease.
We're not talking about a physical separation from all people except believers. We live in a world of unbelievers.
They're everywhere. They're going up and down that highway saying, I wonder what those guys are doing over there. The overwhelming majority of people in this world are not followers of the Lord Jesus Christ.
I heard one estimate one time, I won't argue for or against it, but this one guy whose business was statistical said, I believe there's about three percent truly born again, born from above believers.
[11:16] But the overwhelming majority of people in this world are not followers of Christ. The only witness these people receive by and large are those provided by Christians interacting with them.

When Diane and I were in Scotland the first time we were at Glasgow, we went to Glasgow Cathedral. Now, you've got to understand Glasgow Cathedral. You could put 15 Highland Park churches inside Glasgow Cathedral.
If you take in the grounds, they would be at least as large as the greater downtown area of Bartlesville.
And it was a cemetery. And so we're there and we were surrounded by unbelievers, including, I'm pretty sure, the pastor.
I asked this one, one lady was good to us and nice and I said, man, there's only like 12 people here. I said, what's going to happen when, and they're pretty old and what's going to happen when they're gone?
[12:34] He said, we become a museum. We're already 90% of a museum now, but then we become a full museum. The only witness those people would ever receive were from true believers.

So we're not commanded ever to seclude ourselves in a monastery like Luther did.
You know, we've talked about him. Then he moved into a monastery thinking to be closer to God. Instead, we're to be salt and light to a dying world.

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host

And let's face it, guys, the lights are going out. The lights are going out. But we are never to join in with the sins of this world, all of which flow from the world spirit known as Satan, who, with God's permission right now, is the God of this world.
Little g. That won't be forever. Jesus gave the correct perspective of our relationship with the world in the high priestly prayer.
[13:59] John chapter 17, verses 15-18. This is where Jesus is praying to the Father.

And we get to be the fly on the wall and listen in. Here's what Jesus said to the Father. I do not ask that you take them out of the world.
Who's that? Believers. Don't take them out of the world. But I do ask that you keep them from the evil one. Satan.
They are not of this world. Just as I am not of this world. And then Jesus says, Sanctify them.
That means make them holy. Sanctify them in the truth. Well, where do we go to find the truth? Next sentence.
[14:58] Your word is truth. As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. And there we see our role defined in this world.

Separation from evil, but not from people. What happens when we separate based upon our relationship with Christ?
Well, I can tell you what will happen. That's when persecution happens. 2 Timothy 3.12 says this, All, how many?
All who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted. And if you haven't been persecuted, be more godly, it will happen.
The next thing we'll talk about is sacrifice. In our relationship with the Lord Jesus, we find that God also desires sacrifice.
[16:09] Now, we don't, we're not killing bulls and goats and turtle doves. like that one church I told you in the past, a guy came to me and he said, I'm part of a new church.

We don't even have a building, just temporary building. he said, I'm getting worried because on Sunday night we go up to Lake Copan and we sacrifice chickens to the Lord.
We're killing chickens. I said, yeah, I think I would not go back to that. There was nothing in Scripture about that. You know, take them home and cook them. Hebrews chapter 13 verses 15 and 16, through him, then let us continually offer up a sacrifice.
You're expected to offer a sacrifice. A sacrifice of what? A sacrifice of praise to God.
That is, that sacrifice of praise is the fruit of lips that acknowledge His name, His person, who He is and what He's done.
[17:30] Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.

So, we're to offer a sacrifice of praise. Now, the Jew understood the concept of sacrifice. Under the Old Covenant, it was God's way of dealing with sin.
In fact, they were used to many kinds of sacrifice. They understood Christ's sacrifice in this church, those that were believers.
It was the basis of their salvation. But they must have wondered, as did that church in Copan, are additional sacrifices necessary?
We find in these verses that the Lord does ask for additional sacrifice. He wants sacrifices that are done in word and in deed. God first wants sacrifices done in word.
[18:38] Now, where do you go in the word so you can pick up inerrant Scripture that's God breathed by the Holy Spirit and repeat them back to the Lord as a sacrifice of praise?

Where do you go for that kind of stuff? Go to the Psalms. Go to the Psalms. The Psalms are filled with such sacrifices of praise.
Everywhere you turn in the Psalms, it's just phenomenal. You know, Dr. McBride said one time, read five Psalms every morning and in one month you will have read through all 150 chapters and then start over and do it again and make that the pattern of your life, the rest of your life.
Well, the Psalms are filled with sacrifices of praise and we're to offer such sacrifices continually. In other words, we're to offer the Lord a sacrifice of praise in every circumstance in which we find ourselves.
Well, what if something bad is going on? Offer a sacrifice of praise. The Lord knows what's going on. He'll get you through it.

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host

[20:08] We are also to put feet to our praise or to be doers of the Word of God. Not just listeners, but doers. True worship involves action.

The praises we give God and the works we do for God are inseparable. The only acceptable sacrifice we can offer to God is what we do to others.
How do we treat other people? John wrote of this in 1 John 3.18, Little children, let us not love in word or in talk.
Let us love in deed and in truth. Great verse of Scripture. The third standard of Christian behavior directed toward God is that of submission.
We're to be submissive. Hebrews 13.17, Obey your leaders and submit to them for they are keeping watch over your souls as those who will have to give an account.
[21:31] Let them do this with joy and not with groaning for that would be of no advantage to you. You're not going to groan yourself into the kingdom.

We're to have joy. It is most probable that the Spirit of God is referring to church leaders in this passage.
God today mediates His rule through men. This is true both in the church but also in secular society. When I was police chief that was a ministry.
Romans chapter 13 verses 1 to 4. We of course are commanded to be submissive to the governing authorities.
As long as those governing authorities don't ask us to do something that's a clear violation of a command of God. Then we have to disobey that and we have to be willing to pay the price for disobedience.
[22:39] and the government will exact a price. Church leaders represent God and they have a higher accountability to God.

I was always disturbed by that person. Don't try to be a teacher all of you. You've got a higher accountability. We're to be in obedience and they're to keep watch over our very souls.
And they will have a special accounting to do to God someday. And that should be a sobering thought to anyone involved in church leadership. And then we have supplication.
Hebrews 13 18-19 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 the sooner. Our fourth obligation to the Lord is supplication.
[23:58] Praying for the leaders in the church is a way to serve and please God. As one person has said, prayer moves the hand of God. Now we live in a time when church leaders are under assault both outside and inside many churches.

Church leaders face unimaginable temptations that many people do not face. That is because Satan is pouring out his wrath trying to bring them down.
Failures by church leaders are well documented and have caused great harm to the cause of Christ. In Hebrews chapter 13 verses 20 to 21 we read in these verses about the power of God.
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 everything good 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.
Amen. Amen. this is really a stand-alone benediction doesn't need much in the way of commentary what we need is the God of peace equipping us in all things through his infinite power it is a prayer that God is working in us those things that are well pleasing to him we know that God can do this because he has all the power and the greatest display of divine power was the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ he came out of the tomb alive the tomb is empty Christ brought him back from the dead and that is the very thing he does for you and I when we are saved the writer makes this exhortation
[26:36] I appeal to you brothers bear with my word of exhortation for I've 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 that's 1322 to 25 the book of Hebrews has been called has been a call of coming to Christ in full devotion and service the writer exhorts them to heed this call gives them some news concerning Timothy he's gotten out of prison we don't know the precise details of his incarceration obviously it was for

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host

faith and the

Romans put him in a jail and he asked the people to greet the leadership and all the saints and he makes a note here about some Italian Christians and we don't know anything about them he never follows up explaining what they did do or didn't do or whatever but then the writer closes with these beautiful words he says grace be with all of you Hebrews chapter 13 the last part of 25 and that's how we shall close our study of the book of Hebrews as well grace be with all of us all of you me everyone in this church may grace be with us all

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host