



November 20, 2022

Abounding Grace: Experiencing and Expressing God's Goodness - Hoping and Boasting

Hebrews 4:14-16

For Discussion and Reflection:

1. The author of Hebrews gives admonitions that are the practical application of his doctrine. Notice Hebrews 13:4, "Let marriage be held in honor among all...for God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterous." Or consider Hebrews 13:5, "Keep your life free from the love of money, and be content with what you have, for he has said, 'I will never leave you nor forsake you.'" From the sermon today, how does the work of Christ, which ends in a new kingdom motivate and enable us to follow these admonitions?
2. Take the tour of the author's teaching about the work and reign of Christ: 1:3, 2:9, 2:14, 3:1-6, 4:3, 4:14, 5:9, 8:1-5, 9:11-14, 9:26, 10:11-14, 11:13-16, 11:24-26, 12:10, 12:22-24, 12:27-29. What stands out to you? How does Christ's work affect our earthly perspective?
3. Focus in on Hebrews 11, particularly vv. 13-28. How did God's promise of a new creation and an eternal home motivate these believers to respond to life's challenges? How did their faith in God's promises enable them to live in freedom from the things of the world? How does engagement with God help us have their perspective?
4. In chapter 13, the author says, "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." (Hebrews 13:10-13) What is the "camp" he is referring to? Hint, it's an allusion to the group described in v9. What "camps" do you see today? How are you being challenged to follow Christ against the current streams?
5. Peter makes a similar case as the author of Hebrews, saying, "Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul. Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation." (1 Peter 2:11,12) Notice how the day of visitation changes our identity and behavior. What does this communicate to you?
6. The author continues at the end to urge his readers to listen to their leaders. First, they are to consider those who have been faithful but died, 13:7; second, they are to "obey" (literally be persuaded by) those who are currently leading them, 13:17. These leaders are urging them to faith alone by grace alone in Christ alone as opposed to a return to Judaism, see 13:9-11. How do the leaders of ECPC promote the gospel and protect its simplicity and purity? Consider how they protect our worship and teaching ministry.
7. We are more like the author's audience than we realize. The values of this world are constantly pushing us to abandon our faith and live for self. Even the religious community can push us to adopt "important" practices to be right with God. How are you looking to Jesus alone? Hebrews 12:1,2.
8. What can you do to have more engagement with God and grow in a biblical life of faith?