

# Bearing the Reproach of Christ

Hebrews 13:11-13

*Halifax: 14 July 2024*

## **Introduction:**

We will continue our sermon series from Hebrews.

- I preach through the scriptures because they are the holy word of God.
  - In them, the LORD has given us the things we need to know about Him and about our relationship with Him.
  - Hebrews emphasises Christ and how we need Him as our priest to save us from our sins.
    - To put quite plainly, He was the Son of God from all eternity, and God sent Him here to be born in human flesh with a human soul and body—yet still He is the Son of God.
    - God the Father appointed Him to be the priest who would offer the sacrifice that He requires to take away our sin.
  - We don't realise, until we believe God's word, how offensive our sin is to God.
    - The injustice of us disobeying our creator, which we have all done, is so reprehensible that it demands the most severe retribution.
    - The punishment that God's justice (which is pure justice) requires is eternal suffering in the lake of fire...
      - Either that, or the one sacrifice that Jesus offered as our priest.
      - What was that one sacrifice that Jesus offered for our sins?
        - Hebrews makes much of the fact that He offered Himself for our sins.
        - When He died on the cross, He shed His blood for the forgiveness, or emission (dismissing), of our sins.
    - The result is that whoever believes in Jesus and His priestly work will be forgiven and will not be punished for their sins.
      - That speaks to each of you. It is the most important thing of all.
      - If you will accept that you are sinner who is cut off from God, and if you will simply trust in what Jesus did (what He became—a sacrifice for the forgiveness of sin), you will be fully pardoned—fully restored to God.

The passage we are looking at today tells us that when we trust Jesus in this way, we will have to bear His reproach.

- What does that mean?
  - It means that if you come to Jesus as your saviour, people will look down on you the same way they look down on Him.
    - If they look on Him with contempt and disgust, they will look on you with contempt and disgust for trusting in Him.
    - If they call Him evil, they will call you evil for following Him.

Let's take a look at what the passage we are looking at today says about that.

- The passage is found in Hebrews 13:11-14. I will begin the reading at 13:8.
- This is God's word. May He add His blessing to it.

**Hebrews 13:8-14: Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever. 9 Do not be carried about with various and strange doctrines. For it is good that the heart be established by grace, not with foods which have not profited those who have been occupied with them. 10 We have an altar from which those who serve the tabernacle**

**have no right to eat. 11 For the bodies of those animals, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned outside the camp. 12 Therefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered outside the gate. 13 Therefore let us go forth to Him, outside the camp, bearing His reproach.**

Thanks be to God for His holy and infallible word. May we have ears to hear.

Let's begin with a point of review of what we looked at last week.

### **I. What makes the altar we have as Christians so special?**

- V. 10: **We have an altar from which those who serve the tabernacle have no right to eat.**
- A. To put it quite simply, our altar is special because the one sacrificed there was the very Son of God.
  1. As I told you a moment ago, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is the only sacrifice that is acceptable to God for our sins.
    - It is incredibly precious to God and to those who believe.
    - As John Brown put it, "We hear Him [the Father] saying, as it were, in reference to the sacrifice of His Son, 'I am fully satisfied;' and our souls echo back, 'So are we.' He says, 'This is My Son, in whom I am well pleased;' and we reply, 'This is our Saviour, and He is all our salvation and all our desire.' "
  2. To think that the very Son of God should have been given—and should have been willing to come—to bear the punishment of the sins that we, His creatures, committed is a wonder without compare!
    - The fullness of this wonder grows as we come from our dullness to see the huge difference between God the Creator, and us, the creature.
      - There is no comparison between the one who made everything—think of it!—and those who are made.
      - As we come to see more and more of His holiness, His goodness, His purity, His wisdom, His power, His justice, His righteousness, His truth,
        - The wonder of having God's Son as the sacrifice for our sin grows larger and larger.
- B. Last week, we looked at the fact that if we are believers, we have a right to eat at this altar.
  1. We are entitled to partake of Christ sacrificed as our spiritual food.
    - We do this by believing so that we are spiritually nourished into fuller and fuller communion with God.
    - We are able to know Him and to serve Him more and more as we feed on Christ as the bread of life at this altar.
  2. I exhorted you to eat heartily.
    - It is by this eating that we grow into a fuller sense of the wonder of what God has done in giving His Son as a sacrifice for our sins.
      - We come to see the fullness of His holiness and goodness and purity and wisdom and power and justice and righteousness and truth by our feeding

upon Christ, and as we do that, it is circular—we see more and more of the wonder of God providing such a sacrifice.

C. We looked at how it says that those who served at the altar in the tabernacle have no right to eat from the sacrifice of Christ.

- That's because, as long as they continued offering sacrifices at that altar, it indicated that they had not accepted Jesus Christ as a sacrifice for their sins.
  - They were, therefore, without the benefit of Him.
- By continuing to serve at that altar, they betray the fact that they had been doing so without faith in God who promised that He would provide the sacrifice we need for our sins.
  - Perhaps they thought the sacrificial system was sufficient to make them acceptable with God.
  - The whole sacrificial system was meant to represent that God was going to provide the sacrifice that He required.
  - But those with unbelieving hearts trusted that their own works inclusive of these sacrifices were enough—made them acceptable to God.
    - All they needed a Messiah for was to deliver them from their enemies.
    - They did not need anything more for the remission of their sins.
    - They were living in the delusion that all was well with their souls, not on the basis of the sacrifice that God was going to provide—but on the basis of their own righteousness, inclusive of those ceremonial sacrifices for their sins.
  - Because this is so, they have no right to eat of the altar where Christ is the sacrifice.
    - We who believe in Christ are the only ones who can have the benefits of Christ—the only ones who can eat at the altar where He was sacrificed.

TRANS> Okay. Let's get to this week's topic—*Reproach*.

## **II. First, see here that the Old Testament ceremonies themselves testified that Christ would have to bear reproach.**

A. God gave them these ceremonies as types to portray Christ in all kinds of ways.

1. We use the term *type* to refer to the things in the Old Testament that typified Christ.
  - The ceremonies, priests, and even certain kings were very often types of Christ.
  - When we speak of types in this way, we call Christ the *antitype*.
2. It is pretty easy to see how the offering of animals for the forgiveness of sin is a type of Christ.
  - With reference to the type, Jesus the antitype is called the lamb that was slain.
    - John the Baptist called Him *the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world*.
  - The ceremonies showed that by His sacrifice, our sins are taken away.

B. But how did these ceremonies show us that Christ must bear reproach?

1. We are told here in our text (the passage we are looking at today).

- It makes much of the fact that when these animals were sacrificed for sin, they had to be carried outside the camp and burned.
    - Vs. 11 points this out: **For the bodies of those animals whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin are burned outside the camp.**
  - It was generally understood that this was done with sin offerings because these offerings became defiled and unclean.
    - In the ceremonies, the sin of the priests and the people was ritually transferred from the people to the animal.
    - The animal was killed on account of the sin that was symbolically laid upon it. Death—blood shed—was the consequence and that blood, that death, was offered to God for the sins of the worshippers—to cleanse them from their sins.
  - Since the animal took on the sins, it was not acceptable to be offered to God or to be eaten by the people and had to be removed from the camp.
    - Eating was allowed with some of the other sacrifices—especially the peace or fellowship offerings—but not with the sin offering.
    - As it says in verse 11—it had to be taken outside the camp and burned.
- So the ritual showed that the animal bore the reproach of the people’s sins.
2. Our text in Hebrews goes on to speak about how Jesus suffered outside the gates of Jerusalem.
    - In most cities, malefactors were crucified in the public square, but the Jews did not want ceremonially defile Jerusalem, so the Romans agreed to crucify their criminals outside the city.
    - That Christ was crucified out the city highlighted the fact that He was cursed for our sins.
  3. Our text interprets the ceremonies where the sin offering was burned outside the camp to show that Christ would bear reproach.
    - Verse 12 says: **Therefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered outside the gate.**
      - “Jesus also,” just like the animals sacrificed in the Old Testament, had to be excluded from the camp of God’s people.
        - He had to bear the reproach of His people’s sin.
    - Very few, if any, of the people in the Old Testament (including Jesus’s disciples) understood that the Messiah would have to bear reproach.
      - Even though they had passages like Isaiah 53 that showed that all our iniquities would be laid on Him and that by His stripes we would be healed, and that He would be cut off for the transgression of God’s people,
        - they had various understandings of what was meant, but it was inconceivable to them to think that the Messiah would bear reproach.
      - Isaiah even said that He would be cut off out of the land of the living, which means that He would be both excommunicated and killed.
        - For the people, this interpretation was just too outrageous to entertain.
        - The Messiah, unclean??? How could that be? Who could have thought?

- C. And indeed, the whole thing is quite outrageous and beyond conceiving.
- Let me stress what I said in the review—Jesus is the very Son of God.
    - He is majestic. He is holy. As God the Son, He is transcendent.
    - And He became the sacrifice for our sins—the lamb that was slain.
  - This will keep those with understanding in awe for all eternity.
    - That the Son of the Highest should bear reproach for us!

### **III. A strong application is drawn that applies to all believers.**

- **Verse 13: Therefore let us go forth to Him, outside the camp, bearing His reproach.**

A. This was initially directed to the Hebrew (Jewish) Christians to whom this book is addressed.

1. By accepting Christ, they also were cut off from the apostate Jewish church—the great OT assembly of God’s people whose official priests and elders had rejected their Messiah as unclean.
2. Verse 13 is telling them that as followers of Christ, they must accept the fact that they must bear His reproach.
  - They will be looked at as just as reprehensible as their Master.
    - They would be ridiculed, looked down on, counted as evil, often excluded from society and from their families, looked at as foolish.
    - It had financial implications as well—a young person would lose his inheritance, an widow would not be supported by her family, a business owner would lose his customers, and a tradesman would not be given any work.
  - They would have to take their place with those outside the camp...
    - With the lepers and those with a flow of blood, with the tax collectors and harlots who had been cut off.
3. But the writer says to them, **“Let us go forth outside the camp, bearing His reproach.”**
  - Jesus is also outside the camp.
    - He is the one who came to save sinners.
    - He has a church, not for the righteous, but for sinners.
  - That is, of course, what the Old Testament church was always supposed to be.
    - That is what it was for men like David who wrote Psalm 32...
    - Or Abraham who trusted God to provide a Son through his offspring who would be given for the salvation of the world.
      - Abraham became so confident of God that when God called him to offer up Isaac through whom that Son was promised, he was ready to do so because he believed, that that if necessary, God would raise him from the dead rather than go back on His promise.
    - The Jews who accepted Christ when He came were the ones like David and Abraham.
      - The ones who rejected Him were like so many of those over the years who killed the prophets God sent to them.

B. We must bear reproach for Christ too.

1. We live in a very different time and in a very different culture, but those who follow the true Christ must also go to Him outside the camp, bearing His reproach.
  - There are many false versions of Christ that have been concocted.
    - Much of the reproach is taken away when you follow them.
  - In fact, it is just like it was in the Old Testament.
    - If you stood with Moses, like Joshua and Caleb did, the rest of the people wanted to stone you.
    - If you stood with Elijah and Isaiah and Jeremiah, you had to bear much reproach from the majority of the Israelites.
2. Today, if you stand with scripture and the biblical confessions and creeds of the church, you have to bear reproach not only from fellow Canadians, but also from the majority of those who are baptised professing Christians.
  - This I say to emphasise that bearing the reproach of Christ means more than just being a member of some church and calling yourself a Christian.
    - There are churches that have a Christ that is custom designed by them to be appealing to this generation.
    - They trim away the most offensive things about Him from their creeds to avoid bearing His reproach.

#### IV. Let's look at different aspects of the reproach of Christ that we must bear.

##### A. There is the reproach of His law.

1. One of the most blatant ones is the clear teaching of Christ on sexual purity.
  - The Bible says that people who live a life in which they have sex outside the covenant of marriage instituted by God will not inherit the kingdom of heaven.
    - This includes all homosexual sex and all heterosexual sex outside of marriage.
    - **1Co 6:9: Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites,**
  - As you know, most of our political leaders, many in our society, and almost all mainline churches consider this to be hatred.
    - It has become fashionable to fully accept all kinds of sexual sin and even to celebrate it and be proud about it.
  - You are called to bear the reproach of Christ in this matter.
2. Abortion would be a similar moral issue.
  - The world along with liberal churches have turned abortion into a right and claim that to forbid it is to oppress women.
    - If oppression is defined as forbidding someone to commit a crime, then I suppose we are all oppressed. We are not allowed to murder each other, even if we very much find other people displeasing and inconvenient.
3. Idolatry in worship is a moral issue of a very different kind that we must bear reproach for.
  - The LORD clearly forbids the worshipping of God in ways that He has not appointed. He also forbids taking away what He has appointed.

- Jesus encountered opposition for this just as we do today from traditionalists who have added extra rules and ceremonies of washings and various rituals.
  - We bear the reproach of Christ when those in these very large historical denominations accuse us of departing from the traditions of the church.
  - My reply to them is that we follow the traditions of the apostles that God has revealed to us in His Word.
    - There are no ceremonies venerating Mary or those such as Stephen and James who were martyred before the scriptures were complete. Mary's death is not even recorded.
    - Nor is there anything like the lighting of candles for the dead, prayers for the dead, physical altars, the annual celebration of Christ's birth... nor is there record of these in the early church's history.
    - We must bear the reproach of Christ for abstaining from these things.
- Then there are those churches that have excluded certain things that the Lord has appointed and that we *do* see the apostles practicing...
  - Such as the observance of the Lord's Day each week, or the exclusion of those who will not repent of their sins from the Lord's supper and their removal from the church.
    - When we do these things, we are often called legalists or said to be uncharitable. We must gladly bear the reproach of Christ.
  - These same churches feel free to have drama or musicals in their worship, and they write sentimental songs or invite celebrities to address them.
    - When we forbid such things, we are called legalists or said to be too severe and uptight. We must bear the reproach of Christ.

B. There is the reproach for holding to the Biblical model of the family.

1. God has established that men are to be the head of their homes—to take responsibility for their families before God. Wives are to submit to their husbands.
  - This is how unity is to be found in the relationship, and it is to be done not in a selfish way, but as it is with Christ as the husband to the church—the man is to exercise leadership and authority as one who loves and does what is best for those under his headship, even to the point of great personal sacrifice.
  - In our society, men do not want to take this responsibility and women do not want to submit to their husbands.
    - This model is hated and sneered at, and those who practice it are looked at as backward, ignorant, foolish, and even evil and oppressive
  - We must bear reproach the reproach of Christ for upholding the Biblical model.
2. The Bible says that it is a blessing to have many children (see Psalm 127).
  - Today, there are many who receive this blessing and face criticism and accusation. They are called *irresponsible* for not limiting their family
3. The Bible is clear that children are to honour and obey their parents.
  - Increasingly, children are encouraged to express their independence. The trend is for them to find identity with their peers rather than their parents, and their school more than their family.

- Parental correction is more and more opposed, by social pressure and even by legal sanction. As it is, children have more and more social problems.
- We must bear reproach for establishing godly homes.

C. But what is the greatest offense of all that we give to the world for Christ?

1. It is the offense of the true gospel itself—the gospel without modification.
  - It is highly offensive to Jews and false Christians to assert that we are such sinners that justice can only be served by eternal punishment from God’s hand.
  - And to assert that the only way that God has appointed for this punishment to be removed is by faith in Jesus Christ, His only Son, and His saving work on the cross.
    - That there He bore the sins of the people God chose for salvation, offering Himself as a sacrifice for our sins.
    - In doing so, He was indeed cut off and rejected as defiled and unclean.
  - Those who would have salvation must confess that they are so wicked before God that nothing else can take away their sin.
2. This is obviously very offensive to people.
  - They do not want to admit that their sin is that bad.
  - They do not want to acknowledge that their condition is so desperate that they must rely on Christ and His saving work to deliver or save them.
  - They look at it as ignorant, and as a moral outrage to believe that.
    - When Jesus came, the majority of the Jews considered themselves to be righteous by living a reasonably decent life and observing the rituals of the law—they were even willing to acknowledge that they were sinners and needed sacrifices for pardon—but to say that the Son of God must bear their sin was something that they simply would not tolerate.
  - So it is today with many people—they will admit that they are sinners who need forgiveness, but not sinners who are *such* sinners that they deserve to go to hell forever and can only be saved by the Son of God bearing the equivalent of that punishment!
    - For them, the cross can be an example of dying for a cause and being rejected by those who oppose you, but they cannot tolerate it as a sacrifice for sin.
    - They will find ways to modify the true gospel to make it acceptable to them and more acceptable to other people.
3. Brothers and sisters, we must bear the reproach of Christ—the reproach of the cross.
  - We must joyfully receive this Saviour who became a curse for us that we might be made the righteousness of God through Him.
    - We must go to Him, outside the camp, bearing His reproach.
    - The Hebrew Christians had to bear His reproach as the despised and rejected sin bearer, and today, we must do the same.

**V. Let me assure you that it is a grand thing to bear the reproach of Christ.**

A. All of His reproach is on account of our sins.

1. You know that He is perfectly righteous and has done no wrong.



2. So it is your privilege if you can bear a little reproach for Him in this world who bore so much reproach for you.
- B. When you do, it is also very good for you.
1. Persecution for righteousness is a blessing. It makes your faith stronger because if your faith is not solid, you will not be able to bear it.
  2. Shoring up our faith enables you to see the glory of Christ and the inestimable value of His salvation.
- C. When you bear reproach for Him, it enables you to have fellowship in His sufferings.
1. You become a fellow sufferer with Him, experiencing His sympathy and help as your great high priest who understands.
  2. It also helps you to understand (a little better) His sufferings for you.
- D. When you bear reproach for Him, it also makes you a better witness.
1. People see that you are willing to suffer for what you believe and if they reach no other conclusion, they at least come to see that your faith is sincere.
  2. This also gives you greater boldness in your witness and a stronger voice of encouragement, comfort, and admonition to your brothers and sisters in the faith.
    - You are able to encourage and inspire them by your example.
- E. Know that when you bear reproach for Christ, it pleases both Him and His Father.
1. He is ever watching you and helping you—and whatever love you show toward Him brings Him great joy, satisfaction, and delight because of His great love for you.
    - This is true of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
  2. The LORD promises that you will have a great reward in heaven.

**Conclusion:** Let us then gladly go forth to Him, outside the camp, bearing His reproach.