

## The Focus of the Saints #2

Lyall Johnston—August 30, 2025

Hebrews 13:10: “We have an altar from which those who are serving the *present earthly* tabernacle do not have authority to eat.”

We know and understand that the tabernacle and altar that we have access to is the very altar of God the Father in heaven in the spiritual place of His Holy of Holies, before His very Throne. They do not have access because they did not have access to the blood of Jesus Christ. Well, let me correct myself: They could have had access to the blood of Jesus Christ, ***but they chose to follow under and continue with the Old Covenant rejecting Jesus Christ***

- the Son of God
- the Savior of all mankind
- their Messiah Whom they didn't recognize
  - ✓ they said He had a demon
  - ✓ they said He was illegitimate
  - ✓ they rejected His Lordship

So, today they do not have access to the altar that you and I have access to, and ***all those who have been converted and are letting the mind of Jesus Christ dwell within them!***

Hebrews 13:10: “We have an altar from which those who are serving the *present earthly* tabernacle do not have authority to eat.” ***Their sacrifices do not give them access to the Throne of God***

Verse 11: “For *pertaining to* those animals whose blood is brought into the Holy places by the high priest for a sin *offering*, the bodies of all these are burned outside the camp. For this reason, Jesus, in order that He might sanctify the people by His own blood... “ (vs 11-12).

This is talking about everything that that Old Covenant practices were given as a picture, which the house of Israel under the Old Covenant never could have understood. Only some of the prophets had insight into that, but even they did not have the full knowledge and understanding of all those ordinances, all those laws and commandments to do with the tabernacle. They didn't fully understand!

***Today that knowledge is being given to the Church!*** The Church is to give that knowledge to the world by preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom of God so that people can come to understand the sacrifice of the precious blood of Jesus.

Verse 11: “For *pertaining to* those animals whose blood is brought into the Holy places by the high priest for a sin *offering*, the bodies of all these are burned outside the camp.”

That's an important point, because Paul is going to continue he's going to come back to that.

Verse 12: “For this reason, Jesus, in order that He might sanctify the people by His own blood, also suffered outside the gate.”

What's that talking about? *A totally different way of life from the Old Covenant*—pictured by the Old Covenant—***now raised to a heavenly level, to a spiritual level***, that the physical level never understood.

***But it was written and given for example for us to understand the magnitude between the Old Covenant and what it pictured under the New Covenant in the body and the life and the death and the blood of Jesus.***

Verse 12: “For this reason, Jesus, in order that He might sanctify the people by His own blood...”

We read about that in Rev. 1:5 where He has cleansed us and continually cleanses us as we repent of our sins by His own blood. Which Peter says is precious, and it is!

“... also suffered outside the gate. So then, let us go forward to Him outside the camp, bearing His reproach” (vs 12-13).

That is talking about ***our calling to the way of life that Christ came to show us*** outside the camp:

- coming out of the religions of this world
- coming out of the ways of this crooked and perverse generation that we have read of that this world is living in
- coming out of the world

What did Jesus say about those whom God gave to Him—and you can read this at least in one place, but it's in several places—in John 17 where we were actually like the apostles and the early Church we also have been given to Christ by the Father. It's through His blood and sacrifice; that's the primary the power and focus of our lives! That's what we're talking about:

- the focus of the saints of the living God
- we are the children, the saints, of the living God
- we are the brothers and sisters of the living Jesus Christ in heaven above

Verse 13: “So then, let us go forward to Him outside the camp, bearing His reproach”—***and we do bear His reproach!***

In John 17 Jesus admits this, states this before the Father that we will face reproach. Anyone who will follow Christ will suffer persecution.

Verse 14: “For we do not have a continuing city here *on earth*; rather, we are seeking the one that is coming.”

This is Heb. 13, and chapter 11 is what Paul is referring to. He had already covered this back in Heb. 11, which is called the faith chapter about how the people were strangers and sojourners.

So, doesn't that really figure when it says here that we should go forward to “...Him outside the camp, bearing His reproach...” of this world! Why? *Because our focus is on:*

- loving God
- seeking His Kingdom and His Righteousness
- loving one another
- working towards the goal of entering the Kingdom of God

*by taking on the perfection that was in Christ!*

We're all not perfect! In fact, *we're all far from the perfection of Christ!* **BUT:**

- day-by-day by reading the Word and God inscribing that Word in our mind
- by having that contact with God the Father through Christ
  - ✓ we come **to know** the Father
  - ✓ we come **to know** Jesus Christ

*and that, as He says, **is eternal life!***

So, as we do these things we're progressing toward perfection. As we've mentioned many times the ***whole Bible, the Scriptures, is about that perfection!*** Paul is one who focuses on that specifically in the book of Hebrews.

Verse 14<sub>[transcriber's correction]</sub>: “For we do not have a continuing city here *on earth*...”

The cities of this world are coming to an end! When we return with Christ we're going to see Him absolutely demolish the cities of this world! All these high rise buildings are going to be brought right down to the ground, just like all human beings who are proud and high and mighty are also going to be humbled and brought right down to the ground, to the dust of the earth.

“...rather, we are seeking the one that is coming” (v 14)—***focus! We are focusing on that city that is coming***

Verse 15: “Accordingly, let us offer <sup>l#1</sup>**the sacrifice of praise...**”

Isn't that interesting ***praise is a sacrifice*** to God! Why? ***Because we're praising Him!***

- we're not praising some human being
- we're not praising ourselves
- we're not taking the glory to ourselves

***We're praising God!***

That's being a living sacrifice, as Paul says! ***We should become living sacrifices***; he's telling us in Hebrews how to do it:

“...offer <sup>l#1</sup>**the sacrifice of praise** continually to God through Him; that is, *with the fruit of our lips* openly professing *our faith* in His name. Now do not forget <sup>l#2</sup>**to do good** and <sup>l#3</sup>**to fellowship**, for with such **sacrifices** God is well pleased” (vs 15-16).

We don't often think of those things as sacrifices, but they are and they're pleasing in God's eyes!

Verse 17—***another focus point: “Follow your leaders, and be submissive...”***

In Ephesians Paul says *be submissive to one another*, but when it comes down to the setting of the Church in order, as Paul said to Titus, there are certain things the ministers and elders are responsible to do setting everything in order, and be submissive. In other words, ***listen to:***

- what they say
- what they preach

Then go to the Scriptures and prove what they have said; whether it is the Truth coming from God Himself. If you've proved that that sets a precedence and gives you confidence in the Word of God. It can also give you confidence in the elder ***IF*** he's actually preaching the Word of God, just like we're commanded to do.

“...because they are looking out for your spiritual well-being...” (v 17).

Yes, elders are responsible and looking out—and God holds elders responsible—for the spiritual well-being of the fellowship of the Church of the brethren!

“...as *those who must be ready to give an account to God* in order that they may do this with joy...” (v 17).

So, those who are preaching, those elders who are preaching, are faithful with the Word. We, as those who are listening to them—and even every elder listens to other elders—to be taught by them.

Every elder, and particularly those who are young, need to listen to the older more mature people in the Church who have gained a lot of experience by being in the Church, and the experience of God, of ***coming to understand and knowing many things!***

They can learn from the older men and women in the Church, particularly from the older men! Of course, the younger women can learn from the older women who are mature and have experienced many hardships and many joys in this life. Those who have experienced life and can help and teach. **All this is part of our focus as the saints of God!**

“...and not *with* groaning because that *would* be unprofitable for you” (v 17).

I do not know of any elders in this Fellowship of God that are against the children and the sheep that God has given them to pastor, to feed and to take care of. The role, of course, ***the focus for the elders*** is to help ***bring us all to the maturity of Christ***, which is what God’s Plan is all about.

Verse 18: “Pray for us; for we are certain that we have a clear conscience, in all things desiring to conduct ourselves well. Now, I am earnestly exhorting *you* to do this more diligently that I may be sent back to you more quickly. And *may* the God of peace, Who raised our Lord Jesus from among *the* dead—that great Shepherd of the sheep—through *the* blood of *the* everlasting covenant” (vs 18-20). ***The focus God wants us to have is:***

- becoming perfect ‘because I [Christ] am perfect
- be you Holy ‘because I am Holy

### **This is major focus!**

Verse 21: “Perfect you in every good work in order that you may do His will; accomplishing in you that which *is* well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to Whom *be the* glory into the ages of eternity. Amen.... [now he concludes this by saying]: ...Now, I admonish you, brethren, to patiently listen to this message of exhortation, or to patiently listen to this message of exhortation... [Paul is talking about the whole book, not just this one chapter] ...for I have written to you in only a few words” (vs 21-22).

Basically it ends there. But let’s go to Heb. 12; here is ***another focus*** that we need to be very mindful of because it has to do with God correcting us, God disciplining us. It’s an important focus, because

- **IF** we don’t have that focus
- **IF** we can’t see that God will discipline us at times
- **THEN** we could miss the gate that leads to eternal life

*Which some have done; some have decided to take a different route!*

Hebrews 12:1: “Therefore, *since* we are surrounded by such a great throng of witnesses...”

All those mentioned in Heb. 11 the faith chapter; beginning with Abel and right through to the last of the apostles!

Hebrews 12:1: “Therefore, *since* we are surrounded by such a great throng of witnesses, <sup>1#1</sup>**let us lay aside every weight**, and <sup>1#2</sup>**the sin that so easily entraps us**; and let us <sup>1#3</sup>**run the race set before us with endurance**, <sup>1#4</sup>**having our minds fixed on Jesus**, the Beginner and Finisher of *our* faith; Who for the joy that lay ahead of Him endured *the* cross, *although* He despised *the* shame, and has sat down at *the* right hand of the Throne of God” (vs 1-2).

That’s the shame that we really despise, also; the shame that the world tries to put on us. ***We reject it!*** Like Christ, we despise it!

Verse 3: Now <sup>1#5</sup>**meditate deeply on Him**...—***focus day-by-day-by-day!*** How do we do that? *Many ways but one is:*

- read what Jesus has to say in the Gospels
- read what the apostles have to say about Him in the epistles
- read what John was given to say about Him in the book of Revelation
- read what the Old Testament has to say about Christ

### **that’s our focus!**

Verse 3: Now <sup>1#5</sup>**meditate deeply on Him** Who endured such great hostility of sinners against Himself so that you <sup>1#6</sup>**do not become weary and faint in your minds**. You have not yet resisted to the point of *losing* blood in your struggle against sin” (vs 3-4)—***He did!***

- His shed His blood to cover our sins
- He paid the ultimate price

God may yet call on many of us to pay that same price! That’s why our focus has to be so solid and so strong! In the meantime something we need to keep in mind; ***this is this is a focus for us as the saints of God:***

Verse 5: “And you have already forgotten the admonition that He addresses to you as to sons: ‘My son, <sup>1#7</sup>**do not despise the chastening of the Lord, nor grow weary of being reproved by Him.**” *Many have!*

The problem here can be is that when correction or discipline—when God gives correction through the spoken word—what often happens is we can focus on the speaker, and reject the discipline that’s coming from the Word [of God] through a man who is under the command to tell people ***when they are missing the mark and going astray!*** To pull them back from the hellfire, ***the second death!*** That’s the

focus that God wants; He doesn't want us to die!

Verse 7: "If you endure chastening, **God is dealing with you as a Father with His sons...**"

He'll use those he's called to do this so don't put the face of a man in front of God's disciplining you, because you're going astray and can't see it!

"...For who is the son whom *the* Father does not chasten? But if you are without chastisement, of which all are partakers, then you are bastards and not sons" (vs 7-8).

- I want to be a son of God not a bastard, illegitimate!
- I want I want to be perfected just like you do!

Verse 9: "Furthermore, we have had our fleshly fathers who chastened *us*, and we respected *them*; should we not all the more *willingly* be subject to the Father of spirits, and live *forever*? For in the first case, they chastened *us* for a few days in whatever way seemed good to them; but in the second case, **He chastens us for our own benefit that we may be partakers of His Holiness**" (vs 9-10).

- that we may be perfected
- that we may be his perfect sons and daughters
- let's praise God
- let's thank Him when He corrects us
- let's focus on the Word of God
- let's focus on building and developing continually that relationship with God

***until our very last breath while we are yet in the flesh!***

Scriptural References:

- 1) Hebrews 13:10-12, 11-22
- 2) Hebrews 12:1-5, 7-10

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Revelation 1:5
- John 17
- Hebrews 11

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