

"Cultivate Perspective, Connect with Leaders, and Cry Out to God" ...ToDo's for Concluding Hebrews & 2024

Hebrews 13:14-25

December 29, 2024

INTRO ... (Famous) Last Words - "Cultivate Perspective, Connect with Leaders, and Cry Out to God"

Cultivate Perspective

v. 14-15 ...¹⁴ For here we have no lasting city, but we seek the city that is to come. ¹⁵ Through him then let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge his name.

...the Vital Practice of "IMPOSING PERSPECTIVE"

(1) IMPOSING PERMANENCE... How are You Seeing what is Permanent and What is Momentary?

How Do You Find "MOTIVATION" in Your Life? ...Is Your "Motivation Approach" Trained by Scripture or by "Positivity Publishing"??

"NEGATIVITY" - "**For here we have no lasting city**" ...ie, things/moments/people in life are NOT going to last!

Ecc 3:1-2, 4, 8, 10-11 ¹ For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven:
² a time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted;
...⁴ a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance;
...⁸ a time to love, and a time to hate; a time for war, and a time for peace.
...¹⁰ I have seen the business that God has given to the children of man to be busy with. ¹¹ He has made everything beautiful in its time.

...Not Every Season/Time is "POSITIVE" or Pleasant

Heb 11:13-16 ¹³ These all died in faith, not having received the things promised, but having seen them and greeted them from afar, and having acknowledged that they were strangers and exiles on the earth. ¹⁴ For people who speak thus make it clear that they are seeking a homeland. ¹⁵ If they had been thinking of that land from which they had gone out, they would have had opportunity to return. ¹⁶ But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared for them a city.

Rom 8:18, 23 "For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us. ...²³ we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait..."

Ecc 12:1 "Remember, also your Creator in the days of your youth, before the evil days come and the years draw near of which you will say, 'I have no pleasure in them.'"

...We Need a "Theological" – "It is What it is." ...Spinning Everything to Answer to "Positivity" was not the obligation of the Biblical Writers ...**I Need Biblical PERSPECTIVE—Not "POSITIVITY"**

...¹⁴ For here we have no lasting city, but we seek the city that is to come.

A Significant Biblical Motivator for Us—Is NOT ABOUT THIS WORLD!—We "IMPOSE" That Perspective on Temporary Moments!

(2) IMPOSING PROVIDENCE

v. 15... "Let us continually [always, constantly] offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge his name"

This is HUGE & DEEP! ...Because some Big and Meaningful Things must PRECEDE "continually offering up a sacrifice of praise to God"!!

- ***I must have a healthy and active "reference point" for all of life! ...God is CONTINUOUSLY Providential—He is LORD of everyday!*** (Eph 1:11 "In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will.")
 - 'Acknowledge' = homologéō - to acknowledge in honor of someone, meaning to give thanks, to praise (CWSB Dictionary)
- ***He is Worthy and Undiminished! ...He is not defined by my moments, my experiences, or my feelings!*** (Otherwise, praise could not have been continuous in 2024 or in the coming year)

Connect with Leaders

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. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you.

Leadership is Not a Shallow, Surface Item Biblically (neither for the leader or the person receiving leadership!)—It is about Our Souls, it is about Joy and it contains Obedience & Submission!!

- The "influence" of leadership is one of "benefit/advantage" down in the soul! ...What Kind of "Benefit/Advantage"?
 - **The advantage of sound doctrine, life discernment, a biblical worldview**

Acts 20:28-31 ²⁸ Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood. ²⁹ I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; ³⁰ and from among your own selves will arise men speaking twisted things, to draw away the disciples after them. ³¹ Therefore be alert, remembering that for three years I did not cease night or day to admonish every one with tears. [be alert = keeping watch]
 - **The guarding and protection of your mind, will, & emotions!**
 - **Escape from the "snares of the devil"**

1 Pet 5:1-2, 8 ¹ So I exhort the elders among you, as a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, as well as a partaker in the glory that is going to be revealed: ² shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight, not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you; not for shameful gain, but eagerly; ...⁸ Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.

2Tim 2:24 - 3:2 ²⁴ And the Lord's servant must not be quarrelsome but kind to everyone, able to teach, patiently enduring evil, ²⁵ correcting his opponents with gentleness. God may perhaps grant them repentance leading to a knowledge of the truth, ²⁶ and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, after being captured by him to do his will. ¹ But understand this, that in the last days there will come times of difficulty. ² For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy,

○ Leaders are "HARDWIRED" into Our SOULS!

"[Heb 13:15] "Our passage ends with an exhortation to submit to spiritual leaders established in the church. ... Especially in a self-reliant culture like our own, submission to God-ordained authority is a true spiritual exercise and an element of our worship of the Lord. ... The first of these commands—"obey"—mainly speaks of receiving the teaching given by spiritual leaders. The Greek verb (peithesthe) is also used for "being persuaded." "Submit" speaks of yielding to proper authority established by God. These we offer to God as worship, receiving the truth and yielding to our leaders.

... the word "leaders," which may also be translated as "guides." True spiritual leaders are those who go before the flock into the Word of God, into prayer, and into the Christian life.

...we submit to spiritual leaders because their authority comes from Christ. ... This authority is spiritual and moral, not temporal or worldly. ... Since Christian leaders, particularly deacons and elders, are called to serve the church, we are to receive them as authorities established by Jesus himself.

... the leaders mentioned in Hebrews watch over our very souls. They are gifted by God for rule and Christian teaching. They lie awake at night—that is what the verb "keeping watch" literally means—pondering our spiritual well-being, how they might help and support us in the faith. ...as undershepherds they must give an account to the Chief Shepherd. They are not serving for their own benefit but for ours, and they are called to give an account. Our response, then, is to help them through obedience and faith." **Richard Phillips**, "Hebrews", (Reformed Exp. Com.)

- Who's at the end of that "soul-wire" for you?
- How are you seeking to receive soul shaping input into your life this coming year?

○ Leaders Need to Monitor their "Joy/Groaning" ...Don't Merely Be Focused on the Outward Activity of Leading—pay attention to the Heart!

- Leading involves conditions that cause groaning!
- Leading involves the need to "replenish your joy".

...Leadership may be necessary, but it is not always fun or rewarding.

...A Leader Must Not Settle in to a "Setting of Groaning" - but rather, He Must Find JOY

...Which means he must have an exchange with God in the secret place of his life where God's Purpose Feels Big, Meaningful, and Near!!

Cry Out to God ...Pray - Earnestly & Urgently

v.18-19... Pray for us, for we are sure that we have a clear conscience, desiring to act honorably in all things. ¹⁹ I urge you the more earnestly to do this in order that I may be restored to you the sooner.

THIS Statement is SIMPLE & SIGNIFICANT! ...Prayer is Related to Outcomes! ..."Pray for us... that I might be restored to you the sooner"

Eph 6:16-19

Col 4:2-3 ² Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving. ³ At the same time, pray also for us, that God may open to us a door for the word, to declare the mystery of Christ, on account of which I am in prison—

Acts 12:1-12 ...Earnest prayer and Peter's release from Herod