

Hebrews 13:7-14 "The Invitation to Go to Jesus"\*\*\*

Main Idea: The invitation at the end of the book of Hebrews which we find in Hebrews 13:7-14 invites us to take inventory of three matters.

I. Take inventory of the messenger (7-8).

A. Remember the leaders who spoke God's Word to you in the past.

B. Imitate their faith.

1. Make sure you see the faith being lived out in the life of the preacher.

2. Make sure the preacher points you to Jesus.

II. Take inventory of the message (9-10).

A. Reject teaching that is novel.

B. Receive teaching that addresses the need of the heart.

1. Teaching that pleases God is grace-saturated.

2. Teaching that pleases God is cross-centered.

III. Take inventory of the necessary response (11-14).

A. Ponder what Jesus did (11-12).

1. He suffered outside the city gate.

2. He suffered to make people holy.

B. Ponder what we must do (13-14).

1. We must go to a person.

2. We must leave our dependence on a religious system.

3. We must be ready to suffer disgrace with Jesus.

4. We must live for a future hope.

Make It Personal: Here's the invitation...

1. Will you go to Jesus today?

2. Will you live for Jesus come what may?

*It's time for the invitation.* When you hear those words coming from the lips of a preacher, what image comes to mind? Maybe you see Billy Graham standing before a crusade of people, inviting folks to come to the platform if they're interested in coming to know Christ. Possibly you're thinking of a pastor standing

before his pulpit, with the organ playing "Just As I Am"? Some preachers ask people to stand, others to remain seated, still others to move to another room, all in the name of "giving the invitation." Spurgeon invited folks to return to the church building one evening during the following week. Billy Sunday invited folks to walk down a sawdust trail. Dr. Dixon would ask people to raise their hand.

How a preacher concludes his sermon is quite significant. On the way home from church, a father asked his ten-year-old son what he thought of their new pastor. "I like this one better than the one we had before," the little boy said. "Why's that?" asked the father. "Well," the boy explained, "this preacher said, 'In conclusion,' and he concluded. The other preacher said, 'Lastly,' and then he lasted and lasted and lasted!"<sup>[1]</sup>

I read an interesting analogy this week in John Stott's book on preaching, *Between Two Worlds*. He cites Spurgeon who made the observation that some preachers are like the Chinese jugglers he had seen. One stood against a wall and the others threw knives at him. They'd hit above his head, close by his ear, under his armpit, and between his fingers. They could throw within a hair's breadth and never strike.<sup>[2]</sup>

Preaching isn't for the sake of mere information. It's supposed to lead to *transformation*. Every sermon, for that matter, every Bible study, Sunday School lesson, youth lesson, even Awana devotional, or children's church story time, should have a goal in mind, a goal that's rooted in the text being studied that will result in life change for the glory of Christ.

That's what an invitation is all about. Once a preacher has proclaimed God's truth, he must call upon his hearers to do something with the truth they've heard. To personalize it, once we've heard God's truth, we need to respond to it.

This morning we've come to the invitation of the message delivered by the writer of Hebrews. I've mentioned before that the epistle to the Hebrews is much like a sermon. The writer actually calls it "a word of exhortation" in 13:22. If you read it aloud from beginning to end, it takes about 45-50 minutes. We've taken many months to digest Hebrews paragraph by paragraph, but its first audience probably heard it initially in one shot, a sermon if you will, one delivered in a first century church made up of predominantly Jewish Christians. The first hearers of this exhortation would have heard the first forty minutes of the message exalting Christ's person and work (in what we call chapters 1-10), followed by a list of inspiring examples of men and women who believed in God (in chapter 11), followed by a charge to fix our eyes on Jesus (in chapter 12).

Then comes crunch time. In chapter 13, the writer gives the invitation. It's time to respond. He hasn't spent twelve chapters telling us about Jesus for nothing. He's got a goal in mind, a purpose, and now he's going to lay it before us. He's going to charge us to do something with what we've heard. When it comes to truth, if you *know it* (that's chapters 1-12), you need to *show it* (that's chapter 13).

So let's take a look at this invitation, doing so with two aims in mind. First, by studying this invitation we can better learn how to give invitations as we teach God's Word. How should we conclude our teaching times? This text will help us. The invitation at the end of the book of Hebrews, and specifically the invitation presented in Hebrews 13:7-14, shows us that a good invitation invites people to take inventory of three matters.

But there's another aim I have in mind, a more important one. By looking at this invitation we're going to find out how to respond rightly to the book of Hebrews. What exactly is it that the writer wants us to do with what we've been hearing for months now? We need to know and we will know by the time we conclude this message.

Let me give you the outline at the outset. A good invitation invites people to take inventory of three matters: first of the messenger, second of the message, and third of the necessary response.

### I. Take inventory of the messenger (7-8).

“Remember your leaders, who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.”

God has chosen to use human instruments to give us His Word and to teach us His Word, and those human instruments deserve our attention. Three times in this final chapter the writer calls on his readers to take heed to their leaders. Verse 7—“Remember your leaders.” Verse 17—“Obey your leaders and submit to their authority.” Verse 24—“Greet all your leaders.”

So the church is not a democracy. By God’s design there are leaders and there are followers. What’s the leaders’ task? According to verse 7, it’s to lead, govern, and rule (that’s what the term translated “leader” means). And the leader leads by *speaking the Word of God*. There’s the check and balance. Church leaders are not to teach their own ideas, but only God’s Word. And the congregation’s task is to make sure that what their leaders are telling them is God’s Word, and if so, they are to do it.

Now let’s take a closer look at the way we’re to treat church leaders. The writer told the Hebrews...

**A. Remember the leaders who spoke God’s Word to you in the past.** He seems to have the church’s past leaders in mind. He mentions those who “spoke” the Word to you (past tense). He talks about “the outcome of their way of life,” implying it seems that these leaders are no longer living. Perhaps these are the church leaders who first told them about Messiah Jesus and led them to put their faith in Him. Now they’re gone. But out of sight does not mean out of mind.

*Remember them*, says the writer. We find the same word in 1 Corinthians 11:24, “Do this in remembrance of me.” There we’re commanded to *remember* Christ. Here we’re commanded to *remember* our past leaders. I think the sense is to remember them and see if the message we’re presenting hearing is consistent with the message they preached to us. More about that momentarily.

There’s something else the writer told the Hebrews to do with their former leaders...

**B. Imitate their faith.** Have you thought to yourself, “I wish I had greater faith.”? Well here’s a practical step you can take to develop it. Study the lives of past church leaders and imitate them. The Greek word for “imitate” (*mimēsthe*) is related to our English term “mimic.” Mimic those who have taught you the Word.

Notice the order in verse 7. *Remember*, then *consider*, then *imitate*. Before you can *imitate* someone’s faith, you must *remember* them (if they’re gone), and you must *consider* them, specifically consider the outcome of their life.<sup>[3]</sup> You must study them and observe them carefully (the same word appears in Acts 17:23 where Paul “looked carefully” at the idols on Mars Hill), and when you do you’ll see that what they believe affects the way they live.

God’s kind of church leader welcomes such scrutiny. For example, Paul did. He told the Thessalonians in 2 Thessalonians 3:7-9, “For you yourselves know how you ought to *follow our example*. We were not idle when we were with you, nor did we eat anyone’s food without paying for it. On the contrary, we worked night and day, laboring and toiling so that we would not be a burden to any of you. We did this, not because we do not have the right to such help, but in order to *make ourselves a model* for you to follow.”

Now what does this have to do with an *invitation*? A lot! Before you ever respond to an invitation, you’d be wise to take a close look at the life of the messenger. Simply put...

1. *Make sure you see the faith being lived out in the life of the preacher.* In this case, there’s more than one preacher. There’s the writer of this epistle. He’s preaching the Word to his readers. But there’s also their former leaders. Remember them, says the writer. Remember their faith and the outcome of their faith in the lives.

So let’s do that for a moment. Pastor George Fissel. Pastor Dave Dernlan. Professor Jim Grier. Professor Bob Gromacki. Pastor Larry Rowland. Pastor Kent Poole. Professor Carl Hoch. Those were some of the church leaders who spoke the Word to me when I came to know Christ and during the early

years of my Christian growth. Who were yours? We're supposed to remember and appreciate them. We ought to think about them, ponder their example carefully, consider the outcome of their Christ-focused lives, and walk in their footsteps.

But...at the end of the day, when it's all said and done, they're just men, fallible men in fact, and they can't take us to heaven. They can point the way. They can explain the way. They can introduce us to the One who is the way, but in time they're going to leave us. Either God will take them to another ministry or ultimately take them from this world.

That's why we need the truth of verse 8. "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever." Leon Morris said it well, "Earthly leaders come and go, but he is always there."<sup>[4]</sup> Yes, *the* Leader of the church is always present.

We're so prone to ignore the context of great verses in the Bible, like this verse. Raymond Brown observes, "This sentence (13:8) is probably the letter's most famous verse. We must not forget its context. It is set between the commendation of faithful leaders (13:7) and the condemnation of false ones (13:9)."<sup>[5]</sup>

So how does the teaching of verse 8 relate to the commands in verse 7? What does the fact that Jesus is the same forever have to do remembering and imitating our church leaders? Here's the connection I see. If you're going to imitate a preacher...

2. *Make sure the preacher points you to Jesus.* It doesn't matter if that preacher would happen to be your own father, or brother, or friend. If He's not pointing you to Jesus, then his example is suspect. But if he is pointing you to Jesus, you can follow him and should follow him with confidence and gladness.

It's all about Jesus, beloved. It's all about Him. We ought to remember and imitate our church leaders who point us to Jesus, but we should do so remembering that they are a means to an end, that they will pass away, and that He alone is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

In his commentary on Hebrews Warren Wiersbe shares the following personal story: "After I had announced my resignation from a church I had been pastoring for several years, one of the members said to me, 'I don't see how I am going to make it without you! I depend so much on you for my spiritual help!' My reply shocked him. 'Then the sooner I leave, the sooner you can start depending on the Lord. Never build your life on any servant of God. Build your life on Jesus Christ. He never changes.'"<sup>[6]</sup>

Where's your trust today? I hope it's in Christ. And I hope that whenever you hear a sermon or a Sunday School lesson, you take inventory of that messenger. And if the messenger points you to Christ, you become a mimic of that messenger.

When it comes to an invitation, here's where we start. Take inventory of the messenger.

## II. Take inventory of the message (9-10).

"Do not be carried away by all kinds of strange teachings. It is good for our hearts to be strengthened by grace, not by ceremonial foods, which are of no value to those who eat them. We have an altar from which those who minister at the tabernacle have no right to eat."

What's the writer inviting his readers to do? Simply stated, he wants them to take inventory of the message. The fact is, not every message you hear is worthy of your attention and thus not every invitation you hear deserves your positive response. The writer tells us quite plainly, "Do not be carried away by all kinds of strange teachings." In other words, we're supposed to...

**A. Reject teaching that is novel.** There are "strange" teachings out there (Greek *Xenais*, "unknown, foreign, alien"). In fact, there are "all kinds" (lit. "many colored") of strange teachings. And whenever you hear something strange or novel, you ought to be on your guard. *Don't be carried away by*

it, says the writer. There should be a *sameness* in our message, not newness and variety. Sure, methods change (they ought to be many-colored), but our message must never change.

Remember, Jesus is the same yesterday, today, and forever. If that's true, then the message we preach today ought to sound the same as the message you heard the day God saved you. And that message should be the same as the message your grandparents heard, and their grandparents, if God so graced your ancestors. And if the message isn't the same, if it doesn't present the unchanging truth about Christ and His death, burial, and resurrection, then you ought to reject it, no matter how attractive the preacher may be, or how convincing his invitation appeal may sound.

Remember the setting. The first readers of this letter were Jews who had heard the message of Messiah Jesus, believed in Him, and then began to follow Him. But then they started hearing a different message. Apparently there were preachers, persuasive preachers telling them, "You can believe in Jesus if you want, but if you're serious about going to heaven some day, you'd better come back to Judaism and keep our Jewish traditions and dietary laws. Jesus plus Judaism. That's the ticket. So come on back."

How should you respond when you hear an invitation like that? The writer says, "Don't buy it. Do not be carried away by all kinds of strange teachings."

This is a warning we need to heed, beloved, for strange teachings abound in our day. I'm talking about strange teachings being promoted by preachers who call themselves and their message "Christian." There's a best-selling "Christian" author these days who says we shouldn't talk about sin. Does that sound strange to you? It should. There are preachers promoting a "new perspective" on Paul, suggesting that he never taught the doctrine of Christ's death as a substitute for sinners, asserting that such teaching is cosmic child-abuse. Does that sound strange to you? It should.

Brothers and sisters, when you hear a message that sounds novel, that doesn't square with the gospel truth you've heard from church leaders who spoke the Word of God to you in the past, that's inconsistent with the faith and God-honoring lives they set before you, then reject that message. Yes, we need to reject any teaching that is novel.

What kind of teaching then should we accept? The writer tells us as verse 9 continues, "It is good for our hearts to be strengthened by grace." There's what we need.

**B. Receive teaching that addresses the need of the heart.** That's what is good, not a system of dietary laws, not external regulations. What's good is teaching that can go deep enough to change the human heart. That's what we need and that's what pleases God. And what are the marks of that kind of teaching? How can you identify it? The writer mentions two identifiers, the first in verse 9 and the second in verse 10.

1. *Teaching that pleases God is grace-saturated.* "It is good for our hearts to be strengthened by grace." The grace of God can do what external laws can never do. They can transform the human heart and life, inside out.

"For by grace are you saved through faith (Eph. 2:8)." Titus 2:11-12 "For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age."

That's what's good, not ceremonies and traditions—they can't change your heart. What's good is to be strengthened *by grace*. And that's why the kind of teaching that pleases God and that we desperately need is grace-saturated. Likewise...

2. *Teaching that pleases God is cross-centered.* "We have an altar," says verse 10. A lot of churches talk about having an "altar" and invite folks to "come to the altar" (Roman Catholics refer to the table of the mass as an altar; Baptists and others also often talk about an "altar" in their facilities, referring to a place of prayer in the front of the sanctuary). But in reality, those aren't altars, not biblically defined at least.

One of the accusations the first readers were hearing was, "How can you leave Judaism? We have a temple with an altar in it and priests who offer sacrifices for sins. You don't have an altar!"

But we do! says the preacher. "We have an altar from which those who minister at the tabernacle have no right to eat."

Where is our altar? It's located on a hill outside the city of Jerusalem. It's the place where the Lamb of God was sacrificed for sinners. Our altar is the cross of Jesus Christ.

Do you believe that? If you do, then a response is in order. A good invitation invites you to take inventory of the messenger, then of the message, and finally...

### III. Take inventory of the necessary response (11-14).

How should we respond to this truth that we have an altar? The writer helps us respond by inviting us to ponder carefully two things, first what happened on that altar, and then secondly the effect it should have on us.

**A. Ponder what Jesus did (11-12).** "The high priest carries the blood of animals into the Most Holy Place as a sin offering, but the bodies are burned outside the camp. And so Jesus also suffered outside the city gate to make the people holy through his own blood."

Under the old covenant, you brought your sacrifice to the altar and quite often at least part of that sacrifice was eaten. But there were certain sacrifices, and the sin offering was one of them, that you didn't eat. The priest put the blood of the sin offering on the altar, but he took the body of the animal outside the city where it was burned.

In part, that's what happened to Jesus, says the writer of Hebrews.

1. *He suffered outside the city gate.* He was taken outside the camp where He suffered and died, but here's a surprise. Unlike all previous sin offerings, the Lamb of God wasn't burned up and destroyed. Indeed, He was raised up on the third day, and this Lamb is alive!

Back in verse 10 the writer pointed out that we have an altar from which those outside of Christ have no right to eat. What's implied in that statement? There are people who can't eat at this altar. They don't have the right to do so. But we who know Christ can!

That's one of the many differences between the old and new covenants. Under the old covenant no one ate the sin offering. Under the new covenant, we do.

Jesus talked about this in John 6. He said in John 6:51, "I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." And then in verses 53-55, "I tell you the truth, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink."

You can eat this sin offering, my friend. The question is, *how* do you eat it? One church tradition says you eat it by coming to the communion table, the mass. But that's not true for many reasons, one of which Jesus Himself gave right here in John 6. He tells us how you eat this offering in verse 35, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty."

There's the answer. Jesus says that whoever *comes* to Him will never hunger and whoever *believes* in Him will never thirst. That is to say, it is by coming to Christ that we eat His flesh and by believing in Him that we drink His blood. This is actually one action rather than two, for coming to Christ is the same as believing in him (as explained in John 1:12). Philip Hughes summarizes, "It is by committing ourselves in faith to him who is both our High Priest and the Victim offered in our stead that we eat his flesh and drink

his blood."<sup>[7]</sup>

This is the gospel invitation, beloved. This is the new covenant offer that God extends to us today, this side of the cross. As commentator John Brown explains, "We are permitted to feast on the whole sacrifice of Jesus Christ. We not only eat his flesh, but we do what none of the priests durst do with regard to any of the sacrifices, we drink his blood. We enjoy the full measure of benefit which his sacrifice was designed to secure. We are allowed to feed freely upon the highest and holiest of all sacrifices. Our reconciliation with God is complete, our fellowship with him intimate and delightful."<sup>[8]</sup>

That's what we have, says the writer of Hebrews. We have an altar, and we have the high and holiest sacrifice ever offered to feed upon fully. And don't miss the implied warning. That's what you will forfeit if you turn back from Jesus to Judaism.

But there's more. What's the effect of eating this offering? Notice the purpose stated at the end of verse 12, "And so Jesus also suffered outside the city gate *to make the people holy through his own blood.*" There's the effect...

2. *He suffered to make people holy.* The Holy One, Jesus, went outside the Holy City in order to die on unholy and defiled ground so that by His death He might make people holy.

Again, to appreciate the wonder of this we must think back to how things used to be. Under the old covenant, once a year on the Day of Atonement the priests killed certain beasts as sin offerings, placed their blood on the altar, and then carried their carcasses outside the camp where they were burned (Lev. 16:27). The ground inside the camp was holy and the ground outside the camp was unholy. In fact, before a person could come back into the camp from outside of it he had to undergo ceremonial cleansing (Lev. 16:26, 28).

But notice the point Hebrews is making. Jesus went *outside* the camp. He didn't die in the temple in Jerusalem and His blood wasn't shed on the altar in the holy of holies. No, He went to unholy ground outside of Jerusalem, to a hill called Golgotha, and He went to that unholy ground in order to make people holy.

This was shocking news to the Jewish mind, yet it's good news, gospel news. The Son of God left the holy ground of Jerusalem, went to unholy ground outside of Jerusalem, and there offered Himself as a sacrifice designed to make unholy people holy.

I need some help in explaining this mystery. I've benefitted from Philip Hughes' explanation, "The location of Calvary was one of defilement, not sanctification. But the presence of God's Holy One (Heb. 7:26; Acts 2:27) made holy what was previously unholy and introduced a completely new perspective."<sup>[9]</sup>

To repeat, it's hard for those of us who are not Jewish to appreciate how earth-shattering this message was to first century Jews. For fourteen centuries the Jews had viewed the tabernacle and later the temple as *the holy place*. They'd learned that to be holy, you depended on what happened *inside that holy place*. To be holy, you went *inside the camp*. Furthermore, the Jews learned that if you went *outside* that holy place, you became unclean and unfit for living in relationship with God.

But here's the staggering reality, says the writer of Hebrews. Jesus offered a sacrifice *outside the city gate*, indeed, *outside the holy place*. Yet though He went to unholy ground to make His sacrifice, the effect of His sacrifice was that He *made people holy*.

Do you catch that significance of this? If you want to be holy, you don't need to go to Jerusalem any longer. You don't need to go to a temple there and have a high priest offer a bloody sacrifice inside the camp for your sins. Indeed, you don't need the sacrificial system any longer, for it's fulfilled its God-given purpose. My friend, if you want to have your sins removed, there's only place, one altar that will suffice. And there's only one person that will suffice. It's to Him that we must go.

And that brings us to the climax of the invitation in verses 13-14, "Let us, then, go to him outside the

camp, bearing the disgrace he bore. For here we do not have an enduring city, but we are looking for the city that is to come."

**B. Ponder what we must do (13-14).** Four things.

1. *We must go to a person.* "Let us go to him." This is not a call to a new religion. This is a call to go to the person of Jesus Christ. And notice we're told to go *to* Him. It doesn't say go *for* Him. This isn't a call to do something for Jesus, for while other texts call for such sacrificial service for our Savior (such as verses 15-16), this is where we must begin. Indeed, you can't go *for* Jesus in life until you go to Him.

2. *We must leave our dependence on a religious system.* "Let us go to him *outside the camp.*" The Savior went outside the camp, so if we're going to meet the Savior, we must go to where He is, *outside the camp.*

What's that mean? The first readers knew. To put it simply, Christ is outside the camp of Judaism. Yes, Judaism, which was built on the Hebrew Scriptures, points to Christ, but it doesn't contain Christ. Christ went *outside* the camp, and so must we. If you stay within the camp of old covenant Judaism, you cut off yourself from Christ and miss the benefit of the greatest sin offering of all time. If you want to experience forgiveness and freedom and life eternal, you must go to Jesus *outside the camp.*<sup>[10]</sup>

This invitation certainly had some teeth for its first hearers. Don't go back to Judaism, says the preacher. That's not where the Messiah is. He went outside the camp, and you must go to Him outside the camp. This is no time to turn back to the religious traditions of your upbringing. You must leave those traditions and go to the One to whom they point. You must go to Jesus.

By the way, I could say the same for any other religious system. To be right with God, you must put your faith in the person of Christ, not in a religious system, even a system designed by God Himself (as was the case with Judaism).

3. *We must be ready to suffer disgrace with Jesus.* "Let us go to him outside the camp, *bearing the disgrace he bore.*" That's not exactly the invitation the health and wealth preachers extend, is it? But it's the true gospel invitation. Please realize that if you go to Jesus, you are joining the ranks of a minority, a despised, hated minority in the world. This invitation is an invitation to suffer with Jesus.

So why in the world would anyone accept it? The answer is tht those who accept it aren't living for this world. Indeed, if we're going to accept this invitation...

4. *We must live for a future hope.* That's verse 14, "For here we do not have an enduring city, but we are looking for the city that is to come."

No, I can't offer you a city here and now. I can't offer you fame and health and prosperity. I can't offer that because that's not what Jesus offers us. But I can offer you this, by the authority of the One who called me to preach His gospel, yea, the One who suffered outside the camp to make sinners like you and me holy. I can offer you better and lasting possessions (10:34). I can offer you disgrace for the sake of Christ which is of greater value than the treasures of Egypt (11:36). I can offer you a city, a city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God (11:10). I can offer you a home in the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God (12:22).

That's the King's gracious offer. That's my invitation. Will you accept it? Joseph Hart put it this way...

Come, ye sinners, poor and needy,  
Weak and wounded, sick and sore;  
Jesus ready stands to save you,  
Full of pity, love and power.



Come, ye thirsty, come, and welcome,  
God's free bounty glorify;  
True belief and true repentance,  
Every grace that brings you nigh.

Come, ye weary, heavy laden,  
Lost and ruined by the fall;  
If you tarry till you're better,  
You will never come at all.

View Him prostrate in the garden;  
On the ground your Maker lies.  
On the bloody tree behold Him;  
Sinner, will this not suffice?

Lo! th'incarnate God ascended,  
Pleads the merit of His blood:  
Venture on Him, venture wholly,  
Let no other trust intrude.

Let not conscience make you linger,  
Not of fitness fondly dream;  
All the fitness He requireth  
Is to feel your need of Him.

### *Refrain*

*I will arise and go to Jesus,  
He will embrace me in His arms;  
In the arms of my dear Savior,  
O there are ten thousand charms.*[\[1\]](#)

Make It Personal: Here's the invitation...

1. *Will you go to Jesus today? And...*
2. *Will you live for Jesus come what may?*

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\*\*Note: This is an unedited manuscript of a message preached at Wheelersburg Baptist Church. It is provided to prompt your continued reflection on the practical truths of the Word of God.

[1] Taken from *Handbook of Contemporary Preaching*, Michael Duduit, editor, p. 216.

[2] J.R.W. Stott, *Between Two Worlds*, pp. 251.

[3] That's because "the faith" (that's the literal reading of the command, "Imitate the faith") shows up in a lifestyle.

[4] Leon Morris, p. 148.

[5] Raymond Brown, p. 256.

[6] Warren Wiersbe, p. 328.

[7] I'm indebted to Philip Hughes for his explanation; pp. 576-7.

[8] John Brown, quote taken from Philip Hughes, p. 576.

[9] Philip Hughes, p. 579.

[10] Philip Hughes explains, "By suffering outside the gate, Jesus identifies himself with the world in its unholiness. While we are unable to draw near to God because of our sin, God draws near to us in the person of his Holy One who on our unholy ground makes his holiness available to us in exchange for our sin which he bears and for which he atones on the cross." Philip Hughes, p. 579.

[11] Joseph Hart, "*Come Ye Sinners, Poor and Needy*"