



Sunday, May 13, 2018

Pastor Tim Van Loh

Intro to Hebrews 13:15-16

There have been times and places in our culture where Christians have cultivated a reputation for being unkind. Sometimes it is merely the perception people get when Christians oppose certain sins that are celebrated by the broader culture. Sometimes, though, that reputation is earned as we speak rudely to people who disagree with us, or even consciously refuse to associate with certain people. It can also be earned when visitors in the church come and go without anyone greeting them intentionally or seeking to get to know them.

This passage is a great reminder to us that Jesus Himself came to us when we were sinners, and that in coming to us, He demonstrated the greatest kindness of all when He died on the cross for our sins. As we exhibit kindness towards others, we actually bring praise to God. Like Jesus said, “Let your light shine before others so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven” (Matt. 5:16).

Context

These verses come near the end of the author’s last section in Hebrews. Thus far, the author has argued that Jesus is superior to everything in creation. In fact, Jesus is the one who created everything and upholds it by His word (1:1-3). Therefore, He is superior to the angels, Moses (the mediator of the old covenant), Melchizedek (who is the prototypical high priest), and even better than the old covenant itself. It’s not as though the old covenant was bad, since God was the one who initiated and ratified that covenant as well. But Jesus is far superior to it nonetheless. Those who participate in His covenant do so only by faith, but it is an active faith that involves discipline and perseverance. Finally, at the end of chapter 12, the author outlines how Jesus’ kingdom is eternal and unshakable, and therefore worthy of our complete devotion.

Read and Reflect *(Use this section to write down any thoughts you had on the sermon. Make sure to note any questions you had about something in the passage or in the sermon.)*

Read Hebrews 13:10-16

Main Idea: Jesus enables me to identify with Him and be kind to others—everywhere, all the time.

Other Key Ideas

- What we know about Jesus affects how we respond to Him.
- We ought not be ashamed of Jesus' scars because He bears them for us.
- Live your life by eternity's clock.

Discuss

- 1) Why might someone not want to identify with Jesus?

- 2) Have you or someone you've known ever faced any disgrace or negative responses because you identify with Jesus? What did that look like?

- 3) Why is it so difficult for people to be kind to one another?

- 4) Pastor Tim suggested that sometimes we might make ourselves "too busy to be kind." Have you ever found this to be true in your life? How can you combat that tendency?

- 5) What are some practical ways for us as a group to show kindness to others around us? Maybe in the neighborhood where we meet? Maybe in the context of the church as a whole? Maybe another way?