

Pause Group - Hebrews 13:9-25

Begin your time together by sharing highs and lows from the past week. Pray together with gratitude for the joys of the week in the lives of your group members and the world. Pray for those dealing with struggles. Pray for the world's struggles.

Study Questions: Address the questions your group desires

1. What stood out to you in the readings from the *Hebrews for Everyone* book this week? (pages 171-180)
2. What similarities between Jesus and the sacrificial animals of the sin offering does the author highlight in verses 10-14?
3. Once again in verse 14 the writer mentions the future city we have. How does this help us hold lightly to the material goods, position, prestige, accomplishments, family, or the other sources of self-worth we get in this world?
4. The writer may have been speaking about the tabernacle in the wilderness during Moses' day rather than the Jerusalem temple to avoid mentioning too directly the central institution of Judaism which Jesus declared to be under God's judgement and whose sacrificial system he replaced. Or it may be that the temple had already been destroyed by the Romans. In either case, the point is that the followers of Jesus should be happy to leave the city and its temple even though their fellow Jews may regard them as traitors.
 - With the old sacrificial system defunct, what does 13:15-16 say about the different ways we can bring a continual sacrifice of praise to God?
5. The present mood, particularly in Western society, in which all authority seems suspect, and all power is assumed to corrupt people, gives an extra excuse to people who want to do their own thing rather than submit in any way to someone else. And yet, verses 17-25 suggest there are appropriate structures of responsibility within God's church.
 - How is the relationship between leaders in the church and the rest of God's people described in those verses?
6. What truths are learned in verses 17-25 about the work of the kingdom?
7. The crowning glory of this final passage is the great blessing of verses 20-21, which is still used regularly in many churches, especially in the Easter season. How do these verses bring Hebrews to a culmination?
8. As you think back over the themes of Hebrews, what truths or challenges have been the most significant for you?
9. How has your life of faith been changed by your journey through this letter?

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Closing Prayer -

A prayer of Catherine of Siena

Power of the eternal Father, help me. Wisdom of the Son, enlighten the eye of my understanding. Tender mercy of the Holy Spirit, unite my heart to yourself. Eternal God, restore health to the sick and life to the dead. Give us a voice, your own voice, to cry out to you for mercy for the world. You, light, give us light. You, wisdom, give us wisdom. You, supreme strength, strengthen us.

Amen.