

Riverview Baptist Church  
Sunday School Teaching Plan  
July 13, 2014  
“Leaving the Camp”

**Memory Verse**

“Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe.” Hebrews 12:28, NIV

**The Big Idea:**

Sermon Scripture: Hebrews 13:10-16  
Sermon Title: Receiving God’s Unshakable Kingdom: Part 4: Go Public

Sunday School Scripture: Hebrews 13:10-16  
Sunday School Title: “Leaving the Camp”  
Big Idea:

**REVIEW:** Last week, we discussed brotherly love – loving other Christians, strangers, those in prisons, and those in our own homes. How have you put this into action over the past week?

This week, we’ll talk about sharing Christ with others.

Describe a time recently when something happened to you, and you were extremely excited to share the news with someone else. What was the news? Why did you want to share it? Did it benefit the listener at all? Did you have to make any sacrifices in order to share the news? Would the news have been worth suffering for?

Today, we’ll look at Hebrews 13 and discuss how we can live for Christ and share His love.

**INTRODUCTION**

As we begin today’s lesson, it will help for us to be mindful of a few main points:

1. The original readers/audience of Hebrews were Jewish Christians. They needed help understanding how their Jewish heritage fit in with their new faith in Christ.
2. In the Jewish faith, anything unclean or defiled was disposed of outside of the camp or beyond the city walls. This included carcasses of dead animals used for offerings. Spurgeon explains, “when the High Priest offered the sin-offering, because it typified sin, it was so obnoxious to God that it might not be burned upon the great altar, but it was always burned outside the camp, to show God’s detestation of sin and His determination not only to put it away from Himself, but also to put it away from His Church.” The author’s encouragement to “go outside the camp” in Hebrews 13:10-16 is based upon this Jewish practice.
3. The location of Jesus’ crucifixion, the place of the skull or Golgatha, was a place near but *outside* of the city (John 19:17-20). Spurgeon notes the significance of this: “Now, when our Lord Jesus Christ came into this world to be our Sin-Offering, it behooved Him, also, to be put outside the camp—and it is very interesting to note how remarkably Providence provided for the fulfillment of the type. Had our Lord been killed in a tumult, He would most likely have been slain in the city. Unless He had been put to death judicially, He would not have been taken to the usual Mount of Doom. And it is remarkable that the Romans should have chosen a hill on the outside of the city to be the common place for crucifixion and for punishment by death. We might have imagined that they would have selected some mount in the center of the city and that they would have placed their gibbet in as conspicuous a spot as our Newgate, so that it might strike the multitude with greater awe. But, in the Providence of God, it was arranged otherwise. Christ must not be slain in a tumult! He might not die in the city and when He was delivered into the hands of the Romans, they had not a place of execution within the city, but one outside the camp, that by dying outside the gate, He might be proved to be the Sin-Offering for His people” (C.H. Spurgeon, “Suffering Outside the Camp”).

In Hebrews 13:10-16, the author encourages the readers to “go outside the camp.” This is a reference both to their past Jewish traditions for disposal of the unclean AND for the sacrificial death of Jesus, both of which occurred outside the camp.

***READ Hebrews 13:10-16***

## **LEAVING THE CAMP**

### **1. SEPARATE**

The Jewish tradition required any unclean thing or person to remain outside of the camp or beyond the city walls. This was to impose a strict sense of separation between that which was sinful and unclean and that which was righteous and pure. Gradually, though, the *inside* of the camp became corrupted. Religion became a list of dos and don'ts in an effort to earn heaven. Separation became more about status than righteousness. And righteousness became more about appearance than purity of the heart. The moment Christ died, the camp of Jewish religion and tradition ceased to exist as a viable way to God. And so throughout his letter to these new Jewish Christians, the author of Hebrews encourages them to leave behind the old laws of Judaism and to rely on the supremacy of Christ's sacrifice. In Hebrews 13:13, the writer encourages the readers to “*go to Jesus outside the camp.*” He acknowledges that, in putting their full faith in Jesus, these new believers will be leaving behind their old religion and traditions of Judaism. But if they are to fully appreciate and trust in Jesus' once-for-all sacrifice, they must cut ties, leave, and separate themselves from Judaism.

Today's readers may not need to cut ties with Judaism, but we do need to separate ourselves from many of our culture's priorities and behaviors. In a sense, we need to “leave the camp.” We need to strive to identify more with Christ and less with the world. Our lives need to line up with the Bible, not with the Joneses. Our time, energy, money, and talents should be invested in things of eternal worth, not spent on the temporary things of this world.

***READ 2 Corinthians 6:14-17 and 1 John 2:15.***

Throughout Scripture, God's word tells us to live holy, separate lives. We are to live in the world, but we are not to love the things of the world. As Christ-followers, we are to be separate – different. In fact, we are to live such different lives that others take notice.

***READ 1 Peter 2:12***

*Why is it important for us to separate ourselves from the world? What are some practical ways for us to live differently? Personally, does your lifestyle look more like the world's or Christ's? How can we separate ourselves from the world and yet still love those who are worldly?*

### **2. SUFFER**

Hebrews 13:13 says, “let us then go to him outside the camp, bearing the disgrace he bore.” Scripture tells us that Jesus was despised, arrested, mocked, beaten, and killed like a common criminal. Without a word, Jesus endured all of that in order to shed his perfect blood on our behalf. His sacrifice was initially rejected by many, as he was taken outside of the city to be crucified. Though his blood was the once-for-all sin offering for all mankind, Jesus was still treated as a detested, unclean man that must be separated from and rejected by the people. Jesus suffered in order to attain our salvation. We must be willing to suffer for Him to share the gospel with others. In fact, suffering is something we as Christians should expect!

***READ 2 Timothy 3:12 and Philippians 1:27-29***

*God's word tells us to expect hardship, persecution, and suffering when living for Christ. Many Christ-followers today live in parts of the world where practicing Christianity is illegal. Though we are free to celebrate Christ freely in the United States, in what ways can American Christians still suffer reproach or hardship on Christ's behalf?*

When we separate ourselves from the world in order to love Jesus and live Biblically, we may receive criticism from our culture. In fact, if we *aren't* receiving much criticism or attracting stares and questions, perhaps we're not living differently enough. But it's those times of enduring hardship or rejection or even persecution that earn you the right to

Speak into other's lives. Think about it. If a man believes in something enough to suffer greatly for it, others may observe his patient and hopeful suffering and be open to hearing about the cause for which the man willingly endures. So maybe we should look at our hardships as opportunities to share with others!

### **3. SACRIFICE**

Hebrews 13:16-17 encourages believers to leave the camp and endure suffering because "we do not have an enduring city here, but we are looking for the city that is to come." It's okay to leave the camp and live separately from the culture – this isn't our forever home! The knowledge that this world is not our home enables us to suffer for Christ. Our hope in heaven as our future home gives us motivation to make earthly sacrifices in order to earn eternal rewards. You see, if we're honest, leaving the camp might mean leaving security, comfort, and wealth. Living outside the camp might require suffering, and it will surely involve sacrifices.

*What sacrifices might a Christian make to please God and share Christ? (sending money on missions instead of self; serving others instead of self; spending time in church; sacrificing sleep in order to study God's word; going on mission trips; etc)*

It's not easy to make sacrifices – to give up something in order to gain something else. But the act of sacrifice becomes less painful when the end result is more valuable than what you started with. This is true for the Christian who sacrifices earthly prizes to attain heavenly reward.

#### ***READ Matthew 16:24-26***

Missionary Jim Elliot said, "he is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain that which he cannot lose." The world and everything in it will eventually pass away. But the word of the Lord and the people of God will live eternally with Jesus Christ. Living for Jesus will require separation, suffering, and sacrifice, but the end reward is OH SO WORTH IT!

#### ***READ Philippians 3:7-8***

*Paul had a past marked by stability, comfort, family notoriety and good reputation. He says he considers all of this rubbish (literally dung!) compared to knowing Christ and becoming like Him. Paul says he has lost all things that were previously important to Him in order to gain Christ. What things are you willing to sacrifice in order to know Christ? What are you unwilling to sacrifice?*

### **4. SHARE**

Hebrews 13:15-16 says, "therefore, let us through Christ continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise – the fruit of lips that confess His name. And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased." The verses that follow the encouragement to "leave the camp" then say, "therefore." In other words, the command to praise (verses 15-16) hinges on the earlier verses (12-14). Verses 12-14 tell us that we have a Savior who willingly shed His blood for us and encourages us to "leave the camp" for His sake. So, based on His sacrifice and in obedience to His call, let's live a life of praise that's pleasing to Him!! There are a few key words in verses 15-16 worth noting:

- A. **Continually** – like breathing. Our praise should be constant and so vital that it becomes involuntary. Does your praise depend on a scripted time or a positive situation? Can you praise even in the tough times?
- B. **Fruit of Lips** – praise is verbal! Whom do we praise with our words? Do our words glorify God or disappoint Him? If your words are fruit, are they ripe, delicious and desirable, or are they rotten and unwanted?
- C. **Do Good** – praise occurs in our actions, too! Do you work for God's approval, or man's? Do you serve others out of your love for God, or your desire for reward? Do you consider your job and daily work as acts of worship?
- D. **Share with Others** – this means to live in meaningful community with others. Is your life centered on you, or do you take time and resources to serve others? Do you share your life with others? Do you celebrate Jesus with others? Are you willing to let others show you Christ's love in times of need?

As we learn to live lives of praise in attitude, word, and deed, we will be more able to share the good news of Christ's love with others – whether they live on the inside or outside of the camp.

**CLOSING:** When we leave the camp for Christ's sake, we separate ourselves from the world, suffer and sacrifice for the gospel, and share His praise with others.

**APPLY IT!**

1. Have you "left the camp" for Christ's sake? Or do you live just like the godless world around you? What changes do you need to make to separate yourself from the world?
2. What sacrifices is God calling you to make in order to spread the gospel?
3. With whom does God want you to share His love this week?

**ADDITIONAL RESOURCE:** Sermon by C.H. Spurgeon, "Suffering Outside the Camp" – sermon #2660, preached on February 4, 1900. Available online: <http://www.spurgeongems.org/vols46-48/chs2660.pdf>.

**STUDY NOTES:**

(These are for your own study. This is NOT the lesson. Commentary written by David Guzik and available online: [http://www.blueletterbible.org/commentaries/guzik\\_david/](http://www.blueletterbible.org/commentaries/guzik_david/))

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**We have an altar from which those who serve the tabernacle have no right to eat:** These Jewish Christians had probably been branded as illegitimate by other Jews because they did not continue the Levitical system. But the writer to the Hebrews insists that **we have an altar**, and it is an altar that those who insist on clinging to the Levitical system have no right to. Essentially, our **altar** is the cross - the centerpiece of the Christian gospel and understanding (1 Corinthians 1:18-24; 2:1-5).

**Jesus ... suffered outside the gate. Therefore let us go forth to Him, outside the camp, bearing His reproach:** If our Savior was rejected and His sacrifice (performed at the cross, our **altar**) was branded illegitimate, what better do we expect? Identifying with Jesus often means **bearing His reproach**, the very thing many are quite unwilling to do.

**Outside the camp:** The **camp** referred to is institutional Judaism, which had rejected Jesus and Christianity. Though these Christians from Jewish backgrounds had been raised to consider everything **outside the camp** as unclean and evil, they must follow Jesus there.

**For here we have no continuing city, but we seek the one to come:** The difficult job of **bearing His reproach** is easier when we remember that the city or society we are cast out of is only temporary. We **seek**, and belong to, the permanent city yet to come.

**Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God:** Because we do have an *altar* (the cross) and we do have a High Priest (Jesus), we should always offer sacrifices. But they are not the bloody sacrifices of the old covenant, but the **sacrifice of praise**, the **fruit of our lips**. The writer to the Hebrews spells out several essentials for proper praise.

- Praise that pleases God is offered **by Him**, that is, by Jesus Christ, on the ground of His righteousness and pleasing God.
- Praise that pleases God is offered **continually**, so that we are always praising Him.
- Praise that pleases God is a **sacrifice of praise**, in that it may be costly or inconvenient.
- Praise that pleases God is **the fruit of our lips**, more than just thoughts directed towards God. It is spoken out unto the Lord, either in prose or in song. "What proceeds from the lips is regarded as *fruit*, which reveals the character of its source, as the fruit of a tree reveals the nature of the tree." (Guthrie)

**But do not forget to do good and to share, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased:** Praise is not the only sacrifice that pleases God. We also perform sacrifice that pleases God when we **do good** and **share**. Praise and worship are important, but the Christian's obligation do not end there.