

MARK ONE: CONTROLLING ONE'S PERSONAL BEHAVIOUR

HEBREWS 13:01–08

Introduction

What are the supreme marks of Christian conduct? This begins the last section of the Book of Hebrews — a very practical section. Note the *marks of personal behaviour*.

- I. Mark 1: brotherly love (v. 1).
- II. Mark 2: hospitality (v. 2).
- III. Mark 3: helping the prisoners and the mistreated (v. 3).
- IV. Mark 4: purity in marriage (v. 4).
- V. Mark 5: contentment (vv. 5-6).
- VI. Mark 6: remembering your leaders (v. 7).
- VII. Mark 7: remembering your Source of life and power — Jesus Christ (v. 8).

I. *Hebrews 13:01 Love and Brotherhood*

There is the mark of brotherly love. “Keep on loving each other as brothers.”

1. Note that the love existing among believers is a special kind of love. It is a “brotherly love” (*philadelphia*), the very special love that exists between brothers and sisters within a loving family, brothers and sisters who truly cherish one another. It is the kind of love...
 - that binds each other together as a family, as a brotherly clan.
 - that binds each other in an unbreakable union.
 - that holds each other ever so deeply within the heart.
 - that knows deep affection for each other.
 - that nourishes and nurtures each other.
 - that shows concern and looks after the welfare of each other.
 - that joins hands with each other in a common purpose *under one father* (Leon Morris. *The Epistles of Paul to the Thessalonians*. “Tyndale New Testament Commentary,” ed. by RVG Tasker. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1956, p. 80).

How can people possibly love one another like this when they are not true blood brothers and sisters? Here is how. The Greek word “brother” (*adelphos*) means *from the same womb*. The word used for “love” is *phileo* which means deep-seated affection and care, deep and warm feelings within the heart. It is the kind of love that holds a person near and dear to one’s heart. Now note: the two Greek words are combined together by the writer to convey what he means by *brotherly love*.

=> People who have *brotherly love* have come from the same womb, that is, from the same source. They have been *born again* by the Spirit of God through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. And when they receive this new birth, God gives them a new spirit — a spirit that melts and binds their hearts and lives in love for all the family of God.

Believers may not even know each other. They may even be from different parts of the world, but there is a *brotherly love* between them because they have been given a new birth and a new spirit of love by God. They are brothers and sisters in the family of God — the family of those who truly believe in God's Son, the Lord Jesus Christ — the family who have received a new spirit that binds them together in brotherly love.

John 13:34-35 *“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”*

John 15:12 *“My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you.”*

John 15:17 *“This is my command: Love each other.”*

Rom 5:5 *And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us.*

Gal 5:22 *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness.*

1 John 3:14 *We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love our brothers. Anyone who does not love remains in death.*

1 John 3:18-19 *Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth. This then is how we know that we belong to the truth, and how we set our hearts at rest in his presence.*

1 John 5:1 *Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves the father loves his child as well.*

2. Note that the Hebrew Christians were showing their love for one another — at least most of them were. This is clearly seen in Heb. 6:10, “God is not unjust; he will not forget your work and the love you have shown him as you have helped his people and continue to help them.”

However, there was great danger that the Hebrew Christians were going to lose their brotherly love for one another. Why?

=> Because some had backslidden and were slipping away from Christ (Heb. 10:25).

=> Because false teaching had seeped in among them and was influencing some (Heb. 13:9).

These problems along with other problems were apparently discouraging the faithful and mature believers. They were beginning to cool off and back off instead of facing and handling the problems in the love and strength of Christ.

This is the reason for the exhortation. The believers needed to continue in love, to love enough to forget self. They needed to love enough to sacrifice themselves and to tackle the problems and continue to proclaim and teach the truth of Christ.

Thought 1. Brotherly love is the great need of the hour — a love that will love so much that it will not give up, no matter the problem or opposition. People need to be reached and grown for Christ no matter how contrary they are or how lost and depraved they are. They are without Christ. If believers do not love enough to reach them, they will never be reached. “Keep on loving each other as brothers.”

Rom 12:9 *Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good.*

Eph 4:1-2 *As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love.*

Col 3:12-14 *Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.*

1 Th 3:12 *May the Lord make your love increase and overflow for each other and for every one else, just as ours does for you.*

1 Pet 1:22 *Now that you have purified yourselves by obeying the truth so that you have sincere love for your brothers, love one another deeply, from the heart.*

II. **Hebrews 13:02** *Mark of Hospitality*

There is the mark of hospitality. An open door is to be the mark of a believer: the believer is to open the doors of his home. The Christian believer is to open his home and reach out...

- to the travelling salesperson
- to the homeless, hungry, cold and needy
- to the lonely
- to the young
- to the aged
- to the college student
- to the out of townner
- to church ministries and groups

The idea is that the home of the believer is to be used as an outreach ministry for the Lord. The home of the believer is to be used to meet the needs of people. Note the exhortation: do not forget hospitality, especially to entertain strangers. The Amplified New Testament says this:

Heb. 13:2 *“Do not forget or neglect or refuse to extend hospitality to strangers [in the brotherhood] — being friendly, cordial and gracious, sharing the comforts of your home and doing your part generously — for through it some have entertained angels without knowing it. [Gen. 18:1-8; 19:1-3.]”*

Thought 1. If believers really practiced this, think how many needs would be reached throughout the community. Think how many people would be reached for Christ.

What is needed is this: ministers must lead their people to set up an *open-home ministry*, to use their homes to reach out to people on a *regular basis*. What an impact would be made for Christ! Remember: home evangelism was what Christ stressed so much (see *Home Evangelism*, Lk. 9:4; see Lk. 10:5-6).

Rom 12:13 *Share with God's people who are in need. Practice hospitality.*

Gal 6:10 *Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.*

1 Tim 3:2 *Now the overseer must be above reproach, the husband of but one wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach.*

1 Tim 5:10 *And is well known for her good deeds, such as bringing up children, showing hospitality, washing the feet of the saints, helping those in trouble and devoting herself to all kinds of good deeds.*

Titus 1:8 *Rather he must be hospitable, one who loves what is good, who is self-controlled, upright, holy and disciplined.*

Heb 13:2 *Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so doing some people have entertained angels without knowing it.*

1 Pet 4:9 *Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling.*

III. **Hebrews 13:03 Ministering to Prisoners**

There is the mark of helping the prisoners and the mistreated. As long as the earth is standing, people are going to suffer all kinds of problems.

=> Some people are lawless, and other people are falsely accused, even believers. The end result is the suffering of imprisonment.

=> All people at one time or another suffer adversity of some sort. The result is such experiences as pain, emptiness, questioning, insecurity, loss, hunger, homelessness, poverty, disability, helplessness and sometimes even hopelessness.

Believers are to minister to the needs of prisoners and to those who suffer adversity. Prisoners are not to be forgotten; those who suffer adversity are not to be forgotten. Note this verse: they are to be remembered. Remember the imprisoned! Remember those who suffer adversity. But this is not all that Scripture says:

=> "Remember those...as if you were their fellow prisoners": remember and minister to them so much that it is as though you are imprisoned with them.

=> "Remember those...as if you yourselves were suffering."

Thought 1. What a challenge to believers and to the church! Ministers must take the lead; they must lead their people to set up...

- a ministry to the prisoners.
- a ministry to those who suffer adversity.

Rom 12:15 *Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn.*

Isa 58:7 *Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter — when you see the naked, to clothe him, and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood?*

Acts 20:35 *In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'*

Rom 15:1 *We who are strong ought to bear with the failings of the weak and not to please ourselves.*

Gal 6:2 *Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfil the law of Christ.*

Heb 13:3 *Remember those in prison as if you were their fellow prisoners, and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering.*

James 1:27 *Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.*

IV. Hebrews 13:04 Purity in Marriage

There is the mark of purity in marriage and morality. This is an absolute essential for believers. Note three significant points.

1. Marriage is to be honoured by all believers. The word “honour” (timios) means highly esteemed, counted as the most precious, warm and tender bond, held as the most valuable of bonds, as being the dearest of relationships.

“Let marriage be held in honour” (Marcus Dods. *The Epistle to the Hebrews*. “Expositor’s Greek Testament,” Vol. 4, p. 375).

“Let marriage be held in honour — esteemed worthy, precious, [that is], of great price and especially dear — in all things” (Amplified N T).

Eph 5:25 *Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her.*

Eph 5:31-32 *“For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.” This is a profound mystery — but I am talking about Christ and the church.*

2. The bed is kept pure. The word “pure” (amiantos) means that the bed is unstained by sin, absolutely free from all moral impurity, uncleanness, and defilement. This is saying at least three things.

- => First, husband and wife are free and encouraged to be close in bed. Closeness and intimacy are a gift from God; it is even a type of the church (cp. Eph. 5:22f).
- => Second, the closeness in bed between husband and wife will prevent unfaithfulness.
- => Third, the bed is to be kept pure. Only husband and wife are to be close in bed, and only with each other. There is absolutely no place for anyone else in the bed.

The importance of the bed in marriage cannot be overemphasized. God's Word says that it is so important that husband and wife are not to separate for any period of time except for fasting and prayer, and even then separation is not to occur unless it is by mutual consent.

1 Cor 7:5 Do not deprive each other except by mutual consent and for a time, so that you may devote yourselves to prayer. Then come together again so that Satan will not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.

1 Cor 7:2 But since there is so much immorality, each man should have his own wife, and each woman her own husband.

1 Th 4:4 That each of you should learn to control his own body in a way that is holy and honourable.

Prov 12:4 A wife of noble character is her husband's crown, but a disgraceful wife is like decay in his bones.

3. The adulterers and the sexually immoral will be judged by God. These two terms include all forms of sexual vice: premarital sex, adultery, homosexuality and abnormal sex. Note several stated facts.

=> God knows who commits these vices. He has to know them for Him to judge them, and He has to know them by name. He knows every single person who is immoral. He sees every immoral act, exactly what is done. No one — not a single immoral person — can hide from Him. There is not a closed door or any darkness any-place that blocks His sight. God knows.

=> God calls every sexual vice by its proper name. Men may call it loving, caring, exciting and stimulating. They may call it an act of manhood and womanhood, of gallantry and of conquest. But not God. God calls it by its real name: whoredom and adultery (Mathew Henry. *Mathew Henry's Commentary*, Vol. 6, p. 962). God knows that immorality causes...

- loss of innocence
- disease
- broken homes
- unwanted pregnancies
- damaged minds
- abortion
- destroyed lives
- guilt

The list could go on and on, but such devastation and destruction of life and emotions are the reasons why God pulls no punches with sexual vice. Sexual vice is one of the most destructive vices on earth, no matter what men may say. It is so by the very

nature of man. God made man's very nature for the love of a spouse and a family. And any refusal to live by his nature as God made him can only damage man. (See *Immorality, Body*, 1 Cor. 6:18.)

The great tragedy with sexual vice is this: it always involves others, not only the illicit partner but the parents and family including children, brothers and sisters, and often grandparents, other relatives, friends and neighbours. It involves all those who care for and look up to the immoral person.

The point is this: adulterers and the sexually immoral will be judged by God. There will be no escape.

Gal 5:19, 21 *The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.*

Eph 5:5 *For of this you can be sure: No immoral, impure or greedy person — such a man is an idolater — has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.*

Rev 21:8 *“But the cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, the murderers, the sexually immoral, those who practice magic arts, the idolaters and all liars — their place will be in the fiery lake of burning sulphur. This is the second death.”*

Rev 21:27 *Nothing impure will ever enter it, nor will anyone who does what is shameful or deceitful, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life.*

Rev 22:15 *Outside are the dogs, those who practice magic arts, the sexually immoral, the murderers, the idolaters and everyone who loves and practices falsehood.*

V. **Hebrews 13:05–06** *Mark of Contentment*

There is the mark of contentment. Note what it is that brings contentment:

=> living life without covetousness, free from the love of money.

=> being satisfied with what one has.

=> knowing God personally: experiencing His constant companionship and care, knowing that He never leaves or forsakes us.

1. “Loving money” — “Covetousness” (aphilarguros) means loving money or possessions. A person can love money, property, estates, houses, cars — anything on earth. Thomas Hewitt points out that the Greek word for “lives” (tropos) means *manner of life, or the way of thought and life* (*The Epistle to the Hebrews*. “Tyndale New Testament Commentaries,” p. 206). The believer's very thoughts are to be free from covetousness. His thoughts are to be focused upon Christ and the glorious hope of eternity, not upon this passing world and its possessions. The believer is to have no secret lust for the things of this world.

Prov 15:27 *A greedy man brings trouble to his family, but he who hates bribes will live.*

Eccl 5:10 Whoever loves money never has money enough; whoever loves wealth is never satisfied with his income. This too is meaningless.

Jer 17:11 Like a partridge that hatches eggs it did not lay is the man who gains riches by unjust means. When his life is half gone, they will desert him, and in the end he will prove to be a fool.

1 Tim 6:10 For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.

James 5:3 Your gold and silver are corroded. Their corrosion will testify against you and eat your flesh like fire. You have hoarded wealth in the last days.

Luke 12:15 Then he said to them, "Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; a man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions."

Col 3:5 Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry.

1 Cor 6:10 Nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God.

Psa 119:36 Turn my heart toward your statutes and not toward selfish gain.

2. A believer is to be content with what he has. This does not mean that a believer is not to improve himself, nor that he is not to work and make money and be wise in investments. Scripture teaches the very opposite: we are to work and invest and make money. We are to make enough so that we can meet the needs of the world. What this passage means is that we are...

- to be satisfied with our lot in life: our ability, capacity, job, position, opportunities and on and on.
- to be satisfied with the home, possessions, clothing, goods and everything else we have, whether it is little to nothing.
- to be satisfied with our present conditions.

Again, this does not mean that we do not plan and focus upon improving everything around us — ranging from our personal possessions over to the world's economy and environment. Believers are to work and labour more diligently than anyone else in the world. But while we labour, we know...

- that God never leaves us or forsakes us (Job 1:5).
- that God is our helper, and we are secure no matter what men may do to us (Psa. 118:6).

Even if the world's economy and peace collapsed, believers — true believers — would be secure in God. God provides for His dear followers until He is ready to take them home to heaven (Mt. 6:33). Mathew Henry sums it up well:

“This promise contains the sum and substance of all the promises. I will never, no, never leave thee, nor ever forsake thee. Here are no fewer than five negatives heaped together, to confirm the promise; the true believer shall have the gracious presence of God with him in life, at death and for ever” (Mathew Henry’s Commentary, Vol. 6. p. 962).

Mat 6:33 *“But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.”*

Heb 13:5 *Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, “Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.”*

Gen 28:15 *I am with you and will watch over you wherever you go, and I will bring you back to this land. I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you.”*

Exo 33:14 *The Lord replied, “My Presence will go with you, and I will give you rest.”*

Psa 68:19 *Praise be to the Lord, to God our Saviour, who daily bears our burdens.*

Mal 3:10 *“Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this,” says the Lord Almighty, “and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it.”*

Isa 41:17 *“The poor and needy search for water, but there is none; their tongues are parched with thirst. But I the Lord will answer them; I, the God of Israel, will not forsake them.”*

Isa 25:4 *You have been a refuge for the poor, a refuge for the needy in his distress, a shelter from the storm and a shade from the heat. For the breath of the ruthless is like a storm driving against a wall.*

Thought 1. There are two ways for a person to go about taking care of himself in this world.

- 1) Working and seeking in his own strength: depending upon his own ability and energy alone; fighting and struggling to make it through life and fretting and worrying about succeeding.
- 2) Working and seeking in both God’s strength and his own strength: trusting and acknowledging God while doing all he can; putting his hand to the plough and ploughing; working and working and not looking back, and while working, trusting the results to God. God says He will see to it that such a trusting person will always have the necessities of life.

Thought 2. The believer whose work fails in the eyes of the world can know four sure things — if he has really put God first.

- 1) His failure is temporary. God will help and strengthen and even teach him through the trying times.

- 2) God will work all things out for good, for the believer loves God and has been called by God (Rom. 8:28f).
- 3) God will see to it that the necessities of life are given him.
- 4) God has much better things in store for him — eternally. The believer has been faithful in his work, so God will reward him as a faithful servant, even if his labour has failed in the eyes of the world.

The believer who goes through a failure needs to remember just one thing: be faithful — continue to be faithful. If you put God first, God will lift you up now and eternally.

Thought 3. God made man a spiritual being. Therefore, the only way man can ever be satisfied is to seek God and His righteousness first. This world and the things of this world will not satisfy.

Thought 4. Man's major mistake is this: material things can only make a person *comfortable*. The things of the world can only look good, taste good and feel good; but this is all they can do. Think about it! They are external, *outside* man. and this is just the problem. The need that man senses within is not to be *externally comfortable*, but to be *inwardly satisfied and spiritually satisfied* (see note, Eph. 1:3).

- 1) Material things cannot touch the inside of man. They can only make him comfortable outside.
- 2) Man really knows down deep within that all material things pass away, even himself. He subdues the knowledge, pushes it out of his thoughts, yet he knows it.

Thought 5. Man can have the necessities of life; but he has to do one thing: "Seek first His kingdom and His righteousness..."

Luke 11:9-10 "So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened."

James 2:5 Listen, my dear brothers: Has not God chosen those who are poor in the eyes of the world to be rich in faith and to inherit the kingdom he promised those who love him?

Deu 4:29 But if from there you seek the Lord your God, you will find him if you look for him with all your heart and with all your soul.

Isa 25:4 You have been a refuge for the poor, a refuge for the needy in his distress, a shelter from the storm and a shade from the heat. For the breath of the ruthless is like a storm driving against a wall.

Isa 41:17 "The poor and needy search for water, but there is none; their tongues are parched with thirst. But I the Lord will answer them; I, the God of Israel, will not forsake them."

VI. Hebrews 13:07 Remembering Leaders

There is the remembering of leaders. “Remember” (*mnemoneuete*) means to be mindful; to keep in mind. The idea is continuous remembrance. Leaders are never to be forgotten. But note who the leaders are that are to be remembered: those who have proclaimed the Word of God. If a person has been faithful in proclaiming and teaching God's Word, we are to remember them and never forget them. Note why: *so that we can imitate their faith*. A leader who faithfully proclaims God's Word is a leader to imitate. As the *Amplified New Testament* says:

“Remember your leaders and superiors in authority, [for it was they] who brought to you the Word of God. Observe attentively and consider their manner of living — the outcome of their well-spent lives — and imitate their faith [that is, their conviction that God exists and is the Creator and Ruler of all things, the Provider and Bestower of eternal salvation through Christ; and their leaning of the entire human personality on God in absolute trust and confidence in His power, wisdom and goodness].”

This is a power-packed verse. Note what it says when it is broken down in outline form: imitate your leaders...

- in their conviction that God exists and is the Creator and Ruler of all things.
- in their conviction that God is the Provider and Bestower of eternal salvation through Christ.
- in the leaning of their entire personality on God.
- in their absolute trust and confidence in God's power, wisdom and goodness.

Note that both living and dead leaders are to be followed, those who have ended their work on earth as well as those who are now labouring. Mathew Henry says:

“Remember them — their preaching, their praying, their private counsel, their example.”

“Follow their faith; be steadfast in the profession of the faith they preached to you and labour after the grace of faith by which they lived and died so well. Consider the end of their conversation [behaviour], how quickly, how comfortably, how joyfully, they finished their course!” (Mathew Henry's Commentary, Vol. 6, p. 963.)

1 Cor 4:16 *Therefore I urge you to imitate me.*

Phil 4:9 *Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me or seen in me — put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.*

1 Th 1:6-7 *You became imitators of us and of the Lord; in spite of severe suffering, you welcomed the message with the joy given by the Holy Spirit. And so you became a model to all the believers in Macedonia and Achaia.*

Heb 6:12 We do not want you to become lazy, but to imitate those who through faith and patience inherit what has been promised.

Heb 7:7 And without doubt the lesser person is blessed by the greater.

Heb 7:17 For it is declared: "You are a priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek."

James 5:10 Brothers, as an example of patience in the face of suffering, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

VII. Hebrews 13:08 Source of Life and Power: Jesus Christ

There is remembering one's source of life and power — Jesus Christ. Ministers and leaders come and go and eventually they all die. But the Source of our lives and power never leaves and never passes away. "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever." (v. 8) He is forever present with us, and He never changes. F.F. Bruce says:

"His help, His grace, His power, His guidance are permanently at His people's disposal; why then should they lose heart? Others serve their generation by the will of God and pass on; 'but he, because he abideth for ever, hath his priesthood unchangeable' (Ch. 7:24). He never needs to be replaced, and nothing can be added to His perfect work" (The Epistle to the Hebrews, p. 396).

William Barclay says:

"It is in the nature of things that all earthly leaders must come and go. They have their day and they lead their generation, and then they must pass from the scene. They have their part in the drama of life, and then the curtain comes down. But Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and for ever. His pre-eminence is permanent; His leadership is for ever. And therein there lies the secret of earthly leadership. The real leader is the man who is led himself by Jesus Christ. The men who have made the Churches, the men who have led others on the upward way, are the men who in every age and every generation have themselves been led by the eternal and unchanging Christ. He who walked the ways of Galilee is still as powerful as ever to smite evil and to love the sinner; and, even as then He chose twelve to be with Him, and then sent them out to do His work, so now He is still seeking those who will bring men to Him, and Him to men" (The Letter to the Hebrews, p. 223)

1. "Jesus Christ the same yesterday": *yesterday* — in times past — Jesus Christ sacrificed everything for us, even to the point of dying for us. In fact, He even suffered to the ultimate degree for us: He took our sins upon Himself and bore the guilt and judgment for us. Yesterday Jesus Christ took notice of us and worked everything out for us. He looked upon our plight of corruption and death and loved us and did everything that was necessary to save us and make us acceptable to God.

2. “Jesus Christ the same today”: *today* — in the present hour — Jesus Christ will do everything for us. Yesterday He suffered to the ultimate degree for us; today He has been exalted to the ultimate degree for us. He, the very Son of God, is the great High Priest who has passed through the heavens and been exalted to the right hand of the throne of God. And He has been exalted for one reason and one reason only: to shower mercy and grace upon His followers, that is, to meet their every need. No matter what the need is. He meets it.

=> He meets our need for mercy. No matter how terrible our sin, corruption, depravity, evil, failure, wrong, misdeed, shortcoming — and no matter how often we fail — Jesus Christ has mercy upon us. If we will repent and confess — change our sinful ways and turn to Him and cry for mercy — Jesus Christ will forgive us.

=> He meets our need for grace. He pours out His grace upon us, blessing and favouring us with whatever we need: strength, knowledge, understanding, wisdom, ability and necessities of life.

=> He helps us through all our sufferings and trials and temptations. The idea of help is that He runs to meet our every cry and need for help.

Heb 2:17-18 For this reason he had to be made like his brothers in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people. Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.

Heb 4:14-16 Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has gone through the heavens. Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are — yet was without sin. Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

Rom 8:28 And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.

3. “Jesus Christ the same forever”: *forever* — eternally, from now on, throughout all the ages of eternity. Jesus Christ has not only been exalted to the ultimate degree to meet our needs today, He lives eternally to meet our needs forever and ever.

=> He met all the needs yesterday.

=> He meets all the needs today.

=> He shall meet all the needs eternally.

Jesus Christ will never fail to meet a single need of a true believer.

=> He met the needs of all believers who lived yesterday.

=> He meets the needs of all believers today.

=> He shall meet the needs of all believers forever.

Heb 7:3 *Without father or mother, without genealogy, without beginning of days or end of life, like the Son of God he remains a priest forever.*

Heb 13:8 *Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.*

James 1:17 *Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.*

Rev 22:13 *I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End.*

Heb 13:6 *So we say with confidence, "The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?"*

1 Cor 10:13 *No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.*

Psa 28:7 *The Lord is my strength and my shield; my heart trusts in him, and I am helped. My heart leaps for joy and I will give thanks to him in song.*

Psa 40:17 *Yet I am poor and needy; may the Lord think of me. You are my help and my deliverer; O my God, do not delay.*

Psa 102:27 *But you remain the same, and your years will never end.*

Isa 41:10 *So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand. ■*