



Persisting Love Through the Great Shepherd

Lesson Sixty-Three • Hebrews 13:20-21

23 Commands in Hebrews 13 for Persisting Love to Move Forward to Our Final Salvation!*							
PERSISTING LOVE for One Another! (vv. 1-6)	PERSISTING LOVE with Church Leaders! (vv. 7, cf. 17, 24)	PERSISTING LOVE by the Changeless Christ! (v. 8)	PERSISTING LOVE in Bearing Reproach! (vv. 9-14)	PERSISTING LOVE as Believer Priests! (vv. 15-17, [18a])	PERSISTING LOVE Thru the Great Shepherd! (vv. 20-21)	PERSISTING LOVE to Keep Moving Forward! (vv. 18-19, 22-25)	
8 Commands in 4 Pairs Y'all persist in brotherly love and avoid the pitfalls (sexual immorality & material idolatry) with godly motivation!	9 Commands				NO COMMANDS!	6 Various Commands	
	2	+	0	+	2	+	5
	Let us keep going outside the camp to bear Jesus' reproach as believer priests by imitating past leaders who finished well (v. 7) and obeying present leaders who teach and lead well (v. 17) according to the sound doctrine about the changeless Christ! Rather than being carried away by strange doctrines, continually offer up the spiritual sacrifices that please God: <i>Gratefully confess His name in word and deed!</i>				Only God's gracious blessing through JESUS our Lord, the risen Great Shepherd, will equip us to will and to work what is pleasing to God!	Keep moving forward with conviction in community by God's ordinary means of grace until we enter God's final rest!	

*15 explicit commands plus 8 implicit ones due to grammatical structure.

See Next Page: Seven Characteristics of the Benediction in Hebrews 13:20-21

God Blesses His Believer Priests with PERSISTING Love Through Jesus the Great Shepherd!

1. God's Blessing Is BLOOD BOUGHT for His People.

"Now (may) the God of peace, who brought up from the dead the great Shepherd of the sheep through the blood of the eternal covenant, even Jesus our Lord," (v. 20)

➤ God is the God of PEACE.

"Now (may) the God of peace"

- Peace in His PERSON: God is at peace within Himself and the three persons of the Trinity.
- Peace is His PURPOSE: God has predetermined peace as His sovereign purpose for all creation from before creation.

The God of peace has planned, promised and provided for the fulfillment of the New Covenant of peace!

- Peace is His PASSION: God is passionate about making peace with sinners.

➤ God has brought Jesus up from the DEAD ONES to provide peace with sinners.

"who brought up from the dead (ones)"

Most common Greek word for Jesus' resurrection is **raised up**, the second most common is **stand up**, but the rarest is **BROUGHT** up. Hebrews 13:20; Romans 10:7

- Brought up from the DEAD ones. Hebrews 2:9, 14-15
- Brought up to HEAVEN.
- Brought to up to ENTER Most Holy Place as the final sacrifice for sin. Acts 7:35-41
- Brought up to SIT and wait as our Trailblazing Pioneer and Sitting Perfector as the Great Shepherd of God's sheep!

- God has *exalted* Jesus as the **GREAT SHEPHERD** of His sheep.

"the great Shepherd of the sheep"

Psalm 23; Acts 7:37; Isaiah 63:8-14; Ezekiel 34:23-31; 37:15-28; Zech 9:11-17; 13:7-9

1Peter 2:21-25; 5:1-4

The Good News In Hebrews: Jesus is *like* us –*with* us –*for* us!

- God has *established* the **ETERNAL COVENANT** *through* Jesus' blood.

"through the blood of the eternal covenant,"

- God has *perfected* Jesus as our **LORD**.

"even Jesus our Lord"

2. God's Blessing Is **ENABLING (SOVEREIGN) GRACE** to Do His Will.

equip you in every good thing to do His will, working in us that which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen

Hear and Heed the Heart of This Prayer of Blessing: *"May God...equip you...to do His will."*

God's Enabling Grace Through Jesus the Great Shepherd

- **EQUIPS** us with every good thing to do His will.

"equip you in every good thing to do His will,"

Generally: The **REVEALED** will of God in the inspired and inerrant Scriptures.

Specifically: The **MAIN** idea of the sermon-letter: *Stay fixated on Christ's greater glory to hold fast and move forward until we enter God's final rest!*

- **WORKS** in us that which is pleasing in His sight.

"working in us that which is pleasing in His sight,"

"So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure."
Philippians 2:12-13

- **MEDIATES** everything through and because of His Son to bring His many sons to glory!

"through Jesus Christ,"

- **GIVES** God all the glory forever and ever!

"to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen"

God Blesses His Believer Priests with Persisting Love Through Jesus the Great Shepherd!

Being biblically boring as believer priests (offering the same spiritual sacrifices to God through Christ) *boomerangs back* with God's blessings being actualized in your life from the inside out, so we can keep moving forward to our final salvation!

Let's Boldly Bless One Another as Believer Priests

"Now may the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, equip you with everything good that you may do his will, working in us that which is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen."

Hebrews 13:20-21

Seven Characteristics of the Benediction in Hebrews 13:20-21

“Now may the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, equip you with everything good that you may do his will, working in us that which is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.”

This Benediction Is...

1. **LITURGICAL:** One of the *greatest benedictions* in the Bible that ends with one of the *most common doxologies*.

A **benediction** is a *blessing prayed upon the people* (“Now may God...”), while a **doxology** is *giving glory or singing praise to God* (“Now to God be the glory...”).

Benediction: Blessing from God to His people through a believer priest –pastor or worship leader. [Prayer for Blessing]

OT Priestly Benediction of Aaron as High Priest: *Numbers 6:22-27*

NT endings to key sections: *Romans 15:5-6, 13; 1 Thessalonians 3:11-13; 2 Thessalonians 2:16-17; 3:5* and whole letters: *1 Thessalonians 5:23; 2 Thessalonians 3:16*

Doxology: Giving or singing glory to God by His people as believer priests. [Praise as Offering]

OT Royal Doxology of David as Davidic King: *1 Chronicles 29:10-20; cf. 16:7-37*

NT endings to key sections: *Romans 15:5-6; 13; Ephesians 3:20-21* and whole letters: *Romans 16:25-27; Jude 1:24-25*

Key Differences

- **Direction of Communication:** A benediction moves *from God (via the speaker) to the people*, while a doxology moves *from the people to God*.
- **Primary Purpose:** A benediction *confers divine favor, peace, and protection*, while a doxology *attributes glory, honor, and praise*.
- **Structure and Style:** A benediction is usually a *spoken prayer or declaration*, while a doxology is often a *short, structured hymn or confession*.
- **Liturgical Placement:** A benediction acts as the *final dismissal or sending out*, while a doxology can happen *anywhere in a worship service* to conclude a section of prayer or praise or preaching.

2. **SACRIFICIAL:** Models the *partnership* between the priesthood of believers and pastor-teachers. (13:15-19)

(13:15) Continually offer up the sacrifice of praise: **WHO** God is (v. 20) + **WHAT** God has done, is doing, and will do (v. 21). *Models “lip fruit from his heart root” as he just commanded them to do (v. 15)!*

(13:16) While v. 16 is about sharing material goods to meet pressing physical needs, here the pastor-teacher is asking God to share His spiritual goods (= *the blessings of grace*) to meet their pressing spiritual needs. *Models blessing others with spiritual caring and sharing through intercessory prayer!*

(13:17) The pastor-teacher is asking God to bless them with enabling grace to follow their leaders and submit to their spiritual guidance. *Models the watch care of a good shepherd over their souls by interceding for them as he just asked them to do for him!*

(13:18) The pastor-teacher just asked for prayer for himself from his hearers and now models for them *how* to pray for him and for one another. *Models the mutual ministry of believer priests (“you”/“us,” v. 21)!*

(13:19) The pastor-teacher has repeatedly exhorted them to not forsake the assembling of themselves together as a church during hard times. Being restored to *in-person fellowship and worship* is *desired, needed, and required*. *Models the need for sovereign grace to do this when it feels humanly impossible!*

3. **CHRISTOLOGICAL:** *Christ-centered* with no commands.

What we **believe** about the changeless Christ (v. 8) directly impacts what we **receive** from the mediating Christ (vv. 20-21)!

4. **THEOLOGICAL:** Interweaves nearly all the previous themes into a *beautiful tapestry* of grace. [References are extensive but not exhaustive.]

1) “Now the God of peace” **Peace:** 7:2; 11:31; 12:14; 13:20

2) “Who brought up from the dead” **Resurrection:** 1:3, 5, 12; 2:9, 12, 14-15; 5:7; 6:2; 7:16, 24-25; 9:11-12; 10:12; 11:19-22, 35 (2x); 12:2; 13:20

3) “the great” **Greater:** 6:13, 16; 7:7, 23; 9:11; 11:26; **Better:** 1:4; 6:9; 7:19, 22; 8:6 (2x); 9:23; 10:34; 11:4, 16, 35, 40; 12:24

4) “Shepherd of the sheep” **Wanderer/Pilgrimage:** 11:8-10, 13-16, 36-38; 12:22-24; 13:13-14, 20; cf. shepherd leadership of Moses (Ps 77:20; Isa 63:11) and David (1 Sam 5:2; 1 Chron 11:2; Ps 78:70-72; cf. 13:18)

- 5) *"through the blood"* **Blood:** 2:14; 9:7, 12-14, 18-22, 25; 10:29; 11:28; 12:4, 24; 13:11-12, 20; Sacrifice: 5:1, 3; 7:27; 8:3; 9:9, 23, 26; 10:1, 3, 5, 8, 11-12, 26; 11:4; 13:15-16
- 6) *"of the eternal"* **Eternal:** 5:9; 6:2; 9:12, 14-15; 13:20; Forever: 1:8; 5:6; 6:20; 7:17, 21, 24-25, 28; 13:8, 21
"covenant" **Covenant:** 7:22; 8:6-10, 13; 9:1, 4, 15-18, 20; 10:16, 29; 12:24; 13:20
- 7) *"even Jesus"* **Jesus/Incarnation:** 2:9; 3:1; 4:14; 6:20; 7:22, 24; 10:19; 12:2, 24; 13:12, 20
- 8) *"our Lord,"* **Lordship/Kingship:** 1:10; 2:3; 7:14, 21; 13:6, 20
- 9) *"equip you"* **Strengthen/Establish:** 10:9; 12:2; 13:9, 21
- 10) *"in every good thing"* **Good Works:** 5:14; 6:1, 5; 9:11, 14; 10:1, 24; 12:10; 13:16, 18, 21
- 11) *"to do His will"* **Obedience:** 1:14; 2:4; 8:10; 10:7, 9-10, 16, 36; 13:21; **Perseverance/Warnings:** 2:1-4; 3:5-6, 14-19; 4:1-3, 11; 6:1-12; 10:35-39; 12:1-3, 25-29
- 12) *"working in us"* **Internal:** 13:21; **Heart:** 3:10, 12; 4:12; 10:16, 22; 12:3; 13:9; **Grace:** 2:9; 4:16; 10:29; 12:15; 13:9, 25
- 13) *"that which is pleasing"* **Pleasing God:** 11:5-6, 39-40; 13:15-16, 21
- 14) *"in His sight"* **God Sees/Judges:** 4:13; 13:21
- 15) *"through"* **Mediator:** Repeated theme of Jesus' eternal High Priest, Trailblazing Pioneer, and Sitting Perfector. Cf. 12:1-2; 13:12-15
- 16) *"Jesus Christ"* **Jesus Christ:** 10:10; 13:8, 21; Christ: 3:6, 14; 5:5; 6:1; 9:11, 14, 24, 28; 11:26; **God-Man/Son who Became Son**
- 17) *"to whom be the glory forever and ever."* **Glory:** 1:3; 2:7, 9-10; 3:3; 5:4; 9:5; 13:21
- 18) *"Amen."* **Congregational Worship/Praise:** 2:12; 10:19-25; 12:28-29; 13:15

Several new themes are introduced: *"God of peace," "Lord Jesus," "Great Shepherd,"* and the explicit mention of *Jesus' resurrection* from the dead but not in the typical way! Jesus is *"brought up from the dead ones"* emphasizing His ascension, exaltation, & session!

Almost all these new elements are *titles that are common in the NT*. It seems as if the pastor-teacher is leading these Hebrew Christians deeper into a New Covenant mindset/worldview in light of all he has taught them and us!

5. **ESCHATOLOGICAL:** This blessing is what these first century Hebrew Christians needed, and what we still need to *move forward* to our final salvation.

It is only as this benediction and doxology becomes our way of life that we will finish our race faithful to end!

6. **PASTORAL:** The *heart* of the pastor-teacher pours fourth in prayer and praise to point his sheep to Jesus the Great Shepherd of God's sheep!

Being biblically boring as believer priests (offering the same spiritual sacrifices to God through Christ) *boomerangs* back with God's blessings being *actualized* in our lives from the inside out to persevere to the end!

7. **CONGREGATIONAL:** As a priesthood of believers, we must *never forsake* the assembling of ourselves together to continually offer up spiritual sacrifices of praise like this benediction and doxology!

May our "lip fruit" flow from our "heart roots" to persevere in doing His will and giving Him all the glory now and forever and ever. Amen!

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"Now may the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, equip you with everything good that you may do his will, working in us that which is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen."

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