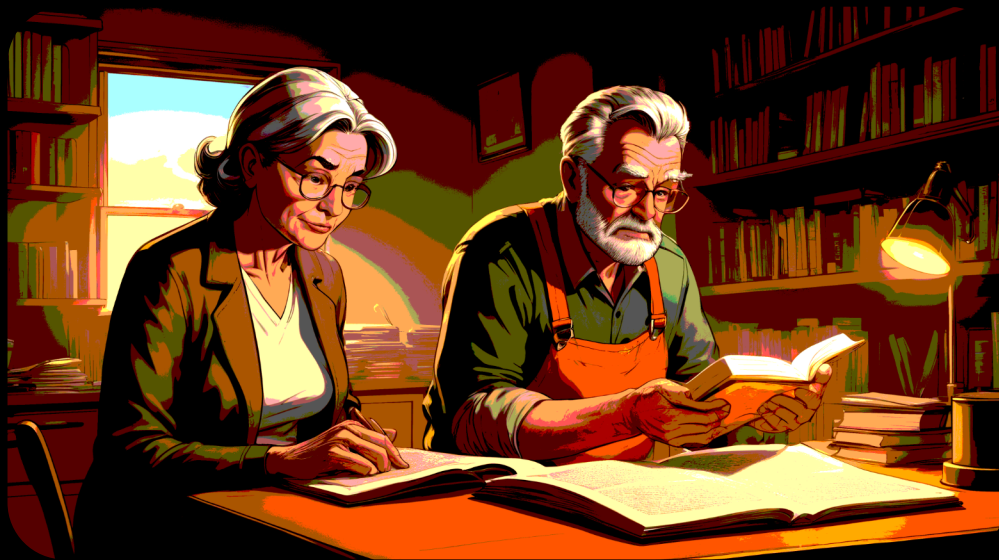


**A HOW-TO GUIDE ...**



**OFFERING ACCEPTABLE SERVICE TO GOD, PART 2**

A biblical study of the spiritual disciplines necessary for cultivating and maintaining reverence and awe in acceptable worship and service to God.

## 1. Love the brothers (and sisters), 13:1.

- (Hebrews 13:1 LSB) **Let love of the brothers continue.**

## 2. Love strangers, 13:2.

- (Hebrews 13:2 LSB) **Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers**, for by this some have entertained angels without knowing it.

## 3. Love the persecuted and mistreated, 13:3.

- (Hebrews 13:3 LSB) **Remember the prisoners**, as though in prison with them, **and those who are mistreated**, since you yourselves also are in **the body**.

## 4. Love your husband or wife, 13:4.

- (Hebrews 13:4 LSB) **Marriage is to be held in honor among all**, and the marriage bed is to be undefiled, **for the sexually immoral and adulterers God will judge.**

## 5. Love God, not money, 13:5-6.

- (Hebrews 13:5-6 LSB) **Make sure that your way of life is free from the love of money, being content with what you have**; for He Himself has said, "I WILL NEVER DESERT YOU, NOR WILL I EVER FORSAKE YOU," 6 so that we confidently say, "THE LORD IS MY HELPER, I WILL NOT BE AFRAID. WHAT WILL MAN DO TO ME?"

A. Make sure that our way of life—how we live—is free from the love of money.

B. The person whose life is not free from the love of money will not be satisfied with what God has provided.

C. He will be a tortured soul—vulnerable to all kinds of evil and wandering away from the faith.

- (1 Timothy 6:10 ESV) **For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils**. It is through this craving that **some have wandered away from the faith** and **pierced themselves** with many pangs.

**Pierce ...** to impale; to subject to an extremely sharp or intense state or condition; **metaphorically to torture one's soul with sorrows.**

D. The person who keeps his life free from the love of money will be content—satisfied and empowered with what God has provided.

E. The person whose life is not free from the love of money does not **acceptably** serve God.

- (Matthew 6:24 ESV) **No one can serve two masters**, for **either** he will hate the one and love the other, **or** he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. **You cannot serve God and money.** (Cf. Luke 16:13.)

F. The person who is not free from the love of money lives in disobedience to the most important command we are given for a right relationship with God. .

- (Mark 12:28-30 ESV) And one of the scribes came up and heard them disputing with one another, and seeing that he answered them well, asked him, "**Which commandment is the most important of all?**" 29 Jesus answered, "**The most important is**, 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. 30 **And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart** and with **all your soul** and with **all your mind** and with **all your strength.**' "

G. Nothing this person offers in service or worship to God is acceptable.

H. He will live in fear apart from the assurance of the Lord's presence at his side as his helper.

- (Psalm 118:5-7 ESV) Out of my distress I called on the Lord; the Lord answered me and set me free. 6 **The Lord is on my side; I will not fear**. What can man do to me? 7 **The Lord is on my side as my helper; I shall look in triumph on those who hate me.**

- (Psalm 46:1-3 ESV) **God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.** 2 **Therefore we will not fear** though the earth gives way, though the mountains be moved into the heart of the sea, 3 though its waters roar and foam, though the mountains tremble at its swelling.

## 6. Remember our spiritual predecessors and the gospel of grace which they preached, 13:7-14.

- (Hebrews 13:7-14 LSB) **Remember your leaders, who spoke the word of God to you**; and considering the result of their conduct, imitate their faith. 8 **Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever**. 9 Do not be carried away by varied and strange teachings; **for it is good for the heart to be strengthened by grace**, not by foods, through which those who were so occupied were not benefited. 10 **We have an altar from which those who serve the tabernacle have no authority to eat**. 11 For the bodies of those animals whose blood is brought into the holy

places by the high priest as an offering for sin, are burned outside the camp. 12

**Therefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people through His own blood, suffered outside the gate.** 13 **So, let us go out to Him outside the camp,** bearing His reproach. 14 For here we do not have a lasting city, but we are seeking the one to come.

**A. Remember past leaders who spoke and stayed true to the word of the truth—the gospel of Jesus Christ.**

- (Colossians 1:4–6 ESV) **Since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus** and of the love that you have for all the saints, 5 because of the hope laid up for you in heaven. **Of this you have heard before in the word of the truth, the gospel,** 6 which has come to you, as indeed in the whole world it is bearing fruit and increasing—as it also does among you, **since the day you heard it and understood the grace of God in truth.**

**B. Remember them and consider how they finished their lives and respond by imitating their faith.**

*The word for remember* means to be mindful of, to call to mind; remember and to respond accordingly.

**C. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever and his gospel has not changed.**

**D. Find our strength and assurance in grace—what Christ has done and not in any outward religious observance.**

**E. We do not share an altar with those who do not trust in grace alone by faith alone in Christ alone.**

- (Hebrews 10:11–12 ESV) **And every priest stands daily at his service,** offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. 12 **But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God.**
- (Hebrews 9:24–26 LSB) **For Christ did not enter holy places made with hands,** mere copies of the true ones, **but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us;** 25 nor was it that He would offer Himself often, as the high priest enters the holy places year by year with blood that is not his own. 26 Otherwise, He would have needed to suffer often since the foundation of the world; **but now once at the consummation of the ages He has been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.**

i. **We have nothing relevant to eternity in common with them in regard to God and salvation.**

ii. **Like Jesus we are outside the camp and are to separate ourselves from them.**

**F. Christ is our high priest and our sacrifice.**

- (Hebrews 7:26–27 LSB) **For it was fitting for us to have such a high priest,** holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners and exalted above the heavens; 27 **who does not need daily, like those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins and then for the sins of the people, because this He did once for all when He offered up Himself.**

**G. Jesus suffered outside the gate so that he could separate himself from and set aside the former inferior, weak, useless system of law and works.**

- (Hebrews 7:18–19 ESV) **For on the one hand, a former commandment is set aside because of its weakness and uselessness** 19 (for the law made nothing perfect); **but on the other hand, a better hope is introduced, through which we draw near to God.**

**H. Jesus suffered outside the gate and died outside the camp—literally outside of Jerusalem and figuratively outside of the works of the law.**

- (John 19:16–18 ESV) So he delivered him over to them to be crucified. So they took Jesus, 17 **and he went out,** bearing his own cross, **to the place called The Place of a Skull,** which in Aramaic is called Golgotha. 18 There they crucified him, and with him two others, one on either side, and Jesus between them.

**7. Continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, 13:15-16.**

- (Hebrews 13:15–16 LSB) **Through Him then, let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that confess His name.** 16 And do not neglect doing good and sharing, for with such sacrifices God is pleased.
- A. We offer up a sacrifice of praise to God by the fruit of our lips which is confessing with our mouth what is true in our heart—that Jesus is Lord.**
  - (Romans 10:8–10 ESV) But what does it say? **“The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart”** (that is, the word of faith that we proclaim); 9 **because, if you confess with**

your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved.

B. To confess his name is to not deny his name **and** to not confess his name is to deny his name.

- (Revelation 3:8 LSB) I know your deeds. Behold, I have given before you an open door which no one can shut, because you have a little power, **and have kept My word, and have not denied My name.**
- (Matthew 10:32–33 ESV) **So everyone who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven,** 33 but whoever denies me before men, I also will deny before my Father who is in heaven. (Cf. Luke 12:8–9).

#### 8. Obey and submit to our leaders, 13:17.

- (Hebrews 13:17 LSB) **Obey your leaders and submit to them**—for they keep watch over your souls as those who will give an account—**so that they will do this with joy and not with groaning,** for this would be unprofitable for you.
- A. We should first take note that we are **commanded by God** to obey and submit to our leaders in the church.
- B. We are to obey and submit because they are accountable to keep watch over our souls.
- C. The Lord Jesus has a unique shepherding relationship with the undershepherds who are responsible for the care of the sheep of his pasture.
- (Psalm 100:3 ESV) **Know that the Lord, he is God! It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.**
  - (1 Peter 5:2 ESV) **Shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight,** not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you; not for shameful gain, but eagerly.
- D. Obeying/submitting brings joy into the relationship.
- E. Not obeying and submitting brings groaning and is unprofitable for the groaner.
- F. The person who refuses to obey and submit to spiritual leaders is incapable of offering acceptable service to God.

G. The grave danger is that the knowledge of Christ that remains has become ineffective and unfruitful to the result of spiritual blindness and forgetfulness.

- (2 Peter 1:7b–9 ESV) And brotherly affection with love. 8 For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, **they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.** 9 **For whoever lacks these qualities is so nearsighted that he is blind,** having forgotten that he was cleansed from his former sins.

H. The person who refuses to obey and submit is not equipped to serve God acceptably.

- (2 Timothy 3:16–17 ESV) All Scripture is breathed out by God **and profitable for teaching,** for **reproof,** for **correction,** and for **training in righteousness,** 17 **that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.**

#### 9. Pray for our leaders, 13:18-19.

- (Hebrews 13:18–19 LSB) **Pray for us, for we are convinced that we have a good conscience,** desiring to conduct ourselves well in all things. 19 And I urge you all the more to do this, so that I may be restored to you the sooner.
- A. Ask God to give our leaders a clear conscience in leading and a passion to act honorably in all things.
- B. This seems to be a prayer asking God to direct men in leadership to make right decisions that honor God and align with the truth by which they are able to maintain a good conscience.
- C. Armed with a good conscience we are strong and courageous in the Lord.
- D. With a clear conscience the leaders continue to hold fast to the truth in the heat of battle.
- (Acts 24:16 ESV) **So I always take pains to have a clear conscience toward both God and man.**
  - (1 Timothy 1:5–6 ESV) **The aim of our charge is love that issues from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith.** 6 Certain persons, by swerving from these, have wandered away into vain discussion.