
Words of Truth

Hebrews 13:15-16

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“By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name. But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased” (Hebrews 13:15-16). The “Him” in verse fifteen is contextually talking about Jesus (Hebrews 13:8; 13:12-13). In our study of verses ten through thirteen we considered, in part, how our altar is our heart. Keep that in mind as we proceed in our current study.

By Jesus we are able to come before God (Hebrews 4:14-16 and Hebrews 10:19-23). Notice what was written to the churches in Ephesus and Colosse: *“Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ... And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him”* (Ephesians 5:19-20 and Colossians 3:15-17).

The giving of thanks is not supposed to be only a dinner time or bedtime event. We are not just supposed to give thanks on the first day of the week. The word “continually” carries the point. Thanksgiving is not just something we offer on certain occasions. The saints in Thessalonica were taught this: *“Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing. In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you”* (I Thessalonians 5:16-18).

Praise and thankfulness are joined together (II Samuel 22:50, I Chronicles 16:4, I Chronicles 16:35, I Chronicles 23:30, I Chronicles 29:13, II Chronicles 5:13, Ezra 3:11, Psalms 18:49, Psalms 35:18, Psalms 69:30, etc.). Then comes in the connection of our altar and the sacrifice of praise. Consider the connection of the heart and praise: *“I will praise thee, O LORD, with my whole heart; I will shew forth all thy marvellous works... My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed: I will sing and give praise... Praise ye the LORD. I will praise the LORD with my whole heart, in the assembly of the upright, and in the congregation... I will praise thee with uprightness of heart, when I shall have learned thy righteous judgments”* (Psalms 9:1, Psalms 57:7, Psalms 111:1, and Psalms 119:7).

The sacrifices of doing good and to communicate is then mentioned. Doing good has long been expected of God's people (Psalms 34:14, Psalms 37:3, and Psalms 37:27). The problem of God's people not doing good has long been a problem too. Notice: *"For my people is foolish, they have not known me; they are sottish children, and they have none understanding: they are wise to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge"* (Jeremiah 4:22).

Doing good is not a limited instruction towards those that are good to us. Jesus said: *"Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so? Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect"* (Matthew 5:43-48).

We have to allow the word of God to teach us what doing good is. The Scriptures fully equip us regarding all good works (II Timothy 3:15-17). One area in which many err in this regard is giving money to people because of examples of such in the Scriptures (i.e. Proverbs 19:17). If we rightly divide the word of God (II Timothy 2:15), we learn that there are some people that may be poor that we cannot help (i.e. II Thessalonians 3:10). So, as with all instructions of God, we need to thoroughly study things through before acting. Having said that, let's return to the point of doing good and tie in what it is to communicate.

To the churches of Galatia, this was written: *"Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things. Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith"* (Galatians 6:6-10). The word translated "communicate" in both our text of study and what we just read that was written to the Galatians means fellowship (Strong's # 2841 and 2842). Whether you do a word study or a study of fellowship in general, that limits the sacrifice of doing good and to communicate (II Corinthians 6:14-18 and Ephesians 5:6-11).

So, the conclusion of the matter is that God is well pleased when brethren do good towards and have fellowship with one another. That includes financial aid to needy brethren (II Corinthians 8:1-9:13) and teachers of the Gospel (Philippians 4:10-20). While other Scriptures, as we addressed in this study does not limit doing good just to faithful brethren; this text is singling out the relationship among faithful brethren.