

Scripture Reference: Hebrews 12:28-13:13

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"Having Received a Kingdom . . ."

Focus: Living a Life of Gratitude to God

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12:28a; "*Since we receive a Kingdom . . .*"

Being reconciled to God, the forgiveness of sins, adoption of as sons and daughter, is wholly the work of Jesus.

His death was the price for *our* transgressions.

His affliction was the response to *our* rebellion.

His righteousness becomes *ours* justification.

His holiness becomes *our* means of being right with God

Unless humanity understands they cannot *secure* the Kingdom but only *receive* it, following Jesus is impossible.

12:28b; ". . . *Let us show gratitude . . .*"

It is natural for some one who has received a gift to "*express gratitude*" (v. 28).

However, if we mistakenly believe that our efforts have anything to do with our relationship with God, we will not have gratitude, instead we will make demands of God because of our perceived good works.

Our focus on ourselves is selfishness, and failing to recognize its depths, we demand more and more from God.

The Gospel has been perverted into a means of personal enrichment (i.e. Joel Olsteen).

Having secured *salvation*, people want bask in their relief from Hell and live in anticipating of Heaven.

Contrary to this mindset, the author of Hebrew admonishes readers to,

"*show gratitude, by which we may offer to God an acceptable service with reverence and awe*" (v. 28 b).

We must recognize that gratitude is shown (i.e. Hebrews 11), not merely vocally expressed.

People show gratitude to God by engaging in actions that are:

a. Rendered *unto Him*

Our actions are not for the benefit of ourselves, not for that of others. Neither do we do things because they are right vs. wrong. Life is the disciple offering up his or her life as a "*living sacrifice*" (Rom 12:1-2).

Life is lived with the focus on being obedient to God, bring Him glory and to make Him smile (2 Cor. 2:15).

b. Our actions are rendered in a spirit of reverence and awe.

Life is to be spent as an expression of gratitude, lived in respect and wonder of Him.

13:1-13; What Reverential Service Offered to God Looks

Like:

v. 1; Persevering devotion to fellow believers.

v. 2; Hospitality to strangers (those who are not of *our group*).

v. 3; Identification with those imprisoned and cast aside.

v. 4; Honoring the covenant of marriage (a state that reflects God's devotion to His people - Eph. 5: ).

v. 5; Demonstrating a Character of godly dependence.

v. 6; Focus on those who are leading you in the faith.

vv. 8-9; A life consistent with Jesus, not tradition or religion.

Those in relationship with God are to follow the pattern seen in Jesus Christ (vv. 10-13).