

## **APPLYING DOCTRINE TO GET BETTER RESULTS (Hebrews 13:17-21)**

### **1. Submit to God's leaders (Hebrews 13:17).**

- a. The first way to get better results when applying the doctrine of Christ being better is to obey and submit to the eldership under which you serve.
- b. He first says to obey.
  - i. Thayer says this word means "to listen to, obey, yield to, comply with".
  - ii. We must listen to our elders when it comes to matters of opinion.
  - iii. Our writer says that they have the rule over us.
  - iv. The word "rule" means "leading as respects influence, controlling in counsel, among any over whom one rules, so of the overseers or leaders of Christian churches".
  - v. This is a command from the Holy Spirit thru the pen of our writer to yield or comply with the brethren who are the overseers of the congregations of God's people, specifically over the congregation of which we are a member.
- c. He then says we are to submit to them.
  - i. This word is different from the word we noticed last Sunday.
  - ii. It is the only time this particular Greek word is used in the New Testament.
  - iii. to resist no longer, but to give way, yield, (prop. of combatants); metaph. to yield to authority and admonition.
  - iv. It seems as if the brethren had a combative relationship with their overseers, or elders.
  - v. Our writer says this is to not be the case.
  - vi. Instead of us battling with them, we are to yield to them
- d. The reason for obedience and submission is that our elders are supposed to be watching for our souls.
  - i. The word watch is a weighty word for those that are elders.
  - ii. Thayer says it means, "to exercise constant vigilance over something (an image drawn from shepherds)."
  - iii. It literally means to be sleepless.
  - iv. Elders who are doing their duty spend a great amount of time looking out for the spiritual well being of the flock over which they've been placed by the Holy Spirit.
- e. They want what is best for the flock and spend time doing those things that shepherds do for their flock.
  - i. They see to it that they are fed a good diet.
  - ii. They see to it that their spiritual needs are being met.
  - iii. They see to it that they are getting what they need to grow spiritually and get heaven.
- f. They must be about this watchfulness for their sheep because they are going to give account before the Lord for the sheep that were under their care while they were on earth serving as shepherds.
  - i. They are going to give an explanation for our actions before the Lord one day.
  - ii. So not only are they going to give an account for their own lives and the lives of those in their immediate families, but also for the lives of all those

- who were under them in the congregations they serve as elders.
- g. We might ask why such is the case.
- i. The reason is that in every aspect of life, there has to be someone or a group in control.
  - ii. We know Christ is the head of the church.
  - iii. However, there are things that come up that need to be dealt with by people who are here, present, and accountable.
  - iv. Our Lord is in heaven.
  - v. Events take place here that need addressing.
  - vi. Imagine how things would go if there was no one in charge.
  - vii. We'd all be doing what we wanted to do and there would be no cohesiveness.
  - viii. Coffman wrote, "Every society must have some kind of government; and the Lord has chosen to elevate to that responsibility in the church men of faith, ability and reputation to bear the burden of government of the church."
- h. The truth is that when we fail to obey and submit to the eldership under which we serve, we are causing division and problems in the Lord's church.
- i. One day they are going to give an account, not only of themselves, but also of those under them.
- i. We need to obey and submit so that account about us can be joyous for them to give.
  - ii. If it is a grievous account then that is not profitable or beneficial for us as individuals.
  - iii. God is going to take it very serious at the judgment is the idea.
  - iv. If we've lived in such a way and acted in such a way that shows we are rebellious or combative with the eldership, there are going to be repercussions at the judgment.
- j. There is a responsibility to elders to rule in such a way that limits fights.
- i. They are not to lord their rule over the congregation.
  - ii. They are to rule in a way that shows they understand the plight of those they are shepherding.
  - iii. However, when they do make a judgment as to what the congregation is to do then we don't fight with them as long as what is decided is scriptural.
  - iv. We may not like it, but if it is scriptural we can't argue with it because that reflects poorly on us and will be grievous for us at the judgment.
- k. One point that needs to be made here is that the Holy Spirit expected those who are members of the church to be under an eldership.
- i. God wants elders and we need to be under an eldership.
  - ii. Now, I know not all congregations have men qualified to be such.
  - iii. Each congregation needs to be working towards that.
  - iv. Also, implied in this verse is that each Christian should be in a congregation of brethren and not floating around out there somewhere.
  - v. There is no such thing as a member at large as one person said.
  - vi. One writer said, "This is a good place to register a protest against that specimen of believer who, in every sense, is a free-lancer, considering himself as a member anywhere he hangs his hat, appropriating to himself the right of free and easy criticism of the elders upon any pretext and

drifting from group to group as occasions arise in which he may draw away disciples after himself.”

I. To get better results through the application of doctrine we need to submit to the authority of the eldership.

## **2. The solicitation of prayer (Hebrews 13:18-19).**

a. The writer gets personal here.

b. He asks for the brethren to pray for him that he would be able to be with them again, which is the idea of restored.

i. It may be that the writer was in prison when he wrote this.

ii. It also may be the case that he had not been able to get to be with them again for some other reason and is asking them to pray that he be allowed to be with them again

c. Something else this shows us is that despite the lack of faith on the part of some there and them being tempted to drift away from Christ, the writer still considered them brethren.

i. He loved them and wanted to be with them again despite their being tempted to leave the Lord.

ii. It seems that there was a relationship between the brethren who received this letter and the one who wrote it.

d. He based his solicitation of their prayers on the good life that he had led and of which they had been aware.

e. If we want to get better results, we need to be those who pray and ask others to pray for us.

i. We have a great privilege known as prayer.

ii. Our writer mentioned this earlier in the book.

iii. We need to be asking God for the growth and prosperity of the congregation here as well as the church the world over.

f. If we want to get better results we need to solicit prayers from our brethren for our efforts.

## **3. The source of our perfection (Hebrews 13:20-21).**

a. God wants peace with man therefore He sent His Son to make it possible.

b. He showed His desire to bring peace by resurrecting our Lord from the dead.

i. Our Lord is the Chief Shepherd.

ii. He mentions that Jesus is the Great Shepherd to remind those shepherds here on earth that Jesus is still in charge and they have a Shepherd over them.

c. The God of peace, through the means of the blood of the eternal or everlasting covenant will perfect us.

i. The word “perfect” carries the idea of equipping someone to do something.

ii. In this case, through the blood of Christ, Christians are equipped to do the will of God.

d. Our writer is closing out the book and reminds them of the blood of Christ and its ability to make us right with God and able to do God’s will.

i. Outside of the blood of Christ, there is nothing that will allow us to do God’s will.

ii. There is nothing that equips us to be able to be wellpleasing to God.

iii. It is all done through Jesus the Christ.  
e. Better results are gotten when we leave everything behind and serve God through the great blood of the Christ.

From a lectureship manuscript by Joey Davis