

# FROM FIRE TO FUNCTION

Hebrews 13:1-8

Doctrine, doctrine, doctrine...		
Jesus is better		from <i>fire</i> (12:29) to function
Hang in there		from vertical (Jesus) to horizontal (people)
Others did it		from love for God to love for the Church
Jesus did it		Doctrine to ethics...

## Apply all of this Christology!

If you truly have the *vertical* relationship (Jesus), the *horizontal* relationships (people) will fall into place as a result.

HE THEN LISTS A FEW HORIZONTAL RELATIONSHIPS TO SHOW US WHAT OUR LIVES SHOULD LOOK LIKE:

If the reality of this doctrine is sinking in...

[1] LET THE LOVE OF THE BRETHREN CONTINUE AP!

**John 13:35** By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another

IDENTIFYING AS CHRIST'S AP!

**1 John 3:16** We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.

## Sometimes this is hard!

- Order your lips and thoughts

**Psalms 141:3** Set a guard, O Lord, over my mouth; Keep watch over the door of my lips.

Your responsibility to purge: bickering, grudges, bitterness...

He then moves from church to the world

If the reality of this doctrine is sinking in...

## [2] DO NOT NEGLECT TO SHOW HOSPITALITY TO STRANGERS TO MAKE CHRIST KNOWN *-NO CHURCH BUBBLES*

**Matt. 5:16** Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven. **AP!**

- NOT CONTINGENT ON THEIR LOVE FOR YOU, BUT ON CHRIST'S LOVE FOR YOU.

Be more hospitable than the world...

**1 Peter 2:12** Keep your behavior excellent among the Gentiles, so that in the thing in which they slander you as evildoers, they may because of your good deeds, as they observe them, glorify God in the day of visitation.

**2 Cor. 2:15** For we are a fragrance of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing

### **Erich Honecker** (Leader of the German Democratic Republic)

- Was in charge of the building of the Berlin Wall.
- Was indicted for ordering border guards to shoot any person trying to cross the East German border into West Germany or West Berlin.<sup>i</sup>
- Imprisoned and tried for high treason and crimes committed during the Cold War.
  - Hated and despised
  - Stripped of his offices
  - Kicked out of his own communist party
  - Booted out of the villa he lived in
  - Even his wife was refused accommodation by the government

- They ended up basically homeless.<sup>ii</sup>
- Christians step in: Pastor Uwe Holmer (Christian help center north of Berlin)
- Holmer and wife decide it would be wrong to give up a room in the center that would be used for the needy, so...
  - **They took the former dictator and his wife into their own home.**
  - The former absolute ruler of the country was being sheltered by one of the Christians whom he and his wife had despised and persecuted.<sup>iii</sup>

IRONY? No...It's "Bare Christianity"

Not only will this minister to the lost, but it will minister to the church by **binding us together in the reality that everything comes from Christ**<sup>iv</sup>

...for by doing this some have entertained angels without knowing it.

- Abraham (Gen 18:1ff)
  - He wasn't looking for an angel.
  - This is simply emphasizing how high hospitality is in the economy of God that the angelic beings would observe us.

### [3] REMEMBER THE PRISONERS

- As though in prison with them
- And those who are ill treated,
- Since you yourselves also are in the same body.

If we are to care for the down and out o the world, how much more so should we care for those who have CHOSEN to be down and out for the sake of Jesus?

[www.prisoneralert.com](http://www.prisoneralert.com)

- Gao Zhisheng

**Minister to them out of an awareness that we too could have been where they are.ʋ**

➤ FYI, that's *grace*

**Romans 12:3** For through the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think

No one is better, because of grace.

*This will...*

### UNIFY THE BODY OF CHRIST

Unity does not mean we all agree on every point of theology or that we all worship the same, but rather...

We are all engaging in the same kingdom.

So we rejoice when others are blessed and we weep with those who weep.

It's the same body glorifying Christ

*I don't care whether the persecuted prisoner is post-trib or not.*

*I care that my brother and sister is suffering.*

## [4] MARRIAGE IS TO BE HELD IN HONOR AMONG ALL

God loves marriage.

### GLORIFY CHRIST AS HIS BRIDE

**Eph. 5:28-33** So husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself; for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ also does the church, because we are members of His body. FOR THIS REASON A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER AND SHALL BE JOINED TO HIS WIFE, AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH. This mystery is great; but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the church. Nevertheless, each individual among you also is to love his own wife even as himself, and the wife must see to it that she respects her husband.

If you seek to glorify Jesus through marriage, the proper outflow is that of...

1. The husband loving his wife in such a way that he lays his life down for her.
2. The wife respecting her husband

- **The marriage bed is to be undefiled**

It is an institution designed by God, for a bigger purpose than satisfying every impulse of our flesh: **To show Christ!**

- **For fornicators and adulterers God will judge** AP!

Adulterers: impure and married

Fornicators: unmarried and impure<sup>vi</sup>

# [5] MAKE SURE THAT YOUR CHARACTER IS FREE FROM THE LOVE OF MONEY

## STAYING LOYAL TO CHRIST

A dependence on money will tear you away from Christ

**Matt 6:24** No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.

\$ is not bad....a dependence on it is bad....

- Being content<sup>vii</sup> with what you have AP!

**Ecc. 5:10** He who loves money will not be satisfied with money, nor he who loves abundance with its income. This too is vanity.

**1 Tim. 6:10** For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.

**Timothy Keller:** *An idol* is anything so central to your life that you can't live without it.<sup>viii</sup>

*The love of money is idolatry...*

What if you're rich?

**Use money to show that God, not possessions, is your treasure.<sup>ix</sup>**

**Deut. 31:1-6** ...He said to them, "I am a hundred and twenty years old today; I am no longer able to come and go, and the LORD has said to me, 'You shall not cross this Jordan.' "It is the LORD your God who will cross ahead of

you; He will destroy these nations before you, and you shall dispossess them...

*"Be strong and courageous, do not be afraid or tremble at them, for the LORD your God is the one who goes with you. He will not fail you or forsake you."*

Moses was telling them to remember God's past reputation.

Author now reminds them of His past reputation...

- For He Himself has said, I WILL NEVER DESERT YOU, NOR WILL I EVER FORSAKE YOU,

Emphatic negative: *not not!!*

[6] SO THAT WE CONFIDENTLY SAY, THE LORD IS MY HELPER, I WILL NOT BE AFRAID. WHAT CAN MAN DO TO ME?

David is about to die, having known the Lord<sup>x</sup>

[7] REMEMBER THOSE WHO LED YOU  
SUBMITTING TO CHRIST

They will give an account to Christ as stewards of His body

**Heb 13:17** Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they keep watch over your souls as those who will give an account.

- Who spoke the word of God to you

"He gave some as pastors...for the equipping of the saints for the work of the service, and the building up of the body of Christ.

- And considering the result of their conduct, imitate their faith

**Heb 6:11-12** And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence so as to realize the full assurance of hope until the end, so that you will not

be sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

## **All of these things flow from knowing the real Jesus.**

Difficulty: these things are fluctuating *Why? Because people are involved in all of these points!*

- Christians sin
- Strangers sin
- Prisoners sin
- Your spouse sins
- Money will run out, the economy will fail, and you may go broke
- Your pastors sin

The world bases their behavior on the consistency of the idol in which their hope lies, and they will run out of steam when that horizontal relationship fails them.

BUT WE PUT OUR HOPE IN THE CONSISTENCY OF JESUS CHRIST WHO IS THE CHANGELESS CHRIST, AND THE ETERNAL SOURCE OF OUR CHRISTIAN LIFE TO:

- (LOVE OTHERS) IDENTIFY AS CHRIST'S AP!
- (LOVE STRANGERS) TO MAKE CHRIST KNOWN
- (REMEMBER THE ILL-TREATED) BE UNIFIED IN THE BODY OF CHRIST
- (HONOR MARRIAGE) GLORIFY CHRIST AS HIS BRIDE
- (REJECT IDOLATRY) STAY LOYAL TO CHRIST
- (REMEMBER AND IMITATE OUR LEADERS) SUBMIT TO CHRIST



**[8] [WHO] IS THE SAME YESTERDAY AND TODAY AND  
FOREVER**

**HE NEVER CHANGES...**

- He's the same Word that speaks
  - The same heir of all things
  - The same creator God
  - The same expression of glory
  - The same representation of the nature of God
  - And He still holds your world together by His powerful word
  - The same King
  - He's still better than the angels
  - And His name is still the most excellent
- He's still on the throne
- His blood still purifies us
  - His stripes still heal us,
    - and He's still sitting at the right hand of the Father,  
because His work is still finished
- The same High Priest
  - The same Intercessor
  - He still defends us

## End:

If the horizontal (personal relationships) are not in the process of being, then you went through all of Hebrews either

- **Not having a clue who Jesus is, or**
- **Not giving a rip.**

Point: Jesus love for us should be translated into a spiritual love for his kingdom. If there's no translation, you ain't spending enough time with Jesus.

Jesus never changes...

But those who put their faith in Christ are in the *business* of changing, becoming less like our pitiful selves, and more like the Jesus we are so obsessed with.

**Christ is the end of the conversation –Jonathan Edwards<sup>xi</sup>**

WORKS CITED:

<sup>i</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Erich\\_Honecker](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Erich_Honecker)

<sup>ii</sup> Hughes, R. Kent. *Hebrews, Vol. 2: An Anchor for the Soul*. 208.

<sup>iii</sup> Ibid, 208 (By a letter received from Campus Crusade for Christ representatives in Germany, Clark and Ann Peddicord in March 1990.

<sup>iv</sup> Hughes, R. Kent. *Hebrews, Vol. 2: An Anchor for the Soul*. 210.

<sup>v</sup> Stedman, Ray C. *Hebrews*. 150.

<sup>vi</sup> Robertson, Archibald Thomas. *Word Pictures in the New Testament*. 444-445.

<sup>vii</sup> This comes from knowing Jesus more (Col. 3:2)

<sup>viii</sup> Keller, Timothy. *The Gospel Coalition 09*. April 21, 2009.

<sup>ix</sup> Piper, John. *Don't Waste Your Life*. 111.

<sup>x</sup> 2 Chronicles 26-29

<sup>xi</sup> Ibid, 949.