

## THE CODE OF CONDUCT IN THE HOUSEHOLD OF GOD

(Hebrews 13)

### (3) Honor and Goodness in the Household of God (13:18-25)

- I. Love and Service Should Be the Norm in the Household of God (13:1-8)
- II. Truth and Obedience Should Be the Norm in the Household of God (13:9-17)
- III. Honor and Goodness Should Be the Norm in the Household of God (13:18-25)
  - A. Believers Relate to Others by Good Conscience and Honor (13:18-19)
    - 1. Believers Actively Reach Out (13:18)
      - a. The Author May Be Plural (Luke Writing for Paul?)
      - b. The Author Showed Vulnerability by Seeking Prayers
      - c. The Author Sought for Good Conscience (Basic Duty Done)
      - d. The Author Sought to Be Honorable (Extraordinarily Good)
    - 2. Believers Sincerely Seek Response (13:19)
      - a. The Author Urged the Readers to Do the Same
      - b. The Author Sought to Restore Better Relationship
  - B. Believers Bless Others by the Goodness of Christ (13:20-21)
    - 1. This Is the Proto-Form of *Collecta Oratio* (Gather-together Prayer)
    - 2. Address: to the God of Peace: Seeking to Restore Lost Peace
    - 3. Attribute: God Is
      - a. Mighty: God Resurrected Christ from the Dead
      - b. Loving: Christ is the Great Shepherd
      - c. Faithful: The New Covenant is Everlasting
    - 4. Petition: God Is to
      - a. Make Complete (Equip) the Readers: Source of Power
      - b. in Every Good Work: Purpose of Being
      - c. to Do God's Will: Definition of "Good"
    - 5. Expectation: God Will
      - a. Creating in the Readers (and the Author [Critical Text]),
      - b. What is Pleasing to God (Love and Unity?)
    - 6. Conclusion:
      - a. through (by the Merit of) Jesus Christ,
      - b. Who Is Worthy of Eternal Glory
  - C. Believers Encourage Others by Practical Love (13:22-25)
    - 1. The Author Wrote to the Readers Words of Exhortation (13:22)
      - a. He Appealed for Acceptance
      - b. He Apologized for Briefness
    - 2. The Author Conveyed Good News and Visiting Plan (13:23)
      - a. He Relayed the Good News of Timothy's Release
      - b. He Promised to Visit the Readers with Timothy Soon
    - 3. The Author Extended Greetings to People on Both Sides (13:24)
      - a. He Greeted People He Knew (Leaders and Congregation)
      - b. He Carried Greeting from People They Knew (from Italy)
    - 4. The Author Blessed the Readers with Grace (13:25)

### Central Ideas

Christian should relate to others by good conscience of honor, bless others by the goodness of Christ, and encourage others by practical love.

### Study Questions for Heb 13:18-25

1. Where do we see the evidence that the author might be plural? What ancient tradition about the authorship of the Book of Hebrews does this fact support?
2. What does the author show in seeking for prayer? Why is it good?
3. What is “having good conscience”? What is “being honorable”? Which is higher?
4. Why did the invocation address to the “God of Peace”?
5. What attributes of God did the author invoke? Why these?
6. What did the author petition God to do? What is “good work” in relationship to “in God’s will”?
7. What was the author expecting the readers to do? Why is that pleasing to God?
8. Why could the readers accomplish the expected result? By whose merit and goodness? To whom was the doxology given? Why?
9. Why did the author beg for forgiveness on being brief in the letter?
10. Does the fact that the author called Timothy a brother negate the theory of Pauline authorship? Why?
11. Does the author’s greeting of both the leaders and the congregation say something about him?
12. What does the fact that the readers know someone from Italy that are with the author(s) reveal?

### Answers to Study Questions for Heb 13:18-25

1. In Heb 13:18, the author speaks for “us.” It is possible that he is writing on behalf of someone else; although it is possible that he is only mentioning a team.
2. He showed vulnerability. It is good in identifying and connecting with people.
3. “Having a good conscience” is having fulfilled all basic duties; “being honorable” is being extraordinarily good. The latter is higher ethically.
4. He addressed to the “God of Peace” because he is seeking for peace, to restore the relationship with the readers, which was once very close, but somewhat distanced.
5. He invoked the attribute of being mighty, loving, and faithful. He expects God to do great works on the readers, that it was done in a loving manner, and that God would faithfully keep the readers in the New Covenant, even if they are unfaithful.
6. He prayed for God to give the readers courage to stay in the church, and do not return to Judaism. “Good works” could mean good things (e.g. courage), or right actions (e.g. staying in the Christian Church); “good” is defined by being “in God’s will.”
7. He expected that the readers will stay in the predominantly-Gentile Christian church, not returning to Judaism or forming an ethnic Jewish-Christian Church. Unity among the brothers in the household of God is pleasing to the Father (Ps 133:1)
8. Because of the redemptive work of Christ, the believers have the power of the Holy Spirit to know the truth and overcome sins. It is by the merit and goodness of Christ that the readers could accomplish the expected result (staying in the Church). The doxology was given to Christ, because of his work of redemption.
9. He felt that he did not spend enough time on the letter to make it more detailed and explained. He hoped that it is not seen as not caring about the readers.
10. It does not! Paul called Timothy as a son privately (1 Tim 1:2), but as a brother publicly (2 Cor 1:1).
11. He cares about all Christians as brothers/sisters in the household of God, not depending on their positions in the church government.
12. The readers apparently knew someone from Italy (Rome), who was with the author at the time of the composition. If the letter was written in Rome, the recipients must be living somewhere else, but have lived in Rome before. If the readers were in Rome, the author must be writing from somewhere else, with a team which includes some members from Rome.

## The Form of a Collect Prayer

Content	Benediction of Heb 13:20-21	A Collect of Purity
(Source)	(NKJV)	(Book of Common Prayer)
(Person)	(Third Person)	(First Person)
Invitation	Now	(Let us pray:)
Address/Invocation	may the God of peace	Almighty God,
Attribute/ Ground of Petition	who brought up our Lord Jesus from the dead, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant,	to whom all hearts be open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid;
Petition	make you complete in every good work to do His will,	Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit,
Reason of Petition/ Result Expected	working in <u>you</u> (Majority Text; <u>us</u> in Critical Text) what is well pleasing in His sight,	that we may perfectly love thee, and worthily magnify thy holy Name;
Christian Conclusion/ Merit & Doxology	through Jesus Christ, to whom <i>be</i> glory forever and ever.	through Christ our Lord.
Affirmation	Amen	Amen

## Evidences of Paul in Hebrews

Hebrews		Paul		Other NT Writers
1:2, 10	Jesus is the heir of God and the direct creator of all things	Col 1:16	All things were created through him and for him	John 1:3
1:3	Jesus is the exact image of God the Father	2 Cor 4:4 Col 1:15	Christ is the image of the invisible God	
1:3	Jesus sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high	Eph 4:10 Phil 2:9	God has exalted Christ above all creation	
1:4	God gave the gifts of the Holy Spirit according to his will	1 Cor 12:4, 7, 11 Eph 1:5,9	God gave the gifts of the Holy Spirit according to what he determines	
1:6	Jesus is the firstborn of God brought into the world	Rom 8:29 Col 1:15	Jesus is the Son of God, who became the firstborn among many children	
1:14	Angels are servants in the household of God	Rom 8:17 Col 4:1, 7	Men are children of God, who will become heirs by joining with Christ	
2:2	The law was given through the angels	Gal 3:19	The Law was ordained by angels through an intermediary	
2:3	The author identifies with the readers, who heard the gospel confirmed by the apostles	Gal 2:9	Paul had Peter confirm his apostleship (confirmed the gospel, too?) Luke heard from the first-hand eye witnesses	Luke 1:2
2:6-8	Christ is the Son of Man, who won what the first man lost	1 Cor 15:45 Phil 2:6-11	Christ is the Last Adam, who won what Adam lost	
2:9	Jesus through his humiliation gained glory and honor	Phil 2:7, 9	Jesus through his humiliation gained glory and honor	2 Pet 1:17
2:14	Jesus destroyed the devil's power of death through his death	Col 2:15 2 Tim 1:10	Jesus disarmed the angelic authorities by his death	
3:4	God builds all things	Eph 2:10	We are God's workmanship	
3:6	Believers are the house of God the Son	1 Cor 3:16	Believers are the temple of Holy Spirit	

## Evidences of Paul in Hebrews

Hebrews		Paul		Other NT Writers
3:19	Israel failed to enter the land because of unbelief	1 Cor 10:11-12	Israel's history was written as a warning for the Church	
4:12	The Word of God is like a two-edged sword	Eph 6:17	The Word of God is the sword of the Spirit	
4:12	The Word of God discerns the thought and intents of the heart	1 Cor 14:24-25	The Word of God in prophesying lay bare the secrets of the heart	
4:15	Christ was tempted but without sin could sympathize us	2 Cor 5:21	Christ who is without sin was made sin for us	
5:8	Christ learned obedience by suffering	Phil 2:8	Christ became obedient unto death	
5:12	Unfortunately, the readers need milk rather than solid food	1 Cor 3:1-2	Unfortunately, the readers need milk rather than solid food	
5:13	Immature believers are babies	Eph 4:14	Immature believers are infants	
6:10	God is not unjust to forget the reader's work	Rom 3:4	God is true in remembering His promises	
6:10	Readers produced work and <i>labor of</i> (Majority Text) love	1 Thess 1:3	Readers produced work of faith and labor of love	
6:10	Readers ministered to the saints	Rom 15:25	Paul ministered to the saints	
6:11	The author hopes that the readers will have full assurance of hope	Col 2:2	Paul hopes that the readers will have full assurance of understanding	
6:17	God's counsel is immutable	Rom 11:29	God's calling is irrevocable	
6:18	The hope is set before us	Col 1:5	The hope is laid up for us in heaven	
7:6	Abraham received the promise	Rom 4:13, 16 Gal 4:14, 18	The promise was given to Abraham	Acts 7:17
7:18	The Law is weak and unprofitable	Rom 8:3	The Law is weak through the flesh	
7:19	Thru hope we draw near to God	Rom 5:2	Through Christ we exult in the hope	

## Evidences of Paul in Hebrews

7:25 9:24	Jesus always lives to make intercession for us	Rom 8:34	Jesus intercede for us at the right hand of God	
7:26 8:1	Christ is raised up to be higher than the heavens	Eph 1:20 Col 3:1	Christ seats with God in the heavenly places	
8:3	Christ as high priest also offered sacrifice (himself)	Eph 5:2	Christ gave himself as the offering and sacrifice	
8:5	The OT sacrificed were but shadows of the heavenly (real) one	Col 2:17	The OT sacrifices were only shadows of the substance—Christ himself	
8:6	Christ obtained a better excellent ministry	2 Cor 3:6-8	The ministry of death(by the Law) is replaced by the ministry of the Spirit	
8:12	Quoting from Jer 31:31-34, God will not remember the sins of the new covenanters.	Rom 11:27	Quoting from Isa 59:21 and alluding to Jer 31:34, God will take away the sins of the new covenanters.	
9:10	The food and drink ordinances were imposed till the time of reformation (Christ's 1st advent)	Col 2:16	No one (in the Church) is to judge in regard to food and drink and other ordinances	
9:12	With his own blood Christ entered the Most Holy Place	Eph 1:7	With his own blood Christ redeemed the believers	
9:15	Christ redeemed sins committed under the previous covenant	Rom 3:25	Due to Christ's death, God passes over sins previously committed	
9:17	A testament is effective after the testator dies	Gal 3:15	A covenant cannot be changed after ratification	
9:27	All men must die once, and then face judgment	2 Cor 5:10	Christians face the judgment seat of Christ after death (or rapture)	
9:28	Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many	Rom 6:10	Christ died to sin once for all	
9:28	Christ will appear for the second time for those who eagerly wait for him	Titus 2:13	Believers look for the blessed hope (rapture?) and the appearing of Christ	

## Evidences of Paul in Hebrews

10:13	Quoting Ps 110:1, adding Jesus will put all enemies under his feet, warning against apostasy	1 Cor 15:24-28	Quoting Ps 110:1; 8:6, Jesus will put all enemies under his feet, defeating death	
10:19-25	The essence of Christian life is faith, hope and love.	1 Cor 13:13 Col 1:5 1 Thess 1:3; 5:8	The essence of Christian life is faith, hope and love.	
10:33	The readers were made spectacles to the world	1 Cor 4:9	The apostles were made spectacle to the world	
10:34	The readers were compassionate to prisoners (Critical Text), or the author in chains (Majority Text)	Eph 3:1; 4:1 Col 4:10 2 Tim 5:8 Phm 1:23	Paul was a prisoner for Christ; the recipients of his letters were compassionate on him	
10:38	Quoting Hab 2:4, the righteous shall live by faith	Rom 1:17 Gal 3:11	Quoting Hab 2:4, the righteous shall live by faith	
11:1	Faith is assurance of things hoped for, conviction in things not seen	Rom 8:24	Hope is faith in things not seen	
11:12	Abraham was as good as dead when he had Isaac	Rom 4:19	Abraham was as good as dead when he had Isaac	
12:1	Believers need to put aside every weight and sins that entangle	Col 3:8	Believers need to put aside sins such as anger, wrath, abusive speech etc.	
12:1, 12	Christian life is likened to the track race of an athlete	2 Tim 2:3-5 1 Cor 9:24	Christian life is likened to the lives of soldiers, athletes and farmers	
12:14	Without holiness no one can see God	1 Thess 4:3 1 Cor 6:9f.	Believers need to be holy in conduct	1 Pet 2:5 1 John 3:9
12:15	Believers should not fall out of the grace of God	2 Cor 6:1 Gal 5:4	Believers should not receive grace in vain or fall away from grace	1 Pet 1:13; 4:10



## Evidences of Paul in Hebrews

13:1	Believers should practice brotherly love to fellow believers	Rom 12:10 1 Thess 4:9f.	Believers should practice brotherly love on fellow believers	1 Pet 2:17 2 Pet 1:7
13:4	Fornicators and adulterers will be judged by God	1 Cor 6:9	Fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, effeminate, and homosexuals cannot inherit the kingdom of God	
13:9	Believers should depend on the doctrine of grace, not food laws	Col 2:16 1 Cor 8:8 Rom 14:17	Believers are not subject to Jewish laws of food and feasts, etc. The kingdom of God is based on grace.	
13:16	Believers need to do good and share	Rom 12:13	Believers should contribute to the needs of the saints, practicing hospitality	
13:16	The sacrifice of doing good is well pleasing to God	Phil 4:18	The love of Epaphroditus to Paul was a sacrifice pleasing to God	
13:18	The author speaks for a plural “us”		Tradition says the Luke wrote for Paul	
13:18	The author asked for prayer to make him confident	Eph 6:19	Paul asked for prayer to make him confident in evangelism	
13:18	The author asked for prayer to live his life in good conscience	Acts 23:1 1 Tim 1:5, 19	Paul lives his life in good conscience and teaches others to do so	1 Pet 3:16, 21
13:20	The author called God the “God of Peace”	Rom 15:33; 16:20 Phil 4:9 1 Thess 5:23	Paul called God the “God of Peace”	
13:21	God is working in the believers to make them complete in every good work to do his will for his pleasure	Phil 2:13	God is at work in believers to will and work for God’s pleasure	
13:23	The author knows Timothy as a brother	2 Cor 1:1 1 Tim 1:2	Paul knows Timothy as a son personally; but as a brother publicly	

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## The Household and the Kingdom of God

