

Hebrews 13:15-16

"Us" in verse 15 are the believers in Messiah. Believers are encouraged to sacrifice because of two basic truths just covered in verses 12 - 14 - serve Him "outside the camp" and live for the eternal not the temporal. In many of the epistles doctrine is first given and then duty follows. This is exactly what is done here, where we have in these verses the duty that flows from the reality of verse 12 - 14.

15 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.

16 But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.

1) **Because Jesus suffered for us "without the gate" we are to serve Him "without the camp."**

One of the main themes of the epistles is to focus on Jesus as the motivation for holy living.

Romans 12:1-2 "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."

The mercies of God are the doctrines of condemnation, justification, sanctification and glorification taught in the first eight chapters.

2 Corinthians 8:9 "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich."

This verse is the foundation for the joy in the midst of persecution, sacrificial giving, and commitment to the Lord these believers in the churches of Macedonia were commended for.

Ephesians 4:1 "I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called."

This admonition is predicated on the first three chapters of this book and the redemption we have in Christ. See for example Ephesians 3:14-21.

Galatians 5:1 "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage."

The allegory of 4:21-31, and in a greater way the entire first 4 chapters, that we are free through Christ sets the stage for the admonition of this verse.

2) **Don't live for the temporal, live for the eternal (vs. 14)**

Matthew 6:19-21 "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal:
But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:
For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."

Colossians 3:1-4 "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.
Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.
For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.
When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory."

"Therefore..."

The realities of the above are accomplished by doing two things in our lives:

1) Sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving with our words - verse 15

15 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.

a) BY HIM

Philippians 4:13 "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."

Jesus is the foundation upon which we stand and live. Without Him the Christian life is impossible.

b) GIVE THE SACRIFICE OF PRAISE

Psalms 150

1	Praise ye the LORD. Praise God in his sanctuary: praise him in the firmament of his power.
2	Praise him for his mighty acts: praise him according to his excellent greatness.
3	Praise him with the sound of the trumpet: praise him with the psaltery and harp.
4	Praise him with the timbrel and dance: praise him with stringed instruments and organs.
5	Praise him upon the loud cymbals: praise him upon the high sounding cymbals.
6	Let every thing that hath breath praise the LORD. Praise ye the LORD.

Our circumstances might tell us there is nothing to praise God for - loss of health, loss of job, death of a spouse or child, divorce, etc. - but it is these occasions that praise becomes a sacrifice!!! Continually!!!

c) GIVE THANKS

1 Thessalonians 5:18 "In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you."

2) Sacrifice of helping and fellowship - verse 16

16 But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.

"But do not forget to do good and to share, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased." NKJV

"And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased." NIV

"Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God." ESV

"And do not neglect doing good and sharing, for with such sacrifices God is pleased." NASV

DO GOOD 1 John 3:18 "My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth."

Galatians 6:10 "As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith."

DON'T FORGET TO SHARE (FELLOWSHIP)

Communicate κοινωνία koinonia, koy-nohn-ee'-ah partnership, i.e. (literally) participation, communion, fellowship.

"That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have **fellowship** with us: and truly our **fellowship** is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ." 1 John 1:3 (Bold added)

"To appreciate the full meaning of the word-group in the New Testament that conveys the nature and reality of Christian fellowship (i.e., the noun koinonia [κοινωνία], the verb, koinonein [κοινωνεω], and the noun koinonos [κοινωνος]) as used in the New Testament, it is necessary to be aware of two fundamental points....

First, the fact and experience of Christian fellowship only exists because God the Father through Jesus Christ, the Son, and by/in the Spirit has established in grace a relation (a "new covenant") with humankind. Those who believe the gospel of the resurrection are united in the Spirit through the Son to the Father. The relation leads to the reality of relatedness and thus to an experienced relationship (a "communion") between man and God. And those who are thus "in Christ" (as the apostle Paul often states) are in communion not only with Jesus Christ (and the Father) in the Spirit but also with one another. This relatedness, relationship, and communion is fellowship.

In the second place, it is probably best not to use the word "community" as a synonym for "fellowship." The reason for this is that in modern English "community" presupposes "individualism" and thus carries a meaning that is necessarily foreign to biblical presuppositions since individualism (i.e., the thinking of a human being as an "individual" and as the basic unity of society) is, technically speaking, a modern phenomenon. So "community" seemingly inevitably today usually refers to a group, body, or society that is formed by the coming together of "individuals" in a contractual way. The emphasis is on the initiative of the "individuals" and on the voluntary nature of the group thus formed. In contrast, *koinonia* [κοινωνία] has its origin in a movement out of the internal, eternal relation, relatedness, and communion of the Godhead of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. *Koinonia* [κοινωνία] for baptized believers is thus a participation within human experience of the communion of the living God Himself." Baker's Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology

FELLOWSHIP IS A CORPORATE SOLIDARITY ISSUE AND IS FUNDAMENTAL TO THE LIFE OF BELIEVERS AND IS SEEN THROUGHOUT THE SCRIPTURE AND INFLUENCES MANY DOCTRINES.

- 1) "This brings us to consider the whole construct of 'corporate solidarity' that is so foreign to our Western thinking. In his book *The New Testament World*, Bruce Malina argues persuasively that the first-century Mediterranean person did not share or comprehend our idea of an individual. Malina is convinced that instead of being individualistic, in the world of the New Testament, people were what he calls 'dyadic.' That is, they conceived of themselves in relation to others, not as separate entities. Thus they did not view people in terms of their specific qualities as individuals, but rather the qualities of their family, village, city, or nation." William Klein, *The New Chosen People: A Corporate View of Election*, page 260
- 2) "Central to the Hebraic concept of community is the idea of corporate personality. This concept means that the individual was always thought of in the collective (family, tribe, nation) and the collective in the individual. This corporate solidarity was reinforced by the fact that the entire community (past ancestors and future members) was viewed as one personality, 'a living whole, a single animated mass of blood, flesh and bones.'" Marvin Wilson, *Our Father Abraham: Jewish Roots of the Christian Faith*, page 187
- 3) "Israel's election by God was clearly corporate...; it was for service." C. Gordon Olson, *Beyond Calvinism and Arminianism*, Global Gospel Publishers, 2003, pg. 193-94
- 4) "The prime point is that the election of the church is a corporate rather than an individual thing." Roger Forster and Paul Marston, *God's Strategy in Human History*, page 137

C. Gordon Olson, in his book *Beyond Calvinism and Arminianism* summarizes seven truths about corporate election (pg. 193-94) - I will mention three of them in light of corporate solidarity:

2. The concept of corporate solidarity is not only essential to the cultures into which the Old Testament came, but is an essential component of the Old Testament itself. Corporate solidarity is still today integral to Asian and African cultures. With our strong emphasis upon individualism, this has been lost in our western cultures. It is not surprising that the notion of individual election to salvation arose in the western, Latin church and is totally absent from eastern Christianity. The Greek churches, which presumably understood Greek better, have no concept of individual election.
4. There are many New Testament symbols of the church which have strong corporate overtones: the vine, the body, the temple of God, the flock, the bride, and the people (nation) of God.
5. The ordinances of the church are ultimately corporate in nature. The Lords table is more obvious, but when we relate water baptism to spirit baptism putting us into the corporate church, its corporate dimension is also clear.

1 Corinthians 12:4-7, 20, 27

- 4 Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit.
- 5 And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord.
- 6 And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all.
- 7 But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.
- 20 But now are they many members, yet but one body.
- 27 Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.

"...with such sacrifices God is well pleased."