

Today I bring my series through the book of Hebrews to a close. We began this journey on the 24 January, and now nine months later, our baby is one week overdue.

Today also marks the completion of 13 years of ministry here at Bethany Emmanuel. We started on the 1st November 2008, having left our children back in Gauteng to fend for themselves.

The message is significant today because it talks about leadership. Leadership in Government, Church and Eternal Leadership. As we as a country go to elections tomorrow, we should be careful to pay attention to the directions in the message,

Last week I gave this section the following title:

v17 Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you. v18 Pray for us. We are sure that we have a clear conscience and desire to live honourably in every way. v19 I particularly urge you to pray so that I may be restored to you soon. v20 May the God of peace, who through the blood of the eternal covenant brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, v21 equip you with everything good for doing his will, and may he work in us what is pleasing to him, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen. v22 Brothers, I urge you to bear with my word of exhortation, for I have written you only a short letter. v23 I want you to know that our brother Timothy has been released. If he arrives soon, I will come with him to see you. v24 Greet all your leaders and all God's people. Those from Italy send you their greetings. v25 Grace be with you all.

Hebrews 13:17-25

WHAT CHRISTIANS SHOULD EXPECT AND HOW CHRISTIANS SHOULD RESPOND TO LEADERSHIP

1. GOVERNMENTAL LEADERSHIP

v17 Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you.

1.1 The TASK of Government?

- i. **EXERCISE AUTHORITY** - The primary responsibility of Government is to maintain Law and Order. *Romans 13:3 "For rulers hold no terror for those who do right, but for those who do wrong. Do you want to be free from fear of the one in authority? Then do what is right and he will commend you."*
- ii. **KEEP WATCH OVER** – Government is there to govern. – True leaders are those that manage the affairs of state well. *Romans 13:6 "This is also why you pay taxes, for the authorities are God's servants, who give their full time to governing."*
- iii. **GIVE ACCOUNT** - Government is there to serve. *Romans 13:4 "For he is God's servant to do you good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword for nothing. He is God's servant, an agent of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer."*

1.2 The GOAL of Government?

- i. **CREATE AN ATMOSPHERE OF JOY** – A well run country will be a HAPPY COUNTRY. *Obey them so that **their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you. Romans 13:7 Give everyone what you owe him: If you owe taxes, pay taxes; if revenue, then revenue; **if respect, then respect; if honour, then honour.*****
- ii. **TO BENEFIT THE PEOPLE** – Government is there for the benefit of society. ANY GOVERNMENT THAT SERVES IT'S OWN INTEREST FIRST, SHOULD BE VOTED OUT. *Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, **for that would be of no advantage to you.***

1.3 The RESPONSE to Government?

- i. **OBEDIENCE** - The primary responsibility of people is OBEYING THE LAW. *v17 Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. Romans 13:3 “For rulers hold no terror for those who do right, but for those who do wrong. Do you want to be free from fear of the one in authority? Then do what is right and he will commend you.”*
- ii. **KEEP LEADERS ACCOUNTABLE** – While leaders will ultimately be responsible to GOD, we too should hold them accountable. *The simplest way to do that in a democracy is to vote. As Christians we have a duty to vote, to be responsible citizens.*

2. CHURCH LEADERSHIP

v18 Pray for us. We are sure that we have a clear conscience and desire to live honourably in every way. v19 I particularly urge you to pray so that I may be restored to you soon. v22 Brothers, I urge you to bear with my word of exhortation, for I have written you only a short letter. v23 I want you to know that our brother Timothy has been released. If he arrives soon, I will come with him to see you. v24 Greet all your leaders and all God's people. Those from Italy send you their greetings.

2.1 The TASK of GODLY LEADERS?

- i. **PREACHING** – Godly leaders' primary responsibility is to preach God's Word. *v22 Brothers, I urge you to bear with my word of exhortation, for I have written you only a short letter*
- ii. **SET GODLY EXAMPLES** – Godly leaders SHOULD BE SETTING A PATTERN FOR LIFE. *v18 We **are sure that we have a clear conscience and desire to live honourably in every way***

2.2 The GOAL of GODLY LEADERS?

- i. **CREATE AN ATMOSPHERE OF ENCOURAGEMENT** – Church should be the place where people are strengthened in their faith. *v19 I particularly urge you to pray so that I may be restored to you soon. v22 Brothers, I urge you to bear*

- ii. **MAINTAIN A WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT** - Churches should be places where people feel welcome. *v24 Greet all your leaders and all God's people. Those from Italy send you their greetings.*

2.3 **The RESPONSE to GODLY LEADERS?**

- i. **PRAYER** – As Church Leaders are often at the battlefield against sin and Satan, the best thing you can do is pray. *v18 Pray for us*

3. **GOD'S LEADERSHIP**

v20 May the God of peace, who through the blood of the eternal covenant brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, v21 equip you with everything good for doing his will, and may he work in us what is pleasing to him, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen. v25 Grace be with you all.

3.1 **The TASK of GOD'S LEADERSHIP?**

- i. **TO RECEIVE GLORY** - The primary responsibility of GOD is to be GOD. *v21 to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen*
- ii. **TO PROVIDE SALVATION** – Only God can provide salvation. THERE IS NO OTHER NAME GIVEN TO MAN THROUGH WHICH WE ARE SAVED. *v20 “who through the blood of the eternal covenant brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus”*
- iii. **TO SHEPHERD** – The Shepherds task is to provide all that the sheep need. *v20... our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep”*

3.2 **The GOAL of GOD'S LEADERSHIP?**

- i. **CREATE AN ATMOSPHERE OF PEACE** – Peace is not absence of WAR, it is a state of wellbeing, regardless of anything. *v20 May the God of peace,*
- ii. **TO EQUIP HIS PEOPLE FOR HIS WORK** – We were created for God's Glory. Our lives only have meaning, as we do HIS WILL. *v21 equip you with everything good for doing his will, and may he work in us what is pleasing to him.*

3.3 **The RESPONSE to GOD'S LEADERSHIP?**

- i. **RECEIVE HIS GRACE** - The final message of the book is simple. *v25 Grace be with you all*

CONCLUSION

We started this study with this theme:

It's all about JESUS

And we end this study with this theme:

It's all about JESUS