

## Outside the Camp: The Least, the Last, the Little, and the Lost

Hebrews 13:13

*“Let us go to Him **outside the camp**, bearing His reproach.”*

The Hebrews had an altar where they brought sacrifices to make peace with God. We have seen in our study of Hebrews that the Old Testament is filled with types and shadows of the eternal reality of Christ. When the Hebrews came with their sacrifices, they were acknowledging “... *without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sin*” (Heb. 9:22). Christ is our High Priest, our Lamb, and our Altar (Heb. 13:10).

The holiest day on the Hebrew calendar was the tenth day of the seventh month—the Day of Atonement. The Hebrews called this day “The Sabbath of Sabbaths.” The High Priest would choose two goats for the sacrifice that day. The High Priest would lay his hands on the first goat, called the scapegoat, and confess the sins of Israel. Then, the goat was taken to a remote place **outside the camp** and released. The other goat was killed and its blood used in the Tabernacle rituals. Afterwards, the remains of the goat were taken **outside the camp** and burned (Lev. 16:20-22; 27-28). The Hebrews were very familiar with the concept of expelling sin *outside the camp*. Even those priests who went *outside the camp* to burn the sacrifice had to go through a cleansing ritual to get back *inside* the camp (Lev. 16:26). Here is the principle: *Sin and shame are outside the camp*. Jesus Christ died *outside the camp*, fulfilling the Law. The writer turns the Old Covenant principle on its head—**Don’t stay in the camp; go outside the camp**.

### I. Going to Christ “outside the camp” means you bear the reproach of Christ’s death.

The early followers of Jesus Christ were mostly Hebrews. They came from religious families, people who took seriously individual morality and the Law of God. Some of these family members had now turned against those who had become followers of Christ. Why? Well, when you become vocal in your belief that no sinner is ever forgiven by God without coming to the altar of Jesus Christ, you will begin to experience reproach and shame. The demons of hell don’t mind religion; they hate Christ.

### II. Going to Christ “outside the camp” means you take the gospel to those who are cast out.

Jesus, throughout his life, left the camp to embrace the unclean—those who had been expelled into the wildness of Jewish social and religious life. To be holy in the New Covenant means we invert the Day of Atonement principle: *We leave the camp to stand with those who have been excluded*. When we “come out” we are disgraced, just as Jesus was disgraced. It is the disgrace of hanging out with those that culture, even the religious culture, considers as losers. To come outside the camp means you **take the gospel to the least, the last, the little, and the lost**. I have said before, and I’ll say it again: *The greatness of a church is not measured by how many it seats, but by how many it sends*.

### III. Going to Christ “outside the camp” means you consider yourself to be the “chief of sinners”.

There are degrees of guilt, degrees of sin, and degrees of punishment. Not all men are vile as other men are vile. There are degrees in sin. All of us are in the mire, stuck in the mud of our depravity and guilt; but not all of us are mired to the same depths. Yet to venture *outside the camp*, we must consider ourselves the “chief of sinners” (I Tim. 1:15). Why is it that each of us should feel this way?

1. When you go to Christ *outside the camp*, you find it impossible to compare yourself to others.
2. When you go to Christ *outside the camp*, you stop worrying about what those in the camp think.
3. When you go to Christ *outside the camp*, you focus on Christ and what He has accomplished.