

Hebrews 13:15

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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.

Analysis

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. Having established believers' pilgrim status and separation from worldly systems, the author instructs what we should offer God. 'By him' (di' autou, δι' αὐτοῦ) indicates Christ is the mediator through whom we offer acceptable worship. All worship must come through Christ, not through Old Covenant priesthood or ceremonies.

'The sacrifice of praise' (thysian aineseōs, θυσίαν αἰνέσεως) replaces animal sacrifices with verbal thanksgiving. The phrase 'fruit of our lips' (karpon cheileon) quotes Hosea 14:2 (LXX), where God values heartfelt confession over ritual sacrifice. 'Continually' (dia pantos, διὰ παντός, 'through all circumstances') calls for constant thanksgiving, not merely occasional or situational praise. This sacrifice costs something—praising God amid persecution and suffering requires faith and commitment.

This illustrates New Covenant worship's nature: spiritual, not ceremonial; continuous, not occasional; through Christ, not human priests. Reformed theology emphasizes worship as response to grace, not earning favor. We don't sacrifice to obtain God's acceptance (Christ's sacrifice accomplished that) but offer praise in gratitude for received grace. Thanksgiving becomes our 'sacrifice'—costly because offered amid trials, voluntary because motivated by love, acceptable because

mediated by Christ. True worship is lifestyle of grateful praise, not ritualistic religious performance.

Historical Context

Old Covenant worship centered on physical sacrifices at temple—animals, grain, incense. Priests mediated between God and people. With Christ's final sacrifice, this system became obsolete (Hebrews 10:18). New Covenant worship is spiritual—prayer, praise, obedience, service. The phrase 'fruit of our lips' references prophetic tradition valuing heartfelt worship over empty ritual (Isaiah 1:11-17; Amos 5:21-24; Hosea 6:6). Early Christians, initially lacking buildings or formal liturgy, worshiped through praise, Scripture reading, prayer, and Lord's Supper in homes. The Psalms heavily influenced early Christian worship—book of Psalms being ancient Israel's hymnbook. Praising God 'continually' amid persecution distinguished Christian worship—they praised even in prison, before execution, characterizing authentic faith that transcends circumstances.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. How can you offer 'sacrifice of praise' continually, even amid difficult circumstances that don't inspire thanksgiving?
2. What does it mean that your praise must be offered 'by him' (through Christ) rather than based on your own merit?
3. In what practical ways can the 'fruit of your lips' become constant thanksgiving rather than complaining or silence?

Interlinear Text

δι' αὐτοῦ οὖν ἀναφέρωμεν θυσίαν αἰνέσεως
By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise
G1223 G846 G3767 G399 G2378 G133

διαπαντός τῷ θεῷ τοῦτ' ἔστιν καρπὸν χειλέων
continually to God the fruit of our lips
G1275 G3588 G2316 G5124 G2076 G2590 G5491

ὁμολογούντων τῷ ὀνόματι αὐτοῦ
giving thanks name him
G3670 G3588 G3686 G846

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 50:14 (References God): Offer unto God thanksgiving; and pay thy vows unto the most High:

Romans 12:1 (Sacrifice): 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.

1 Peter 2:5 (Sacrifice): Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.

Hosea 14:2 (Parallel theme): Take with you words, and turn to the LORD: say unto him, Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously: so will we render the calves of our lips.

Isaiah 57:19 (Parallel theme): I create the fruit of the lips; Peace, peace to him that is far off, and to him that is near, saith the LORD; and I will heal him.

2 Chronicles 33:16 (Sacrifice): And he repaired the altar of the LORD, and sacrificed thereon peace offerings and thank offerings, and commanded Judah to serve the LORD God of Israel.

Psalms 50:23 (Resurrection): Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me: and to him that ordereth his conversation aright will I shew the salvation of God.

Leviticus 7:12 (Sacrifice): If he offer it for a thanksgiving, then he shall offer with the sacrifice of thanksgiving unleavened cakes mingled with oil, and unleavened wafers anointed with oil, and cakes mingled with oil, of fine flour, fried.

Matthew 11:25 (Parallel theme): At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.

2 Chronicles 7:6 (Resurrection): And the priests waited on their offices: the Levites also with instruments of musick of the LORD, which David the king had made to praise the LORD, because his mercy endureth for ever, when David praised by their ministry; and the priests sounded trumpets before them, and all Israel stood.

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