

UNSWAYED – HEBREWS 12:1-2

INTRODUCTION

1. The holidays are finally here and many of us are excited about being with family.
2. Today is the Sunday after Thanksgiving and we are coming off one of those times.
3. This day began as a time to give thanks for the blessing of the fall harvest.
4. It follows on the heels of another day, Veterans Day, where our country gives thanks for those who have served in the U.S. military.
5. These days are opportunities for us to remember how much we have to be grateful for.
6. And as Christians, our minds should turn to God and to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.
7. In Him we have so much to be thankful for, but today I want us to consider our need to be grateful for His faithfulness to God's plan to save mankind.
8. Let us be grateful that despite all the obstacles in His way, Jesus always remained unswayed in His love for God and for you and me.

DISCUSSION

I. UNSWAYED BY FAMILY

- A. As we think about the ministry of Jesus and the end that He knew was before Him, it is easy to see how His family might have been an obstacle for Him.
- B. After all He was the eldest son, the first born in his family, and enjoyed the love and companionship of His mother and brothers (**John 2:12**).
 - i. If Joseph was dead at the time of His public ministry, Jesus would have been considered the head of the family.
 - ii. He would have been granted certain privileges but also responsibilities for the family's wellbeing and reputation.
- C. While Jesus never neglected those responsibilities, He also understood His ultimate responsibility was to His heavenly Father (**Luke 2:49; cp. John 19:26-27**).
- D. His responsibility for His family helps us understand why they expressed concerns about His teaching and ministry at various times.
- E. Whether they were concerned about His mental health or reprisals from the Jews or the Romans, His family pressured Him at times to stop (**Mark 3:21, 31**).
- F. But Jesus wasn't swayed by their pleas or concerns.
- G. He was not going to be deterred from doing God's will.
- H. Now how many of us can relate to the pressure He experienced?
- I. And how many of us would have had the faith, love and courage to resist?
- J. Praise God that Jesus was true to His mission.
- K. Praise God that He left an example for all who would follow Him so we could be a part of the family of God (**Matt. 12:46-50; 10:34-39; 19:29**).

II. UNSWAYED BY CULTURE

- A. Not only did Jesus not let His family get in the way of His mission, but He also resisted the man-made traditions and culture of His fellow Jews.
- B. In Jesus' time, there were various sects of Judaism, each with its own traditions, teachings, and interpretations.
- C. These and all Jewish people had come to observe all manner of customs and traditions that had been handed down to them (**Matt. 15:2; Mark 7:3-5**).
- D. But Jesus wasn't afraid to push back against these traditions.

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- i. He violated their Sabbath traditions (**Mark 2:23-27; 3:5**).
- ii. He violated their traditions about propriety, associating with tax-collector, sinners, and women (**Luke 15:1-2; John 4:7-9, 27**).
- E. He was more concerned about keeping God's Law and doing His will (**Matt. 15:1-9**).
- F. He was more concerned about doing what was right in God's sight than what His culture and customs said was right (**John 4:34**).
- G. What about us today?
- H. Are we willing to examine the customs and traditions passed down to us?
- I. Are we willing to reform or even cast them aside if they aren't right with God's will?
- J. Thanks be to God that Jesus didn't allow Himself to be swayed by culture.
- K. May we have the same courage He did (**2 Thess. 2:15; 3:6; 1 Cor. 11:2**).

III. UNSWAYED BY COUNTRY

- A. No, Jesus didn't let family, culture, or even a love for His country get in His way.
- B. The people of Jesus' day had many misconceptions about the Messiah (**Luke 4:16-22**).
- C. They weren't looking for someone to save them from their sins in the sense we think of.
- D. They were looking for a political and military leader who would throw off the yoke of Roman oppression and restore their nation (**John 6:15; 12:12-15**).
 - i. It is this misconception which caused Peter to be so upset with the idea of Jesus being executed (**Matt. 16:22; Mark 8:32**).
 - ii. And it may very well be part of the reason John the Baptist struggled with doubt in Herod's prison (**Matt. 11:1-3; 3:10-12**).
- E. Jesus faced temptations by His people and even Satan to take shortcuts to get His crown and Kingdom (**Luke 4:5-7; Matt. 26:53**).
- F. But He understood that God had not sent Him for this purpose and that His mission was much bigger than the Jewish people or their nation.
- G. He was committed to God's plan to reconcile all mankind, Jew, and Gentile, to Himself and that meant His death on the cross (**Luke 4:23-30; Eph. 1:10; Rom. 1:16; 3:29**).
- H. What about you and me today?
- I. As Americans, we can surely relate to the pressure, the temptation to put love of country first.
- J. Are we tempted to put our trust in our country to bring about God's reign and rule?
- K. Praise God that Jesus was true to His mission.
- L. Praise God that Jesus left an example for us to trust Him and His word to accomplish God's will (**John 18:36; 2 Cor. 10:3-5; Rom. 1:16**).

CONCLUSION

- 1. There were so many things that could have distracted Jesus from fulfilling God's mission in God's way.
- 2. If Jesus had allowed any of these things to sway Him, to keep Him from going to the cross, then you and I would be lost and have no hope (**1 Cor. 15:12-20; Eph. 2:11-12**).
- 3. But thanks be to God that Jesus did not let anyone, or anything sway Him.
- 4. Not His family, His friends, His culture, or even His own country.
- 5. Praise God and thanks be to Jesus for His faithfulness (**Heb. 12:1-2**).
- 6. If we love Jesus, if we love God and are thankful for Him, how can we show it?
- 7. If we love Him and are thankful for Him, let us strive to be unswayed in living for Jesus (**Heb. 12:3; 2 Cor. 5:15**).