

## Hebrews Part Two

### Lesson #20, Chapter 12 Overview

#### TEACHER'S GUIDE

The goal of this particular lesson is the foundation of all Bible study. It is the practice of observing what's in the text. At this stage in our Bible study you're simply taking note and then recording what God has put into the chapter. You're not making any interpretations about what it means or how it applies to your life—that will come later. Don't rush through this lesson. Set aside time this week to peer into the living and abiding Word of God. You'll be glad you did!

On the pages that follow you'll find the text of Chapter 12 in the New American Standard Bible version. *Use those pages to do this lesson.* Feel free to make notes on the page or mark it up as much as you like to help you do this lesson. Using the same Bible version to do this lesson will cut down on any confusion that would arise if we were all using different versions of the Bible when we get together for class discussion.

1. To begin, read through Chapter 12. Now, summarize the contents of Chapter 12. This is not the time to be super detailed; instead, think of trying to tell a 4th grader the contents of the chapter.<sup>1</sup>

- a. Summarize the contents of the first paragraph (verses 1-2).

The author of Hebrews ties the incredible examples of faith and perseverance in chapter 11 to the struggling believers he's writing to. He encourages the believers to remember the stalwart, rugged, and persevering faith of the Old Testament saints and to put off sin and anything that encumbers them from running and finishing the race of faith well. When they fix their eyes on Jesus and His godly example, they will be able to run and finish well, just like He did.

- b. Summarize the contents of the second paragraph (verses 3-11).

In order to best strengthen the believers, the author of Hebrews begins with Jesus' example of perseverance in suffering, but then switches to the biblical truth that every believer will be disciplined. The discipline shows that God is our Father, who is lovingly, faithfully making us into the image of Christ, so *we may share His holiness*.

- c. Summarize the contents of the third paragraph (verses 12-13).

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<sup>1</sup> The method and process of observation in Bible study does God honor as we stop, observe, and consider each and every one of His recorded Words, in their context. I would be remiss if I didn't acknowledge the debt I owe to the Precept Inductive Bible Studies observation method, which I have adapted in my studies. As far as I know, the method is the brainchild of Kay Arthur, though I've encountered a number of others who have also come up with similar ways for observing the text. The point of observation is to slow down and really look at what God has preserved for us in His Word. What I've created here is simply another variation to help us peer more closely at the Scriptures—for our good and His glory.

Because God disciplines us for our good so we would share His holiness, then we need to trustingly strengthen our weak responses, rather than remaining lame and crippled throughout life.

d. Summarize the contents of the fourth paragraph (verses 14-17).

The author of Hebrews gives us more ways we can respond with holiness in trying times—by pursuing peace with one another, by pursuing holiness, by not allowing bitterness, immorality, or godlessness to remain in our own hearts or among the brethren.

e. Summarize the contents of the fifth paragraph (verses 18-24).

When the Israelites met with God at His holy mountain, it was a fearful sight, yet we have a greater and more awesome mountain that we approach in the heavenly New Jerusalem, where God dwells and we come to Jesus, the great mediator of the New Covenant, which is sprinkled (instituted) with His superior and “better” blood.

f. Summarize the contents of the sixth paragraph (verses 25-29).

Because Jesus is the mediator of that better covenant, then we need to make sure we are listening to Him because of the greater judgment that will be levied against us for our unbelief. God warns that He will shake the heavens and the earth in judgment, to which the author rejoices that we have a kingdom that cannot be shaken. Because of that steadfast city waiting for us, we are to gratefully offer ourselves up to God for He is holy.

2. After reviewing the chapter and what you wrote for your summaries, ask yourself: *What is the main point of this chapter?* How do all the details and events reveal the main idea of the chapter? Record your answer below.

Discipline is an encouraging sign of our sonship, which is why we should take heart and live holy and lives. The knowledge that we have a heavenly and holy city waiting for us should change how we live!

3. Now you're ready to title your chapter. Your title should reflect the contents of the chapter in an abbreviated way. Remember, a title's purpose is to help you remember what is in each chapter.

Truths for Troubled Saints

The Truths that Strengthen in Suffering

The Truths that Help Us Press On to the End

4. On the *Hebrews Bible Text* handout at the end of this lesson, mark *key* words. *God, Jesus Christ, Holy Spirit* are always key words. Start with these first. Then mark words or phrases that are repeated at least 3 times. Mark any other words that seem important to the chapter or are strongly emphasized.

Mark words or phrases by creating a symbol or using a certain colored pencil every time it appears. This will enable you to see at a glance how often a word is used in the chapter or note a progression of thought.

5. Next, *list the phrase containing the key words* on a separate sheet of paper. This step will allow you to pull together the information you noted from marking the key words. Be sure to cite the verse references when you list your key word information.

For example, with *God* as your key word, you would begin to make a list of the information you discovered every time God is mentioned in Hebrews Chapter 1. Your Chapter 1 list about *God* should begin by looking something like the one below. Include the details that you learn about Him. For example: verse 1—*He* spoke long ago to the fathers; verses 1-2—*God...has* spoken to us in *His* Son.

### God

Verse 2 Jesus sat down at the right hand of the throne of God

Verse 5 God says, My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor faint when you are reproved by Him

Verse 6 for those whom the Lord loves He disciplines; He scourges every son whom He receives

Verse 7 God deals with you as with sons

Verse 9 we should much rather be subject to the Father of spirits and live

Verse 10 He disciplines us for our good so that we may share His holiness

Verse 14 [pursue] sanctification without which on one will see the Lord

Verse 15 see to it that no one comes short of the grace of God

Verse 22 you have come to the city of the living God

Verse 23 [you have come to] God, the Judge of all

Verse 25 do not refuse Him who is speaking; we won't escape who turn away from Him who warns from heaven

Verse 26 His voice shook the earth; now He has promised, I will shake not only the earth, but also the heaven

Verse 28 show gratitude, by which we may offer to God an acceptable service

Verse 29 our God is a consuming fire

### Jesus

Verse 2 fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, Who for the joy set before Him endured, despised shame, and sat down

Verse 3 consider Him who has endured such hostility by sinners against Himself so that you will not grow weary or lose heart

Verse 24 [you have come to] Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant

Discipline

Verse 5 do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor faint when you are reproved by Him

Verse 6 those whom the Lord loves He disciplines; He scourges every son whom He receives

Verse 7 it is for discipline that you endure; what son is there whom his father does not discipline?

Verse 8 if you are without discipline you are illegitimate

Verse 9 we had earthly fathers discipline us and we respected them...

Verse 10 they disciplined us as seemed best to them, but He disciplines us for our good

Verse 11 all discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but to those who have been trained by *it*, afterwards *it* yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness.

Sin

Verse 1 lay aside every *encumbrance* and the sin which so easily entangles us

Verse 4 resist in your striving against sin

Synonyms—encumbrance, hostility, bitterness, immoral, godless

Endure

Verse 1 let us run with endurance

Verse 2 He endured the cross because of the joy set before Him

Verse 3 consider Him who has endured such hostility by sinners

6. Mark any *commands* that are listed in the chapter. It helps to look for any actions that are required of the reader or things they are told to do or be.

7. Now, list the commands on your separate sheet of paper in the same way you did for the key words.

See observation sheet

8. Mark words or phrases that are being *compared or contrasted*. Words like *as, likewise, in the same manner, or like* will help you find words or phrases being compared. Contrasting words like “light/dark” or “love/hate” and the word “but” will help you find words or phrases that are being contrasted.

9. Now list the comparisons and contrasts you discovered on the extra paper you’ve been using.

See observation sheet

10. Mark transition terms: *therefore, wherefore, finally*. Sometimes an author has his own kind of transition term that lets you know he is making a switch to a new topic, so be sure to look for those kinds of terms. (Generally, these are at the beginning of a paragraph.)

See observation sheet

11. Mark expressions of time—words like *shortly, quickly, soon, for a little while*.  
See observation sheet

12. Mark words that are synonyms of each other. For example: *God* and *Father* from 1:1.

Synonyms of sin—encumbrance, hostility, bitterness, immoral, godless

Jesus—author, perfecter

Grow weary—lose heart

God—the Father of spirits, the Judge of all, living God, consuming fire

Jesus—mediator of a new covenant

13. List any *attributes* of God, Christ, or the Holy Spirit that you notice in this chapter and add them to your list paper.

***How to identify attributes:*** Look back over the list you compiled about God and identify any of His attributes that you may see. Identifying attributes is easy when you differentiate between what God is *doing* versus *who He is*. Begin your attribute statements with *God is...* and then finish the sentence. List the verse that identified that particular characteristic for you. For clarity's sake you may want to explain why you identified that particular attribute as shown in the examples. For example: God is sovereign from verse 1 (because He ordained His plan and how it would be revealed to the world); God is knowable from verse 2 (because He has spoken to us in Christ and made His will known).

### God

Verse 2 God is king, sovereign, and reigns over all

Verse 5 God is Father, God is wise, God is sovereign, God is worthy of worship and respect

Verse 6 God is love, wise, is farseeing, father

Verse 7 God is personal, near

Verse 9 God is father of all

Verse 10 God is good, God is holy

Verse 14 God is holy

Verse 15 God is grace

Verse 22 God is living

Verse 23 God is judge of all

Verse 25 God is personal, communicator, judge

Verse 26 God is powerful, faithful

Verse 28 God is king, worthy

Verse 29 God is a consuming fire

### Jesus

Verse 2 Jesus is the author, perfecter of faith

Verse 2 Jesus endured the cross, Jesus despised the shame, Jesus sat down

Verse 3 Jesus endured hostility, Jesus endured for our sake

Verse 24 Jesus is mediator

14. Look for *lists of words, phrases, or related thoughts* in the chapter text. Number any lists you find within the Bible text, then write out your list to the side in the margin or on a separate sheet of paper of the Hebrews Chapter 1 Bible text. This step will help you see the thought progression of the author or the results of some action. For example, in Hebrews 1:1-2 *we find a list about God speaking*. We discover 1) God spoke long ago; 2) God spoke to the fathers; 3) God spoke through the prophets; 4) God spoke through the prophets in many portions; 5) God spoke through the prophets in many ways; 6) and now in these last days God has spoken; 7) God has spoken to us; and 8) God has spoken to us in His Son.

See observation sheet

15. Be sure to mark or write down any “nuggets” you observed that you thought were interesting.

We don't refuse Him who is speaking because judgment is coming. This time there will be a shaking of the earth *and* heaven. The things that can be shaken are not eternal. The things that are shaken must be removed so that the eternal city can be established.

Remember, the purpose of this lesson is to observe and take note of what is in each chapter. You are not making any interpretations or applications to your life at this time. Your task at this time is to look for the treasures that God has put in each chapter. Have fun digging into God's word!



SCRIPTURE PATHS BIBLE STUDIES

Discovering the Treasures of the Word

Hebrews Chapter 12

1 Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles

us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,

2 fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

3 For consider Him who has endured such hostility by sinners against Himself, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.

4 You have not yet resisted to the point of shedding blood in your striving against sin;

5 and you have forgotten the exhortation which is addressed to you as sons, "My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, Nor faint when you are reproved by Him;

6 For those whom the Lord loves He disciplines, And He scourges every son whom He receives."

7 It is for discipline that you endure; God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom his father does not discipline?

8 But if you are without discipline, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate children and not sons.

9 Furthermore, we had earthly fathers to discipline us, and we respected them; shall we not much rather be subject to the Father of spirits, and live?

- Things all learn about Jesus
1. author of faith
  2. perfecter of faith
  3. endured the cross
  4. despising shame
  5. All for the joy set before Him
  6. sat down at God's right hand
  7. endured hostility
  8. so we wouldn't grow weary & lose heart

6 for our good  
7 share His holiness

8 it trains us

9 produces peaceful fruit & righteousness

- You Endure Discipline
- 1 because God is treating you like a son
  - 2 father's discipline children
  - 3 all partakers
  - 4 respected earthly fathers
  - 5 even more be subject to heavenly Father

SCRIPTURE PATHS BIBLE STUDIES  
Discovering the Treasures of the Word

10 For they disciplined us for a short time as seemed best to them, but He disciplines us for our good, so that we may share His holiness.

11 All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness.

12 Therefore, strengthen the hands that are weak and the knees that are feeble,

13 and make straight paths for your feet, so that the limb which is lame may not be put out of joint, but rather be healed.

14 Pursue peace with all men, and the sanctification without which no one will see the Lord.

15 See to it that no one comes short of the grace of God; that no root of bitterness springing up causes trouble, and by it many be defiled;

16 that there be no immoral or godless person like Esau, who sold his own birthright for a single meal.

17 For you know that even afterwards, when he desired to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place for repentance, though he sought for it with tears.

18 For you have not come to a mountain that can be touched and to a blazing fire, and to darkness and gloom and whirlwind,

19 and to the blast of a trumpet and the sound of words which sound was such that those who heard begged that no further word be spoken to them.

*Discipline in a nutshell*

- 1 for the moment
- 2 not joyful
- 3 feels sorrowful
- 4 it trains
- 5 afterwards
- 6 yields peaceful fruit of righteousness

*The mtn that can't be touched*

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SCRIPTURE PATHS BIBLE STUDIES  
Discovering the Treasures of the Word

(TTT) 20 For they could not bear the command, "If even a beast touches the mountain, it will be stoned."

21 And so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, "I am full of fear and trembling."

22 But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to myriads of angels,

23 to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect,

24 and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood, which speaks better than the blood of Abel.

25 See to it that you do not refuse Him who is speaking. For if those did not escape when they refused him who warned them on earth, much less will we escape who turn away from Him who warns from heaven.

26 And His voice shook the earth then, but now He has promised, saying, "Yet once more I will shake not only the earth, but also the heaven."

27 This expression, "Yet once more," denotes the removing of those things which can be shaken, as of created things, so that those things which cannot be shaken may remain.

28 Therefore, since we receive a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us show gratitude, by which we may offer to God an acceptable service with reverence and awe;

(TTT) 29 for our God is a consuming fire.

8a  
Mt Zion +  
Jerusalem  
or  
10 things "you"  
have come to  
5521-24

The reason we don't see the reason is seen in vs. 22

Things that can be shaken = created things

The kingdom we receive

God  
+ Jesus  
✓ Holy Spirit  
discipline

sin  
endured  
suffer

CCC comments  
time  
comparison  
contrast  
TTT transition

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## Hebrews Part Two

### Lesson #21, Chapter 12:1-6

#### TEACHER'S GUIDE

Read Chapter 12 with a heart of anticipation for what the Lord will teach you out of His Word.

1. Verse 1 begins with “therefore” that is used with great emphasis here and indicates the author is summing up a major thought. What did you discover about what “therefore” is there for?

Therefore is the *transition* word that ties what the author said in chapter 11 and specifically in Hebrews 11:39-40 about the faithful cloud of witnesses to the encouragement given to “us” in chapter 12.

2. To gain a better understanding for the word *witnesses*, look up the following verses: Acts 10:39; Rom. 1:9; Heb. 10:28. What did you learn?

**Acts 10:39** *“We are witnesses of all the things He did both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They also put Him to death by hanging Him on a cross.*

**Romans 1:9** *For God, whom I serve in my spirit in the preaching of the gospel of His Son, is my witness as to how unceasingly I make mention of you,*

**Hebrews 10:28** *Anyone who has set aside the Law of Moses dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses.*

Witnesses are those who saw something and then are able to tell about it. In each case, it is a first person witness. So, that great cloud of witnesses, whose lives testify to the faithfulness of God to His promises, now stand as witnesses as they watch our lives. Their witnessing eyes are a motivation to us to run well, to run without sin.

- a. What does that great cloud of witnesses “witness” about? Don’t forget that verse 1 begins with “therefore,” which should help you figure out the answer to this question.

This is crucial here. They are witnesses of the faithfulness of God to bring all His promises to pass, even though they died without receiving them or having them fulfilled in their lifetimes.

“I do not believe that the **cloud of witnesses surrounding us** is standing in the galleries of heaven watching as we perform. The idea here is not that we should be faithful lest they be disappointed, or that we should try to impress them like a sports team trying to impress the fans in the bleachers. These are witnesses *to God*, not *of us*. They are examples, not onlookers. They have proved by their testimony, their witness, that the life of faith is the only life to live.

To have a whole gallery of such great people looking down on us would not motivate us but paralyze us. We are not called to please them. They are not looking at us; we are to look at them. Nothing is more encouraging than the

successful example of someone who has “done it before.” Seeing how God was with them encourages us to trust that He will also be with us. The same God who was their God is our God. The God of yesterday is the God of today and tomorrow. He has not weakened, or lost interest in His people, or lessened His love and care for them. We can run as well as they did. It has nothing to do with how we compare with them, but in how our God compares with theirs. Because we have the same God, He can do the same things through us if we trust Him.” [John F. MacArthur Jr., *Hebrews*, MacArthur New Testament Commentary (Chicago: Moody Press, 1983), 375.]

3. What picture is the author of Hebrews painting in verse 1 when he describes the Old Testament saints as that “great cloud of witnesses surrounding us?” He means that there are lots of them. They are like clouds that cover the sky on a hazy or cloudy day. There are many of them and fill the sky with their testimony.

4. In what way are those witnesses of Jesus Christ to motivate us (verse 1)? Their lives, their enduring, trusting, persevering lives are to motivate us to live in the same way—which means we are to remove any hindrances to our running well. They should motivate us to be single-minded in our focus.

5. What two things are we to lay aside (verse 1)?  
Encumbrances and sin

a. Define *lay aside* (NIV *throw off* [Strong’s #659]).

Cast off. To put off from oneself. Like the runners of old, who ran naked, so they could run as fast and as unhindered as possible, so we too, need to run our race to heaven freed from anything that might hinder us or disqualify us.

b. Define *encumbrance* (NIV *hinders*; ESV, KJV *weight* [Strong’s #3591]).

Weight, something like a trailing garment, bulk, mass, any “swelling, superfluous flesh!” Oh my!!!!

“The allusion, therefore, is to the training period preparatory to a race in which encumbering superfluity of flesh is reduced. Expositor’s says: “The Christian runner must rid himself even of innocent things which might retard him. And all that does not help, hinders. ***It is by running he learns what these things are. So long as he stands he does not feel that they are burdensome and hampering.***” Thus, the word “weight” has the idea of “encumbrance.” [Kenneth S. Wuest, [Wuest’s Word Studies from the Greek New Testament: For the English Reader](#), vol. 10 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 213–214.]

6. What do you learn about sin from verse 1?  
We are to lay it aside too. To put off from ourselves any sin. It is also described as something that so *easily entangles us*.

“Therefore also as for us, having so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, having put off and away from ourselves every encumbrance and that sin which so deftly and cleverly places itself in an entangling way around us, with patience let us be running the race lying before us.” [Kenneth S. Wuest, [Wuest’s Word Studies from the Greek New Testament: For the English Reader](#), vol. 10 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 214.]

7. Once we get rid of the things that hinder us, what are we to do according to verse 1?

Run! Run, dear one, run! But we are to run with endurance. **And** we are to run the race that is set before us. We don’t get to choose which race we want to run. We don’t get to choose how we want to run it. We are to run for the long haul, not a sprint. We are to run the course God sets out for us, not one of our own choosing.

8. Every believer has to run. As soon as you become a Christian, the race is before you. It is the course you are on. The question then becomes, “How will you run the race of the Christian life?” How can you show your commitment to running with endurance according to verse 1? How are you running right now—at this point in your life? Do you need to make any changes to your running pace?

I can show my commitment to running this race set before me by putting off things that may hinder me, slow me down, distract me and to remove entangling sins. It means I’m serious about finishing well. It means I want to run like Jesus did—because of the joy that was set before Him. I am running well, but still feel like I have things that slow me down like getting distracted by watching the sidelines. I need to put on my spiritual blinders and not wonder at those running along with me.

TO RUN THE RACE WITH ENDURANCE

“To be successful you need a unique mindset. You need the ability to deal with fatigue and discomfort. It’s a skill that comes through repetition and hard training. You learn to keep going even when things feel horrible.” Matt Aro, winner of two Double Ironman Triathalons

“You have to have the mindset of ‘I’m going to finish no matter what.’” Matt Rinard, artist and Ironman Competitor

9. Fixing our eyes on Jesus is the key component to finishing this race well. Define *fixing* (ESV, NKJV *looking* [Strong’s #872]).

“The word “looking” is *aphorao* (ἀφοραο) “to turn the eyes away from other things and fix them on something.” The word also means “to turn one’s mind to a certain thing.” Both meanings are applicable here, the spiritual vision turned away from all else and together with the mind, concentrated on Jesus. What a lesson in



Christian running technique we have in that little preposition “off, away from,” which is prefixed to this verb. The minute the Greek runner in the stadium takes his attention away from the racecourse and the goal to which he is speeding, and turns it upon the onlooking crowds, his speed is slackened. It is so with the Christian. The minute he takes his eyes off of the Lord Jesus, and turns them upon others, his pace in the Christian life is slackened, and his onward progress in grace hindered.” [1 Kenneth S. Wuest, [\*Wuest’s Word Studies from the Greek New Testament: For the English Reader\*](#), vol. 10 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 214–215.]

- a. What did Paul do to keep his gaze on Jesus? See Phil. 3:7-14; 2 Tim. 2:3-10; 4:7.

**Philippians 3:7–14** But whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ. More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ, and may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith, that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death; in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead. Not that I have already obtained it or have already become perfect, but I press on so that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus. ***Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.***

**2 Timothy 2:3–10** Suffer hardship with me, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. ***No soldier in active service entangles himself in the affairs of everyday life, so that he may please the one who enlisted him as a soldier.*** Also if anyone competes as an athlete, he does not win the prize unless he ***competes according to the rules.*** The hard-working farmer ought to be the first to ***receive his share of the crops.*** Consider what I say, for the Lord will give you understanding in everything. Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, descendant of David, according to my gospel, for which I suffer hardship even to imprisonment as a criminal; but the word of God is not imprisoned. For this ***reason I endure all things for the sake of those who are chosen, so that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus and with it eternal glory.***

**2 Timothy 4:7** ***I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith;***

- b. What are some practical ways *you* can fix your eyes on Jesus?

Some practical ways will always begin with and continue by being in the Word—consistent time with the Lord everyday, time in meditation and memorization, reviewing my true state—I am heaven bound.



10. What do you learn about Jesus from verse 2?

He is the author of faith, the perfecter of faith. His joy about God's plan for His life helped Him endure well. It helped Him endure the suffering of the cross well. He despised the shame unbelievers, and even His followers, tried to heap on Him to keep Him from His calling. He has finished His work, seen by His sitting down at the right hand of the throne of God.

11. Define *author* (ESV *founder* [Strong's #747]).

Better might be *leader* or *captain*. He is the chief leader, who takes the lead in anything, providing an example for us to follow. "In our passage it describes Jesus as the One "who in the pre-eminence of His faith far surpasses the examples of faith commemorated in chapter 11" (Vincent)." [Kenneth S. Wuest, [\*Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament: For the English Reader\*](#), vol. 10 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 215.]

Jesus is both the originator of our faith—as He is of all those who know and love Him—and He is the one who goes first, leading us by His example. Hebrews 4:15, "He was tempted in all things, as we are, yet without sin." He went first, so we know it is possible. And He experienced all the hardships, difficulty, and suffering that we have to a greater degree, so we would not grow weary and lose heart.

a. Define *perfecter* (NKJV *finisher* [Strong's #5051]).

"He is also the finisher of the faith spoken of in these chapters. The word is *teleioo* (τελειοο) which means "to carry through completely, to finish, to make perfect or complete." Our Lord in His life of faith on earth, became the perfect or complete example of the life of faith. Thayer speaks of our Lord as "one who has in his own person raised faith to its perfection and so set before us the highest example of faith." [1 Kenneth S. Wuest, [\*Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament: For the English Reader\*](#), vol. 10 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 215.]

b. What does that phrase "the author and perfecter of faith" mean? See 1 Cor. 1:7-8; Phil. 1:6; Heb. 2:10; 10:14.

"Christ starts our faith and leads it to its consummation." [R. C. H. Lenski, [\*The Interpretation of the Epistle to the Hebrews and of the Epistle of James\*](#) (Columbus, OH: Lutheran Book Concern, 1938), 427.]

**1 Corinthians 1:7–8** so that you are not lacking in any gift, awaiting eagerly the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ, ***who will also confirm you to the end, blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.***

**Philippians 1:6** For I am confident of this very thing, that ***He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus.***

**Hebrews 2:10** For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things, and through whom are all things, ***in bringing many sons to glory***, to perfect the author of

their salvation through sufferings.

**Hebrews 10:14** For by one offering **He has perfected for all time those who are sanctified.**

12. What was Jesus' motivation to endure the cross and shame according to verse 2? There was joy waiting for Him. There was a reward for the suffering. Once He finished the race, that reward would be waiting for Him.

"The joy lying before him" is the glorification that followed the sufferings plus his kingship over all believers." [R. C. H. Lenski, [\*The Interpretation of the Epistle to the Hebrews and of the Epistle of James\*](#) (Columbus, OH: Lutheran Book Concern, 1938), 428.]

"What it was that supported the human soul of Christ under these unparalleled sufferings; and that was *the joy that was set before him*. He had something in view under all his sufferings, which was pleasant to him; he rejoiced to see that by his sufferings he should make satisfaction to the injured justice of God and give security to his honour and government, that he should make peace between God and man, that he should seal the covenant of grace and be the Mediator of it, that he should open a way of salvation to the chief of sinners, and that he should effectually save all those whom the Father had given him, and himself be the first-born among many brethren. This was the joy that was set before him." [Matthew Henry, *Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible: Complete and Unabridged in One Volume* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1994), 2403.]

"This type of race is the *agōn*, the agony race, the marathon, the race that seems never to end. It is not a race you run simply for the pleasure of running. If you do not have something important to look forward to at the end of this race, you will likely not start it and will certainly not finish it." [John F. MacArthur Jr., [\*Hebrews\*](#), MacArthur New Testament Commentary (Chicago: Moody Press, 1983), 379–380.]

13. What did Jesus know that we need to know? See Is. 53:10-12; Phil. 2:5-11; Heb. 2:7-9; 5:9.

**Isaiah 53:10–12** But the LORD was pleased To crush Him, putting Him to grief; If He would render Himself as a guilt offering, He will see His offspring, He will prolong His days, And ***the good pleasure of the LORD will prosper in His hand. As a result of the anguish of His soul, He will see it and be satisfied; By His knowledge the Righteous One, My Servant, will justify the many, As He will bear their iniquities. Therefore, I will allot Him a portion with the great, And He will divide the booty with the strong; Because He poured out Himself to death,*** And was numbered with the transgressors; Yet He Himself bore the sin of many, And interceded for the transgressors.

**Philippians 2:5–11** Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with

God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. ***For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE WILL BOW, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.***

**Hebrews 2:7–9** “YOU HAVE MADE HIM FOR A LITTLE WHILE LOWER THAN THE ANGELS; YOU HAVE CROWNED HIM WITH GLORY AND HONOR, AND HAVE APPOINTED HIM OVER THE WORKS OF YOUR HANDS; YOU HAVE PUT ALL THINGS IN SUBJECTION UNDER HIS FEET.” For in subjecting all things to him, He left nothing that is not subject to him. But now we do not yet see all things subjected to him. But we do see Him who was made for a little while lower than the angels, namely, ***Jesus, because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, so that by the grace of God He might taste death for everyone.***

**Hebrews 5:9** And ***having been made perfect, He became to all those who obey Him the source of eternal salvation,***

He understood what He was doing. He understood that out of His suffering, there would be salvation, rescue, and redemption for all those who trust in Him for salvation. Jesus’ faithfulness in His suffering by His determined look to the finish line and the joy of knowing He was fulfilling God’s perfect plan, helped Him to be faithful in His suffering.

14. What are you to ponder and to consider carefully about Jesus according to verse 3?

I am to consider that Jesus’ example of enduring aggressive hostility, yet still responding in faith, in the fruit of the Spirit, in humility, shows us how we too can respond in the same way when we are treated with hostility by sinners.

He actually did these things, so that I today would not lose heart.

a. How does His example help you not to grow weary or lose heart? See Phil. 3:10; 1 Pet. 2:21-25.

**Philippians 3:10** that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death;

**1 Peter 2:21–25** For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps, WHO COMMITTED NO SIN, NOR WAS ANY DECEIT FOUND IN HIS MOUTH; and while being reviled, He did not revile in return; while suffering, He uttered no threats, but kept entrusting Himself to Him who judges righteously; and He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed. For you were continually straying like sheep, but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Guardian of your souls.

He wants me to follow Him. He went first to show me how it's done. He went farther to grant me grace and strength in the process. My suffering and trials are nothing compared to His. He wants me to be strengthened by His example. Even in His suffering, He was thinking of His loved ones.

15. Though the Hebrew believers were besieged with difficulties and persecution, what are they reminded about that brings balance back to their world? See verse 4.

**Hebrews 12:4** You have not yet resisted to the point of shedding blood in your striving against sin.

They haven't suffered in their strivings, in their persecutions to the point that they shed blood—and especially that they wouldn't sin in the process by thinking hard thoughts about God.

16. How would that bring balance to what anyone has been experiencing? It just puts everything in perspective, that though things are difficult, what Jesus went through was harder—and now He helps us, so we won't grow weary or lose heart. Dearest Lord Jesus, You are so kind. You are mighty to save, rescue, and aid your poor, weak children. Oh, how quickly we lose heart! May we follow your example and persevere. We don't have to sin just because life is hard, and we are in the midst of trials and suffering. We have everything we need to bring God glory. Oh, Great One! Please help us to honor You in how we respond to our trials.

My trials have been fewer than my sins.  
—From *The Valley of Vision*<sup>1</sup>

17. What has been forgotten in the midst of the trials and persecution the Hebrew believers were experiencing? See verses 5-6.  
You have forgotten the exhortation that was addressed to you, which was twofold: don't regard God's discipline too lightly—heed it, and don't faint under the rod of God's discipline either.

18. How are the truths of verses 5-6 an encouragement in troubled times? We need to think rightly. We need to heed and learn in our trials, taking them seriously. And we also need to know that if God has given us the trial, it is not too hard for us to bear. We don't need to faint under His weighty hand.

*It is the Lord; let Him do what seems good to Him. 1 Samuel 3:18*

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<sup>1</sup>*The Valley of Vision*: a collection of Puritan Prayers. Edited by Arthur Bennet.

19. Define *discipline* (KJV *chastening* [Strong's #3809]).  
 "The word is used of the whole training and education of children. It speaks also of whatever in adults cultivates the soul, especially by correcting mistakes and curbing the passions. It speaks also of instruction which aims at the increase of virtue. The word does not have in it the idea of punishment, but of corrective measures which will eliminate evil in the life and encourage the good. Here, the persecutions were used of God in an effort to clarify the spiritual vision of the readers as to the relative merits of the First Testament and the New Testament, warning them against returning to the temple sacrifices and urging them on to faith in the Messiah as High Priest. The readers, in their action of leaning back towards the First Testament and by their avowed purpose of returning to it in order to escape the persecution, had forgotten the lesson of Proverbs." [1  
 Kenneth S. Wuest, [Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament: For the English Reader](#), vol. 10 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 217–218.]

20. According to verse 5, how are we to regard the discipline we receive from the Lord?

Don't regard it too lightly and don't faint under it.

21. What are some practical ways you can apply that wisdom when you are being trained by the Lord?

It all boils down to thinking rightly about the Lord's dealings with me. It definitely means not listening to my feelings!

22. What is crucial to remember when you are being trained (verse 6)?  
 The Lord is doing it out of love for me! Every child receives this kind of training. In fact, the training can even be compared to scourging! Owie! But it's for all of us—not just the particularly naughty ones.

23. Which verse from the following list is encouraging to you and why? See Deut. 8:2-5, 16; Prov. 3:12; Ps. 119:71, 75-76; Lam. 3:27-33; James 1:2-4; 5:11; Rev. 3:19.

**Deuteronomy 8:2–5** "You shall remember all the way which the LORD your God has led you in the wilderness these forty years, that He might humble you, testing you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not. "He humbled you and let you be hungry, and fed you with manna which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that He might make you understand that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by everything that proceeds out of the mouth of the LORD. "Your clothing did not wear out on you, nor did your foot swell these forty years. "Thus you are to know in your heart that the LORD your God was disciplining you just as a man disciplines his son.

**Deuteronomy 8:16** "In the wilderness He fed you manna which your fathers did not know, that He might humble you and that He might test you, to do good for you in the end.



**Proverbs 3:12** For whom the LORD loves He reprove, Even as a father corrects the son in whom he delights.

**Psalms 119:71** It is good for me that I was afflicted, That I may learn Your statutes.

**Psalms 119:75–76** I know, O LORD, that Your judgments are righteous, And that in faithfulness You have afflicted me. O may Your lovingkindness comfort me, According to Your word to Your servant.

**Lamentations 3:27–33** It is good for a man that he should bear The yoke in his youth. Let him sit alone and be silent Since He has laid it on him. Let him put his mouth in the dust, Perhaps there is hope. Let him give his cheek to the smiter, Let him be filled with reproach. For the Lord will not reject forever, For if He causes grief, Then He will have compassion According to His abundant lovingkindness. For He does not afflict willingly Or grieve the sons of men.

**James 1:2–4** Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

**James 5:11** We count those blessed who endured. You have heard of the endurance of Job and have seen the outcome of the Lord's dealings, that the Lord is full of compassion and is merciful.

**Revelation 3:19** 'Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline; therefore be zealous and repent.

For me—at least today, I am loving Psalm 119:75-76 because of the emphasis on God's righteousness. It's so good to remember that all the circumstances of my life come from God's wisdom and holiness, that there is no sin or darkness attached to what I am experiencing. God is not doing evil when I go through hard times, unjust times, perplexing times. They are evidences of His faithfulness in my life. I love the plea to have God's kindness be a comfort, as well.

24. Think about the events and circumstances of your life. Then consider that there is not one part of your life that God cannot or will not use to train you, His child. He does these things; He allows these things; He orchestrates these things for your good. Do you believe it? And if you do, how do you show that you believe it? By responding with faith, trust, hope, even gratitude to what God is doing. Even in tears, there can be hope.

Samuel Rutherford not only accepted the discipline of the Lord in His life, he ran to the rod and kissed it, so eager was he to grow more like the Christ he loved. The following quotes are from the little book of his collected sayings called, *The Loveliness of Christ*.

Why should I be afraid at the plow of my Lord that makes deep furrows on my soul? I know He is no idle farmer; He purposes a crop.

*Discovering the Treasures of the Word*

I pray you learn to be worthy of His pains who corrects; and let Him wring, and wash you; for He has a Father's heart, and a Father's hand, who is training you up, and making you ready for Heaven.

O, what I owe to the file, to the hammer, to the furnace of my Lord Jesus! God has called you to Christ's side, and the wind is now in Christ's face in this land; and seeing you are with Him, you cannot expect the sunnyside of the slope.

I find crosses Christ's carved work that He marks out for us, and that with crosses He figures and portrays us to His own image, cutting away pieces of our ill and corruption. Lord cut, Lord carve, Lord wound, Lord do anything that may perfect Thy Father's image in us, and make us fit for glory.

Whether God comes to His children with a rod or a crown, if He come Himself with it, it is well. Welcome, welcome Jesus, what way soever Thou come, if we can get a sight of Thee: and sure I am, it is better to be sick, providing Christ come to the bedside and draw the curtains, and say, "Courage, I am thy salvation," than to enjoy health being lusty and strong and never to be visited by God.

Read and spell right, for He knows what He is doing; He is only lopping and pruning a fruitful tree, that it may be more fruitful.

## Hebrews Part Two

### Lesson #22, Chapter 12:7-13

**TEACHER'S GUIDE**

Read Chapter 12 with a heart of anticipation for what the Lord will teach you out of His Word.

1. Every time the English word “discipline” is used in Heb. 12:5-11, the same Greek word with the same definition is used. Define *discipline* (NKJV *chastening* [Strong’s #3809]).

“The latter word is *paideia* (παιδεία), which was used of the whole training and education of children. ***It speaks also of whatever in adults cultivates the soul, especially by correcting mistakes and curbing the passions. It speaks also of instruction which aims at the increase of virtue. The word does not have in it the idea of punishment, but of corrective measures which will eliminate evil in the life and encourage the good.*** Here, the persecutions were used of God in an effort to clarify the spiritual vision of the readers as to the relative merits of the First Testament and the New Testament, warning them against returning to the temple sacrifices and urging them on to faith in the Messiah as High Priest. The readers, in their action of leaning back towards the First Testament and by their avowed purpose of returning to it in order to escape the persecution, had forgotten the lesson of Proverbs.” [Kenneth S. Wuest, *Wuest’s Word Studies from the Greek New Testament: For the English Reader, vol. 10* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 217–218.]

Arthur Pink comments, “Remind yourself of how much dross there is yet among the gold and view the corruption of your own heart and marvel that God has not smitten you more severely. Form the habit of heeding His taps, and you will be less likely to receive His raps.” [John F. MacArthur Jr., *Hebrews*, MacArthur New Testament Commentary (Chicago: Moody Press, 1983), 390.]

- a. Define *endure* [Strong’s #5278]. See also 12:2-3.

“The word “endure” is *hupomeno* (ὑπομένο), literally, “to remain under.” That is, the recipients of this letter are exhorted to remain under the chastening hand of God, for the purpose of this chastening is disciplinary.” [Kenneth S. Wuest, *Wuest’s Word Studies from the Greek New Testament: For the English Reader, vol. 10* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 218.]

- b. How do James 1:2-4 and James 1:12 help explain the idea of *remaining under* trials because of the training it provides?

**James 1:2–4** Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

**James 1:12** Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.

The goal of enduring in trial comes when we understand what difficulties and trials and persecutions produce in us. For the child of God, trials produce a complete character because in the hand of God they become tools that shape us into Christ's likeness. We endure because we love the Lord Jesus.

2. Hebrews 12:7 begins, "It is for discipline that you endure." Why would anyone *endure* discipline? See verses 5-7.

**Hebrews 12:5-7** and you have forgotten the exhortation which is addressed to you as sons, "MY SON, DO NOT REGARD LIGHTLY THE DISCIPLINE OF THE LORD, NOR FAINT WHEN YOU ARE REPROVED BY HIM; FOR THOSE WHOM THE LORD LOVES HE DISCIPLINES, AND HE SCOURGES EVERY SON WHOM HE RECEIVES." It is for discipline that you endure; God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom his father does not discipline?

When I endure discipline, it is because I know and understand that it comes from my Father who loves me, that He does this for every one of His children. It means I am not being singled out as being so bad that I need extra. All God's children need this training. Discipline means I am part of God's family. It's ridiculous to consider that our good and wise Father would *not* discipline us.

3. How would those truths from verses 5-7 help you endure any trials you may face? It helps to know that *all of us* get trained this way. All of us, not just the especially naughty ones, need this training (even the sweet, compliant children need to be trained in this hard school). If God ordains it for me, it's not too much for me. It may feel like it is too much, but it isn't, so I won't need to faint under it. It's good to know that it may feel like scourging at times. When the trials are so severe and so hard, it is good to know that God is doing me good, though I may be greatly wounded in the process. Yet, it is all done to produce good in me—to complete my faith.

4. What rhetorical question is asked in verse 7? What answer is assumed?  
*It is for discipline that you endure; God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom his father does not discipline?* The assumed answer is "none." There just aren't any sons whose father doesn't discipline them. Even the very worst fathers discipline their children.

5. What does the author assume about every earthly father?  
They all discipline their children—even the worst father's do this. Maybe not well, but they will discipline their children at times.

6. What does it mean if you are *not* being trained by the Lord? See verse 8.

**Hebrews 12:8** But if you are without discipline, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate children and not sons.

You are an illegitimate child. You aren't a son. You are a pretender. You are lost.

- a. As children, how did we respond to our parent's training according to verse 9?

**Hebrews 12:9** Furthermore, we had earthly fathers to discipline us, and we respected them; shall we not much rather be subject to the Father of spirits, and live?

We respected them. Paid heed to them. Even feared them.

"The comparison is between the respect paid to a fallible, human parent, which may grow out of the natural relation, or may be due to fear, and the complete subjection to the divine Father" (Vincent). [Kenneth S. Wuest, *Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament: For the English Reader, vol. 10* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 219.]

"The surest way for a parent to lose, or never gain, his child's respect is never to correct or punish him, no matter how terrible the child's behavior. Even while they are growing up, children instinctively know that a parent who disciplines fairly is a parent who loves and cares. They also realize that a parent who always lets them have their own way is a parent who does not care. **We had earthly fathers to discipline us, and we respected them**, because of what that discipline proved and produced." [John F. MacArthur Jr., *Hebrews*, MacArthur New Testament Commentary (Chicago: Moody Press, 1983), 395.]

7. To what obvious conclusion does the author bring us in verse 9?

Shall we not much more than respect and submit to God's perfect soul training for us? It's such a "no duh!" kind of thing, and yet, we get stuck at this very point and don't honor or submit to the Lord for His perfect and loving training of us.

8. The author's question in verse 9 takes us to the heart of our response to trials. If trials are part of our heavenly Father's perfect plan to make us more like Himself, then how do we need to respond? How are we often tempted to respond instead? I need to respond with respect—not badmouthing God or thinking hard thoughts about Him. I need to submit to Him instead of fighting against His ways. I need to be grateful rather than acting ungratefully, pridefully, coming up with my own plans.

9. What are some crucial truths to remember next time you experience inconveniences, difficulty, affliction, or persecution?

I need to remember I am being loved by the Lord God, the creator of the universe! I am being made into His likeness, so I carry the family resemblance



more readily. The inconveniences, difficulties, afflictions, and persecutions are all for my good—so that I will share His holiness. Not for my happiness, but for my holiness.

10. Though this section of Scripture is primarily about the wise discipline we receive from our loving Father, we can still glean principles for our earthly parenting as we follow God’s example. Describe the parenting of earthly fathers according to verse 10.

Earthly parents do the best they can—“as seems best to them.” Earthly parents discipline for a short time, but God disciplines for eternal benefit, for our good, for our holiness.

11. Now describe the parenting of our heavenly Father from verse 10. God disciplines for eternal benefit, for our good, for our holiness.

So when earthly parents want to train their children following God’s pattern, they will follow God’s wisdom—not their own; they will discipline for eternal blessing, benefit, and reward, rather than earthly, temporal results; they will discipline for the child’s good—not for the parent’s convenience, ease, or happiness; they will discipline for the child’s holiness—not for earthly characteristics or even good characteristics, but without holiness as a goal, then our parenting will get off kilter. If holiness isn’t our goal, we won’t punish sin; we won’t be consistent; we won’t seek the heart; we won’t seek to turn their eyes to God. We will be focused on more short term, nice goals, but not eternal goals in our parenting.

12. Describe some of the ways and means of parenting, as well as its purpose, from the following verses: Deut. 8:2-5; Prov. 3:12; 13:24; 19:18; 29:15, 17; Eph. 6:4; Col. 3:21.

**Deuteronomy 8:2–5** “You shall remember all the way which the LORD your God has led you in the wilderness these forty years, that He might humble you, testing you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not. “He humbled you and let you be hungry, and fed you with manna which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that He might make you understand that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by everything that proceeds out of the mouth of the LORD. “Your clothing did not wear out on you, nor did your foot swell these forty years. “Thus you are to know in your heart that the LORD your God was disciplining you just as a man disciplines his son.

**Proverbs 3:12** For whom the LORD loves He reproveth, Even as a father corrects the son in whom he delights.

**Proverbs 13:24** He who withholds his rod hates his son, But he who loves him disciplines him diligently.

**Proverbs 19:18** Discipline your son while there is hope, And do not desire his death.

**Proverbs 29:15** The rod and reproof give wisdom, But a child who gets his own way brings shame to his mother.

**Proverbs 29:17** Correct your son, and he will give you comfort; He will also delight your soul.

**Ephesians 6:4** Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

**Colossians 3:21** Fathers, do not exasperate your children, so that they will not lose heart.

13. How does God employ those same parenting strategies with us? God is diligent, consistent with us. He doesn't spare the rod. He disciplines in a timely manner—He doesn't wait to let things get worse. He disciplines to give us wisdom. He doesn't let us grow proud or willful by letting us have our own way. He will not allow us to bring shame to the family. He disciplines us to bring comfort and delight to Himself in seeing us do what is right and respond by faith and in holiness. He doesn't discipline us to exasperate us. He doesn't want us to lose heart. He doesn't provoke us but uses every means possible to instruct us.

14. List what you learn about discipline from verse 11.

**Hebrews 12:11** All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness.

All discipline feels this way.

It all feels that way in the moment.

It doesn't feel joyful.

It feels sorrowful. We feel sad.

Yet when we have been trained by it, it produces fruit.

There is a future payoff.

It yields peaceful fruit which seems to indicate more fruit than a simple one to one ratio.

The fruit is righteousness—that we might share His holiness.

15. Define *trained* from verse 11 [Strong's #1128]. See how the same word is used in 1 Tim. 4:7; Heb. 5:14; and 2 Pet. 2:14.

“The word “exercised” is the translation of *gumnazo* (γυμναζο) which was used of Greek athletes exercising in connection with their athletic games. It means also “to exercise in any way, either the body or the mind.” Here it refers to the spiritual exercise which the recipients went through as a result of the persecutions which in the last analysis were the chastening hand of God. That spiritual exercise consisted of the struggles of the soul, the battle between the determination to go back to the temple sacrifices and thus escape the persecutions, or to go on to faith in the High Priest of the New Testament in spite of them.” [Kenneth S. Wuest, *Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament: For the English Reader*, vol. 10 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 220.]

**1 Timothy 4:7** But have nothing to do with worldly fables fit only for old women.

On the other hand, discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness;

**Hebrews 5:14** But solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil.

**2 Peter 2:14** having eyes full of adultery that never cease from sin, enticing unstable souls, having a heart trained in greed, accursed children;

**NOTE: the picture painted with training also sets us up for the author's comments in verses 12-13.**

*Yields means to pay back, gives, grants.*

16. What result comes *after* the training according to verse 11? What picture comes to your mind when you think of this result?

The peaceful fruit of righteousness. A field where wheat is golden and gently waves in the evening breeze. It has come to fruition and is ready for harvest. There is a great harvest *after* discipline. All the work, labors, and hardships have been completed and we rejoice in the yield.

a. How does that truth provide hope in the midst of affliction?

It's encouraging to know there will be a pleasing and helpful fruit that comes as a result of the trials in my life.

"Discipline itself is not meant to be pleasant. If it were pleasant, it would have little corrective power. By its very nature, discipline is unpleasant to administer and to endure. Medicine, surgery, physical therapy, and other such treatments that we willingly endure are very often painful, uncomfortable, and inconvenient. We endure them for the sake of the end result—better health.

How much more should we be willing to endure the Lord's treatment of our spiritual needs, which **afterwards ... yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness?** We should consider our troubles as spiritual treatment, which builds our character and our faith, our love and our righteousness. It will never look like it from the natural perspective, but from the perspective of faith, we see that discipline is one of God's richest and most rewarding blessings on His children.

Someone has written, *"And so what do I say? I say let the rains of disappointment come, if they water the plants of spiritual grace. Let the winds of adversity blow, if they serve to root more securely the trees that God has planted. I say, let the sun of prosperity be eclipsed, if that brings me closer to the true light of life. Welcome, sweet discipline, discipline designed for my joy, discipline designed to make me what God wants me to be."* [John F. MacArthur Jr., *Hebrews*, MacArthur New Testament Commentary (Chicago: Moody Press, 1983), 397.]

17. The beautiful goal of God's parenting causes the author to consider those in the body who may need to hear about God's intended result. What kinds of people are described?

Those who are weak, feeble, in need of strengthening.

18. What circumstances were the Hebrew believers facing that would magnify the weaknesses and frailties of their brethren in Christ?

They were dealing with fears on every level. They were facing the loss of their homes, their income, their livelihood. They were facing ostracization and persecution from family, friends, and their synagogue. The religious establishment had it out for them. All this would make even the strongest of the strong feel a little weak at the knees.

19. What we see in verses 12-13 is the body of Christ. Not everyone is strong all the time, some are still young in the faith and so still weak, some have grown old and feeble, and some have been injured in some way and need special care. What is your responsibility to these different groups according to verses 12-13?

We are to strengthen the weak and feeble. We are to make sure our way is cleared of anything that could trip us up and lame us (see Hebrews 12:1-2). The goal is healing, not coddling, not allowing them to stay in a place of disability.

**Concerning the translation differences.** Even if you take the rendering of the ESV and NIV which makes verse 12 personal—as “your” weak hands and “your” feeble knees, it still stands to reason that we would strengthen our own hands and feet first and then seek to help others who are weak. It also stands to reason, that if you are one of those who need strengthening, that you would heed this command for yourself.

“The author sensed the tendency to spiritual weakness in his readers, and in the light of the truths he had expounded he encouraged them to renew their strength. If they would do this and would pursue the **level paths** which real righteousness entails, the weakest among them (**the lame**) would not be further **disabled, but rather healed**. Their own strength would benefit weaker Christians.” [Zane C. Hodges, “*Hebrews*,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 810.]

From my talk called “The Healthy Heart Sessions: God’s Good-for-the-Soul Exercises:  
In Training”

Charles Spurgeon said, “We sometimes think that we have strong faith when our faith is weak. How are we to know if it is weak or strong until it is tried? If you were to lie in bed week after week and perhaps get the idea that you were strong, you would certainly be mistaken. Only when you do work that requires muscular strength will you discover how strong or how weak you are. God would not have us

form a wrong estimate of ourselves. He does not want us to say that we are rich and increased in goods and have need of nothing when just the opposite is true. Therefore, He sends trials to test the genuineness of our faith (1 Peter 1:7), that we may understand how strong or weak we are." From "Beside Still Waters" page 338.

**God uses that word picture of the weak hands and feeble knees to tell us to strengthen the areas in our souls that are weak. This is a time for assessment for us.** Remember, we learned that it's good for our hearts to be strengthened by grace, not by some of the default things we run to. Yet, even though we know that to be true, we still do it. And after a lifetime of running to things that don't strengthen us, our spiritual lives have weak areas. **That's why it's necessary to consider, "Where am I weak?"**

English pastor RC Chapman said, "Each one of us has in himself some especially besetting evil—a weight to be laid aside (Hebrews 12:1)." RC Chapman, *Choice Sayings*, page 61.

Paul tells us in **2 Corinthians 13:5** tells us to *examine ourselves*.

And David tells us in **Psalms 139:23-24**: *23 Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me and know my anxious thoughts; 24 And see if there be any hurtful way in me, And lead me in the everlasting way.*

John Owen said, "Get acquainted with your heart. If it is deep, search it out. If it is dark, inquire into it. If your heart seeks to deceive you or to throw you off track by mislabeling its sinful tendencies, do not believe it. Some seek to justify, conceal, or excuse the evils of their own hearts instead of seeking to destroy them. How few there are who will diligently study themselves, or even put up with those who might seek to make them acquainted with them!" [John Owen in *Voices from the Past*, Volume 1, April 9, page 100]

Now the **context** of what comes before Hebrews 12:12 tells us that the weak areas *come to our attention as a result of the discipline, trials, affliction, pressure, and training God is putting us through*. Hence the command—strengthen your weak areas. How many times have you heard this, "Wow, I didn't know I was sore there until you pressed on that muscle!"

**The word strengthen here is really a cool word.** It means to rebuild, restore, build up, strengthen. **It carries with it the idea of making something strong that wasn't strong before or has been broken down for some reason.** It's used of strengthening or making straight something that is deformed.

**What things break us down? What causes deformities in our souls?** *Sin. Our reaction to sin. The effects of another's sin. Sin causes weakness, lack of strength, deformities in us. Just think*



about it: Lack of trust? That's sin. Unbelief? That's sin. Anxiety? That's sin. Anger? Sin. Bitterness? Sin. Impurity? Sin. Immorality, immodesty? Sin.

Pastor RC Chapman said this, "We may be dealing honestly with sin that is seen outwardly, and yet not skillfully and effectually, because of not striking at the deep roots of evil within." Page 8 of RC Chapman, Choice Sayings.

**So, how do we strengthen our weak areas?**

***First, we need to recognize our weak areas.***

- *We'll know that we have weak areas when we feel pain in trying to use them.* It hurts to grip or go up a hill, and in the same way, sometimes we feel pain spiritually because of sin or lack of faithfulness.
- *We'll know we have weak areas when they don't hold up in the testing.* Not able to grip or bear the load. We give up and forget **1 Corinthians 10:13**: *13 No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it.*
- *We'll know we have weak areas when we don't respond with belief in God's Word and trust in Him.* This is where the assessing and looking at what's really going on in our responses.

***Second, we need to apply the healing balm of the Word to our weak areas.*** Only the Word reduces the fever of soul sickness. Only the Word takes away the inflammation from wrong thinking that makes us walk with a limp in our spiritual lives. Only the Word diminishes the redness and scarring left by sin.

- **Listen to the prescription found in Psalm 119:25-32**: *25 My soul cleaves to the dust; Revive me according to Your word. 26 I have told of my ways, and You have answered me; Teach me Your statutes. 27 Make me understand the way of Your precepts, So I will meditate on Your wonders. 28 My soul weeps because of grief; Strengthen me according to Your word. 29 Remove the false way from me, And graciously grant me Your law. 30 I have chosen the faithful way; I have placed Your ordinances before me. 31 I cling to Your testimonies; O Lord, do not put me to shame! 32 I shall run the way of Your commandments, For You will enlarge my heart.*

***Third, we need to trust the Lord to do His work in us.***

- Don't despair. Remember, **Psalm 46:1** *God is our refuge and strength, A very present help in trouble.* Remember, **Philippians 1:6**: *6 For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus.* Remember, **Philippians 2:13**: *13 for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure.*
- Don't try something else. Over and over again we're told to "stand firm" as we're told in **2**

**Thessalonians 2:14-15:** *14 It was for this He called you through our gospel, that you may gain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. 15 So then, brethren, stand firm and hold to the traditions which you were taught, whether by word of mouth or by letter from us. It's the message of Hebrews 13:9... "Don't be carried away by varied and strange teaching..."*

- Remember to draw near to God in your weakness. **Hebrews 7:25:** *Therefore He is able also to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.*
- Remember that God plans to use your brokenness. **Hebrews 13:20-21:** *20 Now the God of peace, who brought up from the dead the great Shepherd of the sheep through the blood of the eternal covenant, even Jesus our Lord, 21 equip you in every good thing to do His will, working in us that which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever and ever.*

So, we've seen that God intends to train every one of His children with a specific kind of "child instruction." We've also seen that the training ground takes place in trials, pressures, afflictions. And those trials, pressures, and afflictions come upon us, they reveal weak areas that need to be strengthened. **Which brings us to our third point: Recognize Your Need for Healing (Hebrews 12:13).**

11 All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness. 12 Therefore, strengthen your weak, drooping hands and your weak, feeble knees, **13 and make straight paths for your feet, so that the limb which is lame may not be put out of joint, but rather be healed.**

Not only are we to strengthen our weak spiritual areas, **but we are to consider the way in which we walk.** We're told to clear the path of debris or anything that might trip us up.

20. Why do you need to help the weak and frail? See 12:1.

So we can all run the race well—with endurance, knowing the race we run is the one set before us by God. There is no other race we are to be running, so we need to make sure we run this race well.

21. How would you encourage these fellow believers from Hebrews 12:1-11?

I would remind them of Jesus' example *so they would not grow weary and lose heart.* I would remind them of the joy that is set before us in finishing well. I would remind them that the race has been run well by the "great cloud of witnesses" to help them see, even "normal, everyday" people have run this race. I would encourage them about God's purposes in discipline—sonship, love, holiness, wisdom, our good. I would encourage them that it will come to an end as it is only "for the moment." I would remind them to clear the path of anything that encumbers them from running well. I would remind them that I am running alongside them too. I would remind them that every believer, every *son*, goes through discipline. All will experience suffering, trials, adversity, difficulty, and

sorrow. But oh, it will be worth it all when we see Jesus.

Come, children of God, do not be despondent because of your tribulations.  
YOU ARE IN A RACE,  
SO RUN even while you are smarting from your chastisements, STILL RUN,  
and KEEP ON RUNNING until you win the prize.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Charles H. Spurgeon, *Spurgeon's Sermons: Volume 1*, electronic ed., Logos Library System; Spurgeon's Sermons (Albany, OR: Ages Software, 1998).

## Hebrews Part Two

### Lesson #23, Chapter 12:14-21

#### TEACHER'S GUIDE

Read Chapter 12 asking the Lord for His help as you seek to apply it to your life.

1. What are the Hebrew believers commanded in verse 14?

**Hebrews 12:14** Pursue peace with all men, and the sanctification without which no one will see the Lord.

They are commanded to pursue peace and pursue sanctification.

2. Define *pursue* (NIV *make every effort*; KJV *follow* [Strong's #1377]). The word "follow" is the translation of *dioko* (*διωκο*) "to run swiftly in order to catch some person or thing, to run after, to press on." It is used of one who in a race runs swiftly to reach the goal (Phil. 3:12 "follow after"). Used in a metaphorical sense it means "to pursue, to seek after eagerly, earnestly endeavor to acquire." The word is seen, therefore, to have a sense of urgency about it, of intensity of purpose.

The exhortation to earnestly seek after peace, has its rise in the historical background here. Expositor's says: "The circumstances of the Hebrews were fitted to excite a quarrelsome spirit, and a feeling of alienation towards those weak members who left the straight path. They must not suffer them to be alienated but must restore them to the unity of the faith, and in endeavoring to reclaim them must use the methods of peace, not of anger or disputation." The exhortation is thus addressed to the saved among the recipients of this letter, and in relation to their attitude towards the unsaved Jews who were in danger of renouncing their professed faith in Messiah and of returning to the temple sacrifices. The holiness spoken of here is defined in the context and by the historical background of the letter. Expositor's says: "The holiness which this epistle has explained is a drawing near to God with a cleansed conscience (10:14, 22), a true acceptance of Christ's sacrifice as bring the worshipper into fellowship with God." [Kenneth S. Wuest, [\*Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament: For the English Reader\*](#), vol. 10 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 222–223.]

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Translation. Constantly be eagerly seeking after peace with all, and holiness, without which (holiness) no one shall see the Lord.

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"Give peace a chase as if in a hunt." Robertson's Word Pictures

3. Take a look at the practical ways we can pursue peace. What do you learn from Gen. 13:7-9; Ps. 34:12-14; Prov. 17:14; 19:11; Rom. 12:9-18; 14:16-19; Gal. 5:22-23; Eph. 4:1-3?

**Genesis 13:7–9** And there was strife between the herdsmen of Abram’s livestock and the herdsmen of Lot’s livestock. Now the Canaanite and the Perizzite were dwelling then in the land. So Abram said to Lot, “Please let there be no strife between you and me, nor between my herdsmen and your herdsmen, for we are brothers. “Is not the whole land before you? Please separate from me; if to the left, then I will go to the right; or if to the right, then I will go to the left.” COME UP WITH A PLAN, HUMBLE YOURSELF

**Psalms 34:12–14** Who is the man who desires life And loves length of days that he may see good? Keep your tongue from evil And your lips from speaking deceit. Depart from evil and do good; Seek peace and pursue it. SEEK IT DILIGENTLY. ACTIVELY ENGAGE IN PEACE-GIVING, PEACE-PROMOTING WORDS AND ACTIONS.

**Proverbs 17:14** The beginning of strife is like letting out water, So abandon the quarrel before it breaks out. DON’T GIVE INTO QUARRELS.

**Proverbs 19:11** A man’s discretion makes him slow to anger, And it is his glory to overlook a transgression. OVERLOOK THINGS THAT CAN CAUSE DIVISION AMONG BELIEVERS.

**Romans 12:9–18** Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil; cling to what is good. Be devoted to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one another in honor; not lagging behind in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; rejoicing in hope, persevering in tribulation, devoted to prayer, contributing to the needs of the saints, practicing hospitality. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep. Be of the same mind toward one another; do not be haughty in mind, but associate with the lowly. Do not be wise in your own estimation. Never pay back evil for evil to anyone. Respect what is right in the sight of all men. If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men. LOVE EACH OTHER WELL AND IN DOING SO, PURSUE PEACE.

**Romans 14:16–19** Therefore do not let what is for you a good thing be spoken of as evil; for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. For he who in this way serves Christ is acceptable to God and approved by men. So then we pursue the things which make for peace and the building up of one another. LOOK FOR WAYS TO MAKE PEACE...DON’T FLAUNT FREEDOMS IN SOMEONE’S FACE.

**Galatians 5:22–23** But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. LIVE AND WALK BY THE SPIRIT OF GOD. LIVE A CHRIST-CONTROLLED LIFE.

**Ephesians 4:1–3** Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing tolerance for one another in love, being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. BE DILIGENT TO PURSUE PEACE.

4. We are also to pursue *sanctification* (KJV, NIV *holiness* [Strong’s #38]). Just



what is that?

Expositor's says: "The holiness which this epistle has explained is a drawing near to God with a cleansed conscience (10:14, 22), a true acceptance of Christ's sacrifice as bring the worshipper into fellowship with God." [Kenneth S. Wuest, [\*Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament: For the English Reader\*](#), vol. 10 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 223.]

Consecration, holiness. Being cleansed.

5. What is the connection between sanctification and seeing the Lord? See John 3:3; Titus 2:11-14; 1 Jn. 3:2-3.

**John 3:3** Jesus answered and said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, *unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.*"

**Titus 2:11–14** For the grace of God has appeared, *bringing salvation to all men, instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus, who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds.*

**1 John 3:2–3** Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that *when He appears, we will be like Him*, because we will see Him just as He is. And everyone who has this hope fixed on Him *purifies himself, just as He is pure.*

Only those who are growing in holiness, seeking the Lord, and turning away from sin and entanglements show evidence that they are truly saved. Only those who are saved will see the Lord in His righteousness.

6. What is the first thing we should see to according to verse 15?  
See to it that no one comes short of the grace of God.

- a. What does the phrase, "see to it that no one comes short of the grace of God" mean? See Heb. 4:1-3; 6:11-12; 10:23-25 for help.

**Hebrews 4:1–3** Therefore, let us fear if, while a promise remains of entering His rest, any one of you may seem to have come short of it. For indeed we have had good news preached to us, just as they also; but the word they heard did not profit them, because it was not united by faith in those who heard. For we who have believed enter that rest, just as He has said, "AS I SWORE IN MY WRATH, THEY SHALL NOT ENTER MY REST," although His works were finished from the foundation of the world.

**Hebrews 6:11–12** And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence so as to realize the full assurance of hope until the end, so that you will not be sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

**Hebrews 10:23–25** Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful; and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near.

The phrase reveals how very important receiving the grace of God is. If they don't, *they won't enter His rest or receive the promises* because the day is drawing near.

- b. In our efforts to obey this command where should our search begin? See 1 Cor. 13:5 and 2 Pet. 1:10-11.

**1 Corinthians 13:5** does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered,

**2 Peter 1:10–11** Therefore, brethren, be all the more diligent to make certain about His calling and choosing you; for as long as you practice these things, you will never stumble; for in this way the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be abundantly supplied to you.

In our efforts to win others to Christ, we must love them faithfully and practice godliness with all diligence.

7. Next, verse 15 tells us to see to something else. What is it? [See to it] that no root of bitterness springing up causes trouble.

8. Where does it originate? See Mark 7:20-22.

**Mark 7:20–22** And He was saying, "That which proceeds out of the man, that is what defiles the man. "For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed the evil thoughts, fornications, thefts, murders, adulteries, deeds of coveting and wickedness, as well as deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride and foolishness.

From the heart. From within.

9. Where and how must the battle be waged? See Ps. 119:9-11, 33-35, 133.

**Psalms 119:9–11** How can a young man keep his way pure? By keeping it according to Your word. With all my heart I have sought You; Do not let me wander from Your commandments. Your word I have treasured in my heart, That I may not sin against You.

**Psalms 119:33–35** Teach me, O LORD, the way of Your statutes, And I shall observe it to the end. Give me understanding, that I may observe Your law And keep it with all my heart. Make me walk in the path of Your commandments, For I delight in it.

**Psalms 119:133** Establish my footsteps in Your word, And do not let any iniquity have dominion over me.

The battle begins in the heart but is waged upon the pages and promises of Scripture. It is the flesh versus the spirit, choosing to live by faith over feelings. The battle is waged in the soul so that the flesh is subdued, and we can walk according to the dear, wonderful, and holy Spirit's power. ***The Word of God roots out the bitterness in the heart.***

10. What does bitterness lead to if allowed to continue (verse 15)? What is the result? It springs up and causes trouble. If allowed to continue, many will be defiled by it.

11. From verse 16, describe the third group of people we are to watch out for. Who are they and who are they compared to?

The immoral or godless person—who is like Esau.

12. How did that person's actions reveal his true spiritual state (verses 16-17)? He sold his birthright for a single meal. It is interesting that the author of Hebrews points this out. Esau could have haggled for years worth of free meals, but he valued his birthright so little, that he gave it up for just one meal. Respecting and guarding the birthright shows trust and faith in God's promises because of the rights and privileges given to the first born. Esau was greedy, rash, and ungrateful for his position in the family. And his foolishness cost him.

13. Reexamine the situation the Hebrew believers were facing. To get you started, reread 2:1-3, 17-18; 3:12-13; 4:14-16; 5:12-14; 6:9-12; 10:23-25, 32-39; 11:13-16; 12:1-5, 10-13.

**Hebrews 2:1–3** For this reason we must ***pay much closer attention to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away from it.*** For if the word spoken through angels proved unalterable, and every transgression and disobedience received a just penalty, ***how will we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?*** After it was at the first spoken through the Lord, it was confirmed to us by those who heard,

**Hebrews 2:17–18** Therefore, ***He had to be made like His brethren in all things,*** so that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. For since He Himself was tempted in that which He has ***suffered,*** He is able to come to the aid of those who are tempted.

**Hebrews 3:12–13** Take care, brethren, that there not be in any one of you ***an evil, unbelieving heart that falls away from the living God.*** But encourage one another day after day, as long as it is still called "Today," so that none of you will be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.

**Hebrews 4:14–16** Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, ***let us hold fast our confession.*** For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin. Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

**Hebrews 5:12–14** For *though by this time you ought to be teachers, you have need again for someone to teach you the elementary principles of the oracles of God, and you have come to need milk and not solid food.* For everyone who partakes only of milk is not accustomed to the word of righteousness, for he is an infant. But solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil.

**Hebrews 6:9–12** But, beloved, we are convinced of better things concerning you, and things that accompany salvation, though we are speaking in this way. For God is not unjust so as to forget your work and the love which you have shown toward His name, in having ministered and in still ministering to the saints. And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence so as to realize the full assurance of hope until the end, so that *you will not be sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.*

**Hebrews 10:23–25** *Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering,* for He who promised is faithful; and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, *not forsaking our own assembling together,* as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near.

**Hebrews 10:32–39** *But remember the former days, when, after being enlightened, you endured a great conflict of sufferings,* partly by being made a public spectacle through reproaches and tribulations, and partly by becoming sharers with those who were so treated. For you showed sympathy to the prisoners and accepted joyfully the seizure of your property, knowing that you have for yourselves a better possession and a lasting one. Therefore, *do not throw away your confidence,* which has a great reward. For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God, you may receive what was promised. FOR YET IN A VERY LITTLE WHILE, HE WHO IS COMING WILL COME, AND WILL NOT DELAY. BUT MY RIGHTEOUS ONE SHALL LIVE BY FAITH; AND IF HE SHRINKS BACK, MY SOUL HAS NO PLEASURE IN HIM. But we are not of those who shrink back to destruction, but of those who have faith to the preserving of the soul.

**Hebrews 11:13–16** *All these died in faith, without receiving the promises, but having seen them and having welcomed them from a distance, and having confessed that they were strangers and exiles on the earth.* For those who say such things make it clear that they are seeking a country of their own. And indeed if they had been thinking of that country from which they went out, they would have had opportunity to return. But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for He has prepared a city for them.

**Hebrews 12:1–5** Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider Him who has endured such hostility by sinners against Himself, *so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.*

You have not yet resisted to the point of shedding blood in your striving against sin; and you have forgotten the exhortation which is addressed to you as sons, "MY SON, DO NOT REGARD LIGHTLY THE DISCIPLINE OF THE LORD, NOR FAINT WHEN YOU ARE REPROVED BY HIM;

**Hebrews 12:10–13** For they disciplined us for a short time as seemed best to them, but *He disciplines us for our good, so that we may share His holiness*. All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness. Therefore, strengthen the hands that are weak and the knees that are feeble, and make straight paths for your feet, so that the limb which is lame may not be put out of joint, but rather be healed.

14. Based upon your review of their situation and the immediate context of 12:12-13, why would the commands of verses 14-16 be necessary?

Because they were struggling spiritually. Life was hard. They needed the shoring up of the above verses and of 12:12-13 to be strengthened *because* once they did those things, they needed to focus on others. They needed to also strengthen their relationships and strengthen the church.

15. This message is as much for us as it was for the Hebrew believers. The things we are commanded to watch for in others, we must also watch for in ourselves. Take some time right now with the Lord to do an inventory of your heart.

a. Are you growing in a peaceful, quiet spirit? What things hinder you from growing more steadfast in these qualities?

The things that hinder me are not resorting to the Word of God sooner. If I try to sort things out myself then I will suffer from chaos and anxiety in my heart.

b. Are you growing in holiness? Consider what choices you can make to protect and guard your heart, while also strengthen it in holiness.

I can protect and guard my heart by hemming it in with the Word.

c. Are you sure of the grace of God at work in your life? Why?

Absolutely! Only because my responses are so "of the Lord" rather than myself. He strengthens me to do things, I would never or could never do myself.

d. Are you bitter or resentful about something? If so, what is at the root of that sinful response? What biblical truths do you need to apply?

I'm not. But if I were, I would need to confess and repent of my sinful responses. I would need to review God's sovereignty, wisdom, and great kindness to help me overcome my sin.

e. Are you a troublemaker in some area of your life? Consider ways you can guard against a rash spirit.

Not really. Sometimes, I make trouble in my spirit against others, so that even if it



doesn't come out in my speech or actions, it still hinders me because I am "disturbing the peace" by my rash thoughts. A rash spirit can creep in at any time and can slip out in rash words all too easily, so I need to guard against it by being in the Word and confessing my sin regularly.

- f. Are you acting immorally, like a godless person? In what ways can you shore up your heart against sinful temptations and repent of your immorality?

No, but I still need to shore up my heart by spending time in the Word!

- g. Is your repentance real, whether in salvation or in turning away from a specific sin? What does real repentance look like?

Yes, real repentance is quick to respond, humble, willing to do whatever it takes to make sure God is pleased.

- h. Why bother answering these questions? See Hebrews 12:1-2.

***Because I need to remove the encumbrances and the entangling sins, so I can run with endurance.*** I will never be able to fun well if I don't do those things and fix my eyes on Jesus.

16. In Hebrews 12:18-21, the author of Hebrews recounts what happened to Israel when God's glory descended upon Mt. Sinai. Read verses 18-21, then read the original account to fill in the gaps from Ex. 19:9-13, 16-20; 20:18-21; Deut. 4:10-13; 5:22-29; 9:15-19.

**Exodus 19:9–13** The LORD said to Moses, "Behold, I will come to you in a thick cloud, so that the people may hear when I speak with you and may also believe in you forever." Then Moses told the words of the people to the LORD. The LORD also said to Moses, "Go to the people and consecrate them today and tomorrow, and let them wash their garments; and let them be ready for the third day, for on the third day the LORD will come down on Mount Sinai in the sight of all the people. "You shall set bounds for the people all around, saying, 'Beware that you do not go up on the mountain or touch the border of it; whoever touches the mountain shall surely be put to death. 'No hand shall touch him, but he shall surely be stoned or shot through; whether beast or man, he shall not live.' When the ram's horn sounds a long blast, they shall come up to the mountain."

**Exodus 19:16–20** So it came about on the third day, when it was morning, that there were thunder and lightning flashes and a thick cloud upon the mountain and a very loud trumpet sound, so that all the people who were in the camp trembled. And Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet God, and they stood at the foot of the mountain. Now Mount Sinai was all in smoke because the LORD descended upon it in fire; and its smoke ascended like the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mountain quaked violently. When the sound of the trumpet grew louder and louder, Moses spoke and God answered him with thunder. The LORD came down on Mount Sinai, to the top of the mountain; and the LORD called Moses to the top of the mountain, and Moses went up.

**Exodus 20:18–21** All the people perceived the thunder and the lightning flashes and the sound of the trumpet and the mountain smoking; and when the people saw it, they trembled and stood at a distance. Then they said to Moses, “Speak to us yourself and we will listen; but let not God speak to us, or we will die.” Moses said to the people, “Do not be afraid; for God has come in order to test you, and in order that the fear of Him may remain with you, so that you may not sin.” So the people stood at a distance, while Moses approached the thick cloud where God was.

**Deuteronomy 4:10–13** “Remember the day you stood before the LORD your God at Horeb, when the LORD said to me, ‘Assemble the people to Me, that I may let them hear My words so they may learn to fear Me all the days they live on the earth, and that they may teach their children.’ “You came near and stood at the foot of the mountain, and the mountain burned with fire to the very heart of the heavens: darkness, cloud and thick gloom. “Then the LORD spoke to you from the midst of the fire; you heard the sound of words, but you saw no form—only a voice. “So He declared to you His covenant which He commanded you to perform, that is, the Ten Commandments; and He wrote them on two tablets of stone.

**Deuteronomy 5:22–29** “These words the LORD spoke to all your assembly at the mountain from the midst of the fire, of the cloud and of the thick gloom, with a great voice, and He added no more. He wrote them on two tablets of stone and gave them to me. “And when you heard the voice from the midst of the darkness, while the mountain was burning with fire, you came near to me, all the heads of your tribes and your elders. “You said, ‘Behold, the LORD our God has shown us His glory and His greatness, and we have heard His voice from the midst of the fire; we have seen today that God speaks with man, yet he lives. ‘Now then why should we die? **For this great fire will consume us;** if we hear the voice of the LORD our God any longer, then we will die. ‘For who is there of all flesh who has heard the voice of the living God speaking from the midst of the fire, as we have, and lived? ‘Go near and hear all that the LORD our God says; then speak to us all that the LORD our God speaks to you, and we will hear and do it.’ “The LORD heard the voice of your words when you spoke to me, and the LORD said to me, ‘I have heard the voice of the words of this people which they have spoken to you. They have done well in all that they have spoken. ‘Oh that they had such a heart in them, that they would fear Me and keep all My commandments always, that it may be well with them and with their sons forever!

**Deuteronomy 9:15–19** “So I turned and came down from the mountain while the mountain was burning with fire, and the two tablets of the covenant were in my two hands. “And I saw that you had indeed sinned against the LORD your God. You had made for yourselves a molten calf; you had turned aside quickly from the way which the LORD had commanded you. “I took hold of the two tablets and threw them from my hands and smashed them before your eyes. “I fell down before the LORD, as at the first, forty days and nights; I neither ate bread nor drank water, because of all your sin which you had committed in doing what was evil in the sight of the LORD to provoke Him to anger. “For I was afraid of the

anger and hot displeasure with which the LORD was wrathful against you in order to destroy you, but the LORD listened to me that time also.

17. From the verses you just read in question #16, answer the following questions:  
What is Israel's situation?

Deuteronomy 4:10-13 states it very clearly that they were being instructed for the first time in how to worship the Lord *His way*. God wanted them to learn to fear Him so they would not fall into sin and idolatry.

- a. What will happen if someone touches the mountain?

They will be put to death—either stoned or shot through.

- b. Why is Israel to stay back from the mountain?

Because it was holy because the Lord was there.

- c. How does Israel respond to God's glory?

They were appropriately afraid and wary of sparking the Lord's anger. They told Moses to speak to them himself. They were afraid that the fire on the mountain would consume them (which also brings in what the author of Hebrews writes in verse 29 about our God being a consuming fire).

18. The point of verses 18-24 will come into full view in next week's lesson. For now, let's take a look at the comparison being made between the two mountains mentioned in verses 18 and 22. What is the distinction between Mt. Sinai and Mt. Zion? Where can Mt. Sinai be found (Ex. 19:2)? Where can Mt. Zion be found (verse 22)?

**Hebrews 12:18** For you have not come to a mountain that can be touched and to a blazing fire, and to darkness and gloom and whirlwind,

**Hebrews 12:22** But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to myriads of angels,

**Exodus 19:2** When they set out from Rephidim, they came to the wilderness of Sinai and camped *in the wilderness*; and there Israel camped in front of the mountain.

The people were prohibited from stepping on the mountain, but if the Lord's presence was removed, it was just another mountain. Mount Sinai is created and earthly, while Mount Zion cannot be touched or walked on because it is in the heavenly realm.

19. Which mountain is to be preferred and why?

Mount Zion in heaven. Why? Because it is so much more superior to the earthly one. Just as in every other comparison made in this book, this one too "better than" the earthly one.

## Hebrews Part Two

### Lesson #24, Chapter 12:22-29

#### TEACHER'S GUIDE

To prepare for this week's lesson read Hebrews 10:32 to 12:29. There's too much here to proceed in your own strength. Be sure to stop and ask the Lord for His help as you study.

1. The author uses comparisons effectively *and* frequently in this book. Using the references below list what is being compared and which one is superior.

- a. From 1:4-5:

**Hebrews 1:4–5** having become as much better than the angels, as He has inherited a more excellent name than they. For to which of the angels did He ever say, "YOU ARE MY SON, TODAY I HAVE BEGOTTEN YOU"? And again, "I WILL BE A FATHER TO HIM AND HE SHALL BE A SON TO ME"?

Jesus is being compared to angels—and of course, He is better.

- b. From 1:1-2 and 2:1-3:

**Hebrews 1:1–2** God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world.

**Hebrews 2:1–3** For this reason we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away from it. For if the word spoken through angels proved unalterable, and every transgression and disobedience received a just penalty, how will we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? After it was at the first spoken through the Lord, it was confirmed to us by those who heard,

In this God's method of communicating is being compared. He used to speak through the prophets, but now has spoken to us in His Son. Hebrews 2:1-3 points out the reason for Jesus' superior message.

- c. From 3:3-6:

**Hebrews 3:3–6** For He has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses, by just so much as the builder of the house has more honor than the house. For every house is built by someone, but the builder of all things is God. Now Moses was faithful in all His house as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken later; but Christ was faithful as a Son over His house—whose house we are, if we hold fast our confidence and the boast of our hope firm until the end.

In this comparison, Jesus is being compared with Moses with the example of the builder having more honor than the house. Though Moses was faithful, he was a servant, while Christ was faithful as a Son.

d. From 4:8-9:

**Hebrews 4:8–9** For if Joshua had given them rest, He would not have spoken of another day after that. So there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God.

In this part, the two kinds of rest are being compared, the earthly rest of going into the land and the Sabbath rest that comes from God's salvation.

e. From 4:14-15:

**Hebrews 4:14–15** Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin.

Jesus our high priest is being compared with the earthly high priests. Of course, He is far superior because though He was tempted in all ways, He never sinned.

f. From 6:13-18:

**Hebrews 6:13–18** For when God made the promise to Abraham, since He could swear by no one greater, He swore by Himself, saying, "I WILL SURELY BLESS YOU AND I WILL SURELY MULTIPLY YOU." And so, having patiently waited, he obtained the promise. For men swear by one greater than themselves, and with them an oath given as confirmation is an end of every dispute. In the same way God, desiring even more to show to the heirs of the promise the unchangeableness of His purpose, interposed with an oath, so that by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have taken refuge would have strong encouragement to take hold of the hope set before us.

In this case the oaths given to seal the promises are being compared. In the first the oaths that men make to show they intend to keep their promise and the oath that God made to show His unchangeable purpose in salvation.

g. From 7:18-19:

**Hebrews 7:18–19** For, on the one hand, there is a setting aside of a former commandment because of its weakness and uselessness (for the Law made nothing perfect), and on the other hand there is a bringing in of a better hope, through which we draw near to God.

The Law versus the "better hope" are being compared—basically old covenant and the new covenant.

h. From 7:23-24:

**Hebrews 7:23–24** The former priests, on the one hand, existed in greater numbers because they were prevented by death from continuing, but Jesus, on the other hand, because He continues forever, holds His priesthood permanently.



The many priests needed under the old covenant because they died off is being compared with Jesus' all sufficient priesthood that lasts forever.

i. From 8:6-7:

**Hebrews 8:6–7** But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, by as much as He is also the mediator of a better covenant, which has been enacted on better promises. For if that first covenant had been faultless, there would have been no occasion sought for a second.

The two covenants are being compared and Jesus is the mediator of the better covenant.

j. From 9:11-12:

**Hebrews 9:11–12** But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things to come, He entered through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this creation; and not through the blood of goats and calves, but through His own blood, He entered the holy place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption.

Jesus entered the perfect, heavenly tabernacle, rather than the earthly one. And His sacrifice was superior to the offering of bulls and goats.

k. From 9:24:

**Hebrews 9:24** For Christ did not enter a holy place made with hands, a mere copy of the true one, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us;

Christ entered the heavenly tabernacle rather than the copy on earth. Oh the wonder of it all!

l. From 10:4, 10-12:

**Hebrews 10:4** For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.

**Hebrews 10:10–12** By this will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. Every priest stands daily ministering and offering time after time the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins; but He, having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, SAT DOWN AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD,

The different sacrifices are being compared—the blood of bulls and goats that cannot take away sins and Jesus' sacrifice done once that has accomplished redemption for all—and is finished.

m. From 10:28-29:

**Hebrews 10:28–29** Anyone who has set aside the Law of Moses dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. How much severer punishment do you think he will deserve who has trampled under foot the Son of God, and has regarded as unclean the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has insulted the Spirit of grace?

In this case the rejection of God’s provision for mercy in the Law and then through Jesus are being compared.

n. From 11:16, 39-40:

**Hebrews 11:16** But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for He has prepared a city for them.

**Hebrews 11:39–40** And all these, having gained approval through their faith, did not receive what was promised, because God had provided something better for us, so that apart from us they would not be made perfect.

The heavenly country versus the earthly one. And the Old Testament saints with the New Testament ones.

2. What point is the author making with his continued use of comparisons in the book of Hebrews?

He wants to impress on his readers that the salvation in Jesus is God’s perfect plan. It is not a second rate one, but is the culmination of all He prepared beforehand. All the sacrifices, laws, promises, prophets, etc., were all intended to lead people to Christ.

3. We ended last week’s lesson with an examination of the first mountain mentioned in this chapter. For review, list five observations about Mt. Sinai from verses 18-21.

**Hebrews 12:18–21** For you have not come to a mountain that can be touched and to a blazing fire, and to darkness and gloom and whirlwind, and to the blast of a trumpet and the sound of words which sound was such that those who heard begged that no further word be spoken to them. For they could not bear the command, “IF EVEN A BEAST TOUCHES THE MOUNTAIN, IT WILL BE STONED.” And so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, “I AM FULL OF FEAR and trembling.”

The mountain cannot be touched. The mountain was covered in blazing fire, while also being covered in darkness, gloom, and whirlwind. Upon the mountain, there was the sound of a trumpet blast. It was so mighty that the people begged God not to speak to them. If even a beast touches the mountain, it will be stoned and killed. Even Moses was full of fear and trembling.

4. Though the Israelites went to Mt. Sinai, what mountain have *we* come to (verse 22)?

**Hebrews 12:22** But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to myriads of angels,

We have come to Mount Zion!

5. Where does the mountain reside to which we have come?  
In heaven, where the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem is.

6. What do these two mountains represent? See Gal. 4:21-31 and 2 Cor. 3:7-11.  
**Galatians 4:21–31** Tell me, you who want to be under law, do you not listen to the law? For it is written that Abraham had two sons, one by the bondwoman and one by the free woman. But the son by the bondwoman was born according to the flesh, and the son by the free woman through the promise. This is allegorically speaking, for these women are two covenants: one proceeding from Mount Sinai bearing children who are to be slaves; she is Hagar. Now this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia and corresponds to the present Jerusalem, for she is in slavery with her children. But the Jerusalem above is free; she is our mother. For it is written, “REJOICE, BARREN WOMAN WHO DOES NOT BEAR; BREAK FORTH AND SHOUT, YOU WHO ARE NOT IN LABOR; FOR MORE NUMEROUS ARE THE CHILDREN OF THE DESOLATE THAN OF THE ONE WHO HAS A HUSBAND.” And you brethren, like Isaac, are children of promise. But as at that time he who was born according to the flesh persecuted him who was born according to the Spirit, so it is now also. But what does the Scripture say? “CAST OUT THE BONDWOMAN AND HER SON, FOR THE SON OF THE BONDWOMAN SHALL NOT BE AN HEIR WITH THE SON OF THE FREE WOMAN.” So then, brethren, we are not children of a bondwoman, but of the free woman.

**2 Corinthians 3:7–11** But if the ministry of death, in letters engraved on stones, came with glory, so that the sons of Israel could not look intently at the face of Moses because of the glory of his face, fading as it was, how will the ministry of the Spirit fail to be even more with glory? For if the ministry of condemnation has glory, much more does the ministry of righteousness abound in glory. For indeed what had glory, in this case has no glory because of the glory that surpasses it. For if that which fades away was with glory, much more that which remains is in glory.

They represent the old covenant and the new covenant, the Law versus the law of grace, the ministry of death versus the ministry of the spirit, the children of the slave woman versus the woman of the free woman.

7. What else exists with Mt. Zion according to verses 22-24?

**Hebrews 12:22–24** But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to myriads of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood, which speaks better than the blood of Abel.

The city of the living God which is the heavenly Jerusalem. Myriads of angels. The general assembly. The church of the firstborn. God, who is the Judge of all. The spirits of the righteous made perfect. Jesus, the mediator. The sprinkled blood. *What an interesting list of things that we will discover in heaven at Mount Zion!*

8. The author sets up a comparison of superiority again—just as he has done many times in this book. What is the point of the mountain comparison?

The mountain comparison shows the superiority of Mount Zion versus Mount Sinai. It shows that God intended something more than what they had received at Mount Sinai.

9. The author continues to make his point that Christ is superior in every way. In Hebrews 12:24 what two men are being compared? What did the first man in verse 24 do that “speaks better” than what the second man did? To learn more about the second man and what he did, read Hebrews 11:4.

The two men being compared are Jesus and Abel.

The first man in the verse, Jesus, was the mediator of the new covenant and sprinkled the blood of the sacrifice.

Abel offered a blood sacrifice, which is implied because “the blood” is supplied by the translators. Hebrews 11:4 helps us see that this is what the author is referring to. **Hebrews 11:4** By faith Abel offered to God a better sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained the testimony that he was righteous, God testifying about his gifts, and through faith, though he is dead, he still speaks.

- a. The NASB, ESV, and NIV all add “the blood” at the end of the verse in reference to Abel in hopes of bringing clarity to what the author is communicating in verse 24.<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately, that choice seems to have muddied the waters rather than providing the insight needed. The NKJV provides better help by simply translating the verse as the original Greek text had it. The NKJV says, “to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than that of Abel.” This rendering helps us see the point of comparison between Jesus as our mediator and priest, who offered Himself as a sacrifice that cleanses us from all sin and the offering that Abel gave. We learn from Hebrews 11:4 that Abel offered up an acceptable sacrifice to God, yet even that pleasing sacrifices pales in comparison to Christ’s magnificent one.

- b. We learn in Hebrews 12:24 that Christ, as the mediator of the new

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<sup>1</sup> In the NASB, when the translation team adds extra information to the original Greek or Hebrew text, they will *italicize* it as way to let the reader know that it deviates from the original text. When it comes to disputed or difficult passages, it’s especially helpful to know when something was not in the original Greek or Hebrew text.

covenant, sprinkled blood. What does that sprinkled blood communicate to us? See 9:11-14, 19-22; 10:19-22; 1 Peter 1:2; 1 John 1:7.

**Hebrews 9:11–14** But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things to come, He entered through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this creation; and not through the blood of goats and calves, but through His own blood, He entered the holy place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption. *For if the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling those who have been defiled sanctify for the cleansing of the flesh, how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?*

**Hebrews 9:19–22** For when every commandment had been spoken by Moses to all the people according to the Law, he took the blood of the calves and the goats, with water and scarlet wool and hyssop, and *sprinkled* both the book itself and all the people, saying, “This is the blood of the covenant which God commanded you.” And in the same way he *sprinkled* both the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry with the blood. And according to the Law, one may almost say, *all things are cleansed with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.*

**Hebrews 10:19–22** Therefore, brethren, since we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He inaugurated for us through the veil, that is, His flesh, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, *having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.*

**1 Peter 1:2** according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, *by the sanctifying work of the Spirit, to obey Jesus Christ and be sprinkled with His blood:* May grace and peace be yours in the fullest measure.

**1 John 1:7** but if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and *the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin.*

The sprinkled blood refers to cleansing.

- c. The NKJV translation of Hebrews 12:24, “to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than that of Abel” fits the context of the passage better and leads us to the comparison the author of Hebrews intended us to see, which is the comparison about *speaking*. Look at Hebrews 11:4 and record what you learn about Abel and his sacrifice *speaking* to us. Then note the continued use of *speaking/speaks/spoke* or any reference to communicating in 12:18-29. What does the author of Hebrews want to emphasize about *speaking* in this section of Hebrews (12:18-29)?

**Hebrews 11:4** By faith Abel offered to God a better sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained the testimony that he was righteous, *God testifying about his gifts, and through faith, though he is dead, he still speaks.*

**Hebrews 12:24** and to *Jesus*, the mediator of a new covenant, and to *the sprinkled blood, which speaks better than the blood of Abel.*

**Hebrews 12:25** *See to it that you do not refuse Him who is speaking.* For if those did not escape when they refused him who *warned* them on earth, much less will we escape who turn away from Him who *warns* from heaven.

**Hebrews 12:26** And His *voice* shook the earth then, but now He has *promised*, saying, “YET ONCE MORE I WILL SHAKE NOT ONLY THE EARTH, BUT ALSO THE HEAVEN.”

The author makes the comparison about the blood sacrifice between Jesus and Abel. Abel offered an animal, while Jesus offered Himself. This point of comparison then leads the author to make his point about speaking. Abel’s sacrifice “speaks” of his faithfulness, but Jesus’ sacrifice of Himself is greater, better, grander, and all sufficient. That is why the author insists that we “do not refuse Him who is speaking” for to refuse Him is to face fierce judgment.

- d. Why is the comparison about what has been spoken or how it was spoken a significant argument or point of comparison throughout the book? See 1:1-2; 2:1-3; 4:2; 10:29; 11:4; 12:24-25.

**Hebrews 1:1–2** God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world.

**Hebrews 2:1–3** For this reason we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away from it. For if the word spoken through angels proved unalterable, and every transgression and disobedience received a just penalty, how will we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? After it was at the first spoken through the Lord, it was confirmed to us by those who heard,

**Hebrews 4:2** For indeed we have had good news preached to us, just as they also; but the word they heard did not profit them, because it was not united by faith in those who heard.

**Hebrews 11:4** By faith Abel offered to God a better sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained the testimony that he was righteous, God testifying about his gifts, and through faith, though he is dead, he still speaks.

**Hebrews 12:24–25** and to *Jesus*, the mediator of a new covenant, and to *the sprinkled blood, which speaks better than the blood of Abel.* See to it that you do not refuse Him who is speaking. For if those did not escape when they refused him who *warned* them on earth, much less will we escape who turn away from Him who *warns* from heaven.

God spoke through the prophets and now speaks to us in Jesus. His message is even greater than the one previously given in the Law. All the more reason to receive it profitably, by faith. God Himself affirms that Abel’s sacrifice was pleasing, but we learn that it is surpassed by the magnificent offering of Jesus



Christ to take away our sin. We are urged then, not to refuse Him who is speaking because it is so dire for our eternity if we refuse to hear and heed.

*In Hebrews 12:25 we are told to “see to it” that we do not refuse Him who is speaking. It’s an insightful little study to look at the other places this phrase appears and just what God wants us to make a priority.*

**Matthew 24:4** And Jesus answered and said to them, “*See to it* that no one misleads you.

**Mark 13:5** And Jesus began to say to them, “*See to it* that no one misleads you.

**Luke 21:8** And He said, “*See to it* that you are not misled; for many will come in My name, saying, ‘I am He,’ and, ‘The time is near.’ Do not go after them.

**Ephesians 5:33** Nevertheless, each individual among you also is to love his own wife even as himself, and the wife must *see to it* that she respects her husband.

**Colossians 2:8** *See to it* that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ.

**Hebrews 12:15** *See to it* that no one comes short of the grace of God; that no root of bitterness springing up causes trouble, and by it many be defiled;

**Hebrews 12:25** *See to it* that you do not refuse Him who is speaking. For if those did not escape when they refused him who warned them on earth, much less will we escape who turn away from Him who warns from heaven.

10. What warning is given in verse 25?

See to it that you do not refuse Him who is speaking.

**Hebrews 12:25** See to it that you do not refuse Him who is speaking. For if those did not escape when they refused him who warned them on earth, much less will we escape who turn away from Him who warns from heaven.

11. Who warned the Israelites on earth? See 1:1; 10:28.

**Hebrews 1:1** God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways,

**Hebrews 10:28** Anyone who has set aside the Law of Moses dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses.

The prophets and the Word of God itself.

12. What warning have we been given from heaven? See 10:29-31.

**Hebrews 10:29–31** How much severer punishment do you think he will deserve who has trampled under foot the Son of God, and has regarded as unclean the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has insulted the Spirit of grace? For we know Him who said, “VENGEANCE IS MINE, I WILL REPAY.” And again, “THE LORD WILL JUDGE HIS PEOPLE.” It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

That there is more severe punishment for those who reject Christ's sacrifice so freely offered on their behalf. Oh, the words, "It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God."

13. According to this context [in verse 25], how could someone refuse to heed the message of Christ?

Sheer unbelief. Stubborn refusal to hear and to heed the message. A willful turning away and rejecting of the message of hope, relief, rescue, and salvation.

14. What do we learn about creation in verses 26-27?

God's voice shook the earth at the giving of the Law at Mt. Sinai, but there is coming a day when not only the earth, but also the heavens, will shake once more! We see in verse 27 that there is a removing of the created things. God is making all things new!

15. What will remain (verse 28)?

That heavenly kingdom which cannot be shaken.

16. How do you receive a kingdom which cannot be shaken? See 10:19-22.

**Hebrews 10:19–22** Therefore, brethren, since we have confidence to enter the holy place *by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way* which He inaugurated for us through the veil, that is, His flesh, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us *draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.*

Through Jesus—only through Jesus.

17. How should you respond to such a magnificent gift according to verse 28? What are some specific ways you can apply that daily?

With gratitude! Gratefully! Thankfully! Humbly! So aware of the precious gift that has been given on my behalf.

The verse says we are to show gratitude by offering up our lives as a living and holy sacrifice. To live each day for His glory, for His service—to do whatever He may ask or think. To give Him honor by looking only to Him for hope, help, and change.

**Romans 12:1** Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship.

**1 Peter 2:5** you also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

18. What does that response allow you to do (verse 28)?

Gratitude moves me to offer up a holy, acceptable, pleasing service to God.

- a. What does your application of the end of verse 28 look like in your daily life? See Rom. 12:1-2; Col. 3:23-24; 2 Tim. 1:3; Heb. 9:14.

**Romans 12:1–2** Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.

**Colossians 3:23–24** Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve.

**2 Timothy 1:3** I thank God, whom I serve with a clear conscience the way my forefathers did, as I constantly remember you in my prayers night and day,

**Hebrews 9:14** how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

We will live differently because of Jesus. We will be renewed in our minds. We will serve the Lord heartily in whatever the Lord gives. We will serve without duplicity or hidden motives, but with a clear conscience. We are cleansed from dead works to serve the living God.

Service. Living for Jesus a life that is true!

Living for Jesus, a life that is true,  
Striving to please Him in all that I do;  
Yielding allegiance, glad-hearted and free,  
This is the pathway of blessing for me.

Refrain:

O Jesus, Lord and Savior, I give myself to Thee,  
For Thou, in Thy atonement, didst give Thyself for me;  
I own no other Master, my heart shall be Thy throne;  
My life I give, henceforth to live, O Christ, for Thee alone.

Living for Jesus Who died in my place,  
Bearing on Calv'ry my sin and disgrace;  
Such love constrains me to answer His call,  
Follow His leading and give Him my all.

Living for Jesus, wherever I am,  
Doing each duty in His holy Name;  
Willing to suffer affliction and loss,  
Deeming each trial a part of my cross.

Living for Jesus through earth's little while,  
My dearest treasure, the light of His smile;  
Seeking the lost ones He died to redeem,  
Bringing the weary to find rest in Him.

19. What attitudes are to accompany your offering to God according to verse 28?  
Reverence and awe.

20. What do you learn about God in verse 29?  
He is a consuming fire.

- a. Look up the following verses to learn more: Nahum 1:2-3, 5-8; Luke 3:16-17; Heb. 10:26-31; 2 Pet. 3:7.

**Nahum 1:2–3** *A jealous and avenging God is the LORD; The LORD is avenging and wrathful. The LORD takes vengeance on His adversaries, And He reserves wrath for His enemies. The LORD is slow to anger and great in power, And the LORD will by no means leave the guilty unpunished. In whirlwind and storm is His way, And clouds are the dust beneath His feet.*

**Nahum 1:5–8** *Mountains quake because of Him And the hills dissolve; Indeed the earth is upheaved by His presence, The world and all the inhabitants in it. Who can stand before His indignation? Who can endure the burning of His anger? His wrath is poured out like fire And the rocks are broken up by Him. The LORD is good, A stronghold in the day of trouble, And He knows those who take refuge in Him. But with an overflowing flood He will make a complete end of its site, And will pursue His enemies into darkness.*

**Luke 3:16–17** *John answered and said to them all, "As for me, I baptize you with water; but One is coming who is mightier than I, and I am not fit to untie the thong of His sandals; He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. "His winnowing fork is in His hand to thoroughly clear His threshing floor, and to gather the wheat into His barn; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire."*

**Hebrews 10:26–31** *For if we go on sinning willfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a terrifying expectation of judgment and THE FURY OF A FIRE WHICH WILL CONSUME THE ADVERSARIES. Anyone who has set aside the Law of Moses dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. How much severer punishment do you think he will deserve who has trampled under foot the Son of God, and has regarded as unclean the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has insulted the Spirit of grace? For we know Him who said, "VENGEANCE IS MINE, I WILL REPAY." And again, "THE LORD WILL JUDGE HIS PEOPLE." It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God.*

**2 Peter 3:7** *But by His word the present heavens and earth are being reserved for fire, kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men.*

21. What does verse 29 have to do with verse 28? How does that connection fit in

with the exhortation of verses 18-27?

We've been given this incredible gift in Jesus' sacrifice on our behalf, yet to reject this precious and magnificent offering from God will be judged, for He is the mighty King who reigns from on high. Judgment comes for all who reject Jesus' sacrifice of salvation. If we accept the earthly sacrifices as something good, yet reject the heavenly ones, there are great consequences.

22. After studying these verses, it makes you wonder why anyone would want to go back to the old law system. Obviously, the author of Hebrews wondered that too. He can't imagine why anyone would reject Christ's magnificent sacrifice and the blessings of the new covenant, to instead return to the never-ending sacrifices and offerings of the old covenant. Even in light of the trials and persecutions the believers were experiencing because they were following Christ, the rewards of following Christ far outweighed any momentary, light affliction in the present. In what way has our study in this passage impacted your attitudes and response to the Lord Jesus and how you are living toward Him?

It makes me want to honor Him better and more faithfully than what I have done. He is worthy of all my honor, praise, efforts, service, obedience—even in hardship—all the more in hardship, trial, and affliction because it reveals the true testing of my faith. Only the disciplined, scourged ones persevere until the end. All to Jesus, I surrender, all to Him I freely give!

All to Jesus I surrender,  
All to Him I freely give;  
I will ever love and trust Him,  
In His presence daily live.

"All things may pass away; the world as we know it may be uprooted; life as we experience it may come to an end; but one thing stands eternally sure—the relationship of every Christian to God. If that is so, there is a great obligation laid upon us. We must worship God with reverence and serve him with fear; for nothing must be allowed to disturb that relationship which will be our salvation when the world passes away."

~William Barclay<sup>2</sup>

"For every man the choice is the same. Whether we are Jew or Gentile, to try to approach God by our works is to come to Sinai and to discover that our works fall short and cannot save us. Whether we are Jew or Gentile, to trust in the atoning blood of Jesus Christ is to come to Zion, where our heavenly High Priest will mediate for us and bring us to the Father, and where we find reconciliation, peace, and eternal life. And if you have truly come to Zion and received all its blessings, it is inconceivable that you would want to hold on to Sinai in any way." ~John MacArthur<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> William Barclay, *The Letter to the Hebrews*, The New Daily Study Bible (Louisville, KY; London: Westminster John Knox Press, 2002), 222.

<sup>3</sup> John F. MacArthur Jr., *Hebrews*, MacArthur New Testament Commentary (Chicago: Moody Press, 1983), 418.

## Hebrews Part Two

### Lesson #25, Chapter 13 Overview

#### TEACHER'S GUIDE

The goal of this particular lesson is the foundation of all Bible study. It is the practice of observing what's in the text. At this stage in our Bible study you're simply taking note and then recording what God has put into the chapter. You're not making any interpretations about what it means or how it applies to your life—that will come later. Don't rush through this lesson. Set aside time this week to peer into the living and abiding word of God. You'll be glad you did!

On the pages that follow you'll find the text of Chapter 13 in the New American Standard Bible version. *Use those pages to do this lesson.* Feel free to make notes on the page or mark it up as much as you like to help you do this lesson. Using the same Bible version to do this lesson will cut down on any confusion that would arise if we were all using different versions of the Bible when we get together for class discussion.

1. To begin, read through Chapter 13. Now, summarize the contents of Chapter 13. This is not the time to be super detailed; instead, think of trying to tell a 4th grader the contents of the chapter.<sup>1</sup>
  - a. Summarize the contents of the first paragraph (verses 1-6).

The author of Hebrews gives his final admonitions to his readers. In verses 1-6 he provides concrete ways the believers can show love toward the brethren.
  - b. Summarize the contents of the second paragraph (verses 7-16).

The author continues with his final encouragements by reminding them of the essentials of the faith. To follow in the path of the faithful and adhere to the faithful teaching which remains the same, just as the Lord Jesus Himself is eternally unchanging. Jesus alone is able to sanctify us, so we are urged to align ourselves with Him.
  - c. Summarize the contents of the third paragraph (verses 17-19).

The author gives counsel concerning leaders so the church will function as it should.
  - d. Summarize the contents of the fourth paragraph (verses 20-21).

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<sup>1</sup> The method and process of observation in Bible study does God honor as we stop, observe, and consider each and every one of His recorded Words, in their context. I would be remiss if I didn't acknowledge the debt I owe to the Precept Inductive Bible Studies observation method, which I have adapted in my studies. As far as I know, the method is the brainchild of Kay Arthur, though I've encountered a number of others who have also come up with similar ways for observing the text. The point of observation is to slow down and really look at what God has preserved for us in His Word. What I've created here is simply another variation to help us peer more closely at the Scriptures—for our good and His glory.



The author gives a benediction that God will equip them so they can serve well.

- e. Summarize the contents of the fifth paragraph (verses 22-25).

Final comments.

2. After reviewing the chapter and what you wrote for your summaries, ask yourself: *What is the main point of this chapter?* How do all the details and events reveal the main idea of the chapter? Record your answer below.

The main point of this chapter is to give the last words that would equip and strengthen the believers to live well to the glory of God.

3. Now you're ready to title your chapter. Your title should reflect the contents of the chapter in an abbreviated way. Remember, a title's purpose is to help you remember what is in each chapter.

Make Sure You Do These Things

Final Thoughts and Admonitions

Hebrews 13:22 could work as a key verse for the chapter.

4. On the *Hebrews Bible Text* handout at the end of this lesson, mark *key* words. *God, Jesus Christ, Holy Spirit* are always key words. Start with these first. Then mark words or phrases that are repeated at least 3 times. Mark any other words that seem important to the chapter or are strongly emphasized.

Mark words or phrases by creating a symbol or using a certain colored pencil every time it appears. This will enable you to see at a glance how often a word is used in the chapter or note a progression of thought.

5. Next, *list the phrase containing the key words* on a separate sheet of paper. This step will allow you to pull together the information you noted from marking the key words. Be sure to cite the verse references when you list your key word information.

For example, with *God* as your key word, you would begin to make a list of the information you discovered every time God is mentioned in Hebrews Chapter 1. Your Chapter 1 list about *God* should begin by looking something like the one below. Include the details that you learn about Him. For example: verse 1—*He* spoke long ago to the fathers; verses 1-2—*God*...has spoken to us in *His* Son.

God

Verse 4 fornicators and adulterers God will judge

Verse 5 *He [God] Himself [God] has said, "I [God] will never desert you, now will I [God] ever forsake you."*

Verse 6 we may confidently say, The Lord [God] is my helper

Verse 7 remember those who...spoke the Word of God to you

Verse 15 through Jesus, let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is the fruit of lips that give thanks to His [God's] name  
Verse 16 God is pleased with our sacrifices of doing good and sharing  
Verse 20 Now the God of peace...  
Verse 21 (now the God of peace) equip you in every good thing to do *His* [God's] will, working in us that which is pleasing in *His* [God's] sight

Jesus

Verse 8 *Jesus Christ* is the same yesterday, today, and forever  
Verse 12 *Jesus* also, that *He* [Jesus] might sanctify the people through *His* [Jesus'] own blood, suffered outside the gate  
Verse 13 let us go out to *Him* [Jesus] outside the camp, bearing *His* [Jesus'] reproach  
Verse 15 through *Him* [Jesus], let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God  
Verse 20 God brought up the *great Shepherd of the sheep* [Jesus] through the blood of the eternal covenant, even *Jesus our Lord*  
Verse 21 believers are equipped in every good thing through *Jesus Christ*, to whom be the glory forever and ever

6. Mark any *commands* that are listed in the chapter. It helps to look for any actions that are required of the reader or things they are told to do or be.
7. Now, list the commands on your separate sheet of paper in the same way you did for the key words.

See Observation sheet.

8. Mark words or phrases that are being *compared or contrasted*. Words like *as, likewise, in the same manner, or like* will help you find words or phrases being compared. Contrasting words like “light/dark” or “love/hate” and the word “but” will help you find words or phrases that are being contrasted.
9. Now list the comparisons and contrasts you discovered on the extra paper you've been using.

See Observation sheet.

10. Mark transition terms: *therefore, wherefore, finally*. Sometimes an author has his own kind of transition term that lets you know he is making a switch to a new topic, so be sure to look for those kinds of terms. (Generally, these are at the beginning of a paragraph.)

See Observation sheet.

11. Mark expressions of time—words like *shortly, quickly, soon, for a little while*.
- See Observation sheet.

12. Mark words that are synonyms of each other. For example: *God* and *Father* from 1:1.

See Observation sheet.

13. List any *attributes* of God, Christ, or the Holy Spirit that you notice in this chapter and add them to your list paper.

***How to identify attributes:*** Look back over the list you compiled about God and identify any of His attributes that you may see. Identifying attributes is easy when you differentiate between what God is *doing* versus *who He is*. Begin your attribute statements with *God is...* and then finish the sentence. List the verse that identified that particular characteristic for you. For clarity's sake you may want to explain why you identified that particular attribute as shown in the examples. For example: God is sovereign from verse 1 (because He ordained His plan and how it would be revealed to the world); God is knowable from verse 2 (because He has spoken to us in Christ and made His will known).

### God

Verse 4 God is judge. He is holy, righteous, sovereign, just.

Verse 5 He Himself has said. God is knowable, accessible, gracious, and compassionate to communicate with man.

Verse 5 God is eternal, unchanging, faithful, kind and gracious in never deserting or forsaking us.

Verse 7 who spoke the Word of God to you. God is knowable, accessible, gracious, and compassionate to communicate with man.

Verse 15 God is praiseworthy. He is worthy, King, sovereign, all good and all wise, powerful, mighty, holy.

Verse 15 give thanks to His name. His name is God. He is knowable, accessible, worthy of thanks.

Verse 16 God is pleased. He can be pleased which reveals how patient, loving, kind, and gracious He is.

Verse 20 He is the God of peace. He is peace. He is powerful. He brought Jesus up from the dead.

Verse 21. He is gracious and compassionate in equipping us to do the things that please Him.

### Jesus

Verse 8 Jesus is eternal, unchanging. He is God! He is faithful.

Verse 12 Jesus sanctifies through the sacrifice of Himself. He is holy.

Verse 13 Jesus is humble. He endured suffering and reproach.

Verse 21 Jesus enables us to serve God acceptably.

14. Look for *lists of words, phrases, or related thoughts* in the chapter text. Number any lists you find within the Bible text, then write out your list to the side in the margin or on a separate sheet of paper of the Hebrews Chapter 1 Bible text. This step will help you see the thought progression of the author or the results of some

action. For example, in Hebrews 1:1-2 *we find a list about God speaking*. We discover 1) God spoke long ago; 2) God spoke to the fathers; 3) God spoke through the prophets; 4) God spoke through the prophets in many portions; 5) God spoke through the prophets in many ways; 6) and now in these last days God has spoken; 7) God has spoken to us; and 8) God has spoken to us in His Son.  
See Observation sheet.

15. Be sure to mark or write down any “nuggets” you observed that you thought were interesting.

The number of commands in this chapter far exceeds the commands in the rest of the book! After teaching and informing for 12 chapters, the author’s last words are ones of go and do!

Remember, the purpose of this lesson is to observe and take note of what is in each chapter. You are not making any interpretations or applications to your life at this time. Your task at this time is to look for the treasures that God has put in each chapter. Have fun digging into God’s word!

SCRIPTURE PATHS BIBLE STUDIES

Discovering the Treasures of the Word

Hebrews Chapter 13

- 1 Let love of the brethren continue.
- 2 Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by this some have entertained angels without knowing it.
- 3 Remember the prisoners, as though in prison with them, and those who are ill-treated, since you yourselves also are in the body.
- 4 Marriage is to be held in honor among all, and the marriage bed is to be undefiled; for fornicators and adulterers God will judge.
- 5 Make sure that your character is free from the love of money, being content with what you have; for He Himself has said, "I will never desert you, nor will I ever forsake you,"
- 6 so that we confidently say, "The Lord is my helper, I will not be afraid. What will man do to me?"
- 7 Remember those who led you, who spoke the word of God to you; and considering the result of their conduct, imitate their faith.
- 8 Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.
- 9 Do not be carried away by varied and strange teachings; for it is good for the heart to be strengthened by grace, not by foods, through which those who were so occupied were not benefited.
- 10 We have an altar from which those who serve the tabernacle have no right to eat.
- 11 For the bodies of those animals whose blood is brought into the holy place by the high priest as an offering for sin, are burned outside the camp.

ways to show love to the brethren

- 1. Show hospitality
- 2. Remember prisoners

3 remember ill-treated

4 Honor marriage

5 don't defile marriage bed

6 Be free from love of money

7 remember those who led you

8 imitate faith

Bodies of animals compared to Jesus

SCRIPTURE PATHS BIBLE STUDIES  
*Discovering the Treasures of the Word*

12 Therefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people through His own blood, suffered outside the gate.

13 So, let us go out to Him outside the camp, bearing His reproach.

14 For here we do not have a lasting city, but we are seeking the city which is to come.

15 Through Him then, let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that give thanks to His name.

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

17 Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they keep watch over your souls as those who will give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with grief, for this would be unprofitable for you.

18 Pray for us, for we are sure that we have a good conscience, desiring to conduct ourselves honorably in all things.

19 And I urge you all the more to do this, so that I may be restored to you the sooner.

20 Now the God of peace, who brought up from the dead the great Shepherd of the sheep through the blood of the eternal covenant, even Jesus our Lord,

21 equip you in every good thing to do His will, working in us that which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

*not literal!*

*Handwritten annotations: Circles, crosses, triangles, and arrows are used to mark specific words and phrases across the text, often with lines connecting them. For example, in verse 19, a red box highlights "so that I may be restored to you" with a note "prayer (vs. 18)".*



SCRIPTURE PATHS BIBLE STUDIES

*Discovering the Treasures of the Word*

22 But I urge you, brethren, bear with this word of exhortation, for I have written to you briefly.

23 Take notice that our brother Timothy has been released, with whom, if he comes soon, I will see you.

24 Greet all of your leaders and all the saints. Those from Italy greet you.

25 Grace be with you all.

△ God  
+ Jesus  
∨ Holy Spirit

CCC commands  
↔ comparisons  
↔ ...  
TTT transitional terms  
□ so that  
↔ synonyms

## Hebrews Part Two

### Lesson #26, Chapter 13:1-6

#### TEACHER'S GUIDE

To prepare for this week's lesson, please read Hebrews 12:28 to 13:25. There's so much here, be sure to ask the Lord for His help to learn and apply it!

1. Chapter 13 begins with a command. What is it?

Let love of the brethren continue.

2. How have the believers applied this command in the past and how have they been encouraged to continue? See Heb. 6:10-11 and 10:24-25.

**Hebrews 6:10–11** For God is not unjust so as to forget your work and the love which you have shown toward His name, in having ministered and in still ministering to the saints. And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence so as to realize the full assurance of hope until the end,

**Hebrews 10:24–25** and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near.

3. We are commanded to continue in a state of loving our fellow believers. What are some specific ways you intend to love the brethren this week?

This week I am meeting with some. I am preparing studies and teaching which will build them up in the faith. I have sent flowers, texts, email, and made phone calls to reach out and check on people. We have practiced hospitality and made food to share. I plan to attend a little birthday party to encourage the mama and to see other women and spend time with them. I am praying for them. Oh, Lord, help me to love them better. I am such a poor substitute for you, Lord, but may I somehow encourage them as You would.

- a. Notice this verse says *continue*. There may be some of you who need to *start* loving the brethren. It also means you have some work to do with the Lord, since you have been disobeying this command for some reason. What needs to change?

Most of the time, this is a faith issue. Yet, loving the brethren comes more easily when we are loved by the Lord and love Him in return.

- b. For all to answer: What if you meet someone who has been a faithful attender at church, who claims to be a believer, but who has not been applying this verse. What would you do to help them grow in this area?

First, consider whether or not they truly know the Lord. Faithful church attendance isn't a guarantee of salvation. Then I would encourage them to jump in somewhere. Usually love for the brethren grows when we serve them, not when we wait for them to notice us. If there is a love problem, it often begins there.

4. What is the second command given in this chapter (verse 2)?  
Don't neglect to show hospitality to strangers.

5. Define *neglect* (NIV, NKJV *forget* [Strong's #1950]).  
Used only here and in Romans 12:13: contributing to the needs of the saints,  
practicing hospitality.  
Forget, no longer caring about, given over to oblivion, lose thought of, disregard.

6. What clues can you find in verses 1-3 that indicate more about the identity of the  
*strangers* we are to show hospitality to?  
Verses 1 and 3 both address believers [brethren/since you yourselves are in the  
body], so it's more than likely that the hospitality we are to show is to be toward  
believers as well. Context! Even the reference to "the prisoners" in verse 3 is  
about the believers who were being persecuted for their faith.

7. In verse 2, what does *for by this* refer to (ESV *for thereby*; NIV, NKJV *for by so  
doing*)? And when some did *this* thing, what were they doing according to verse  
2?

For by this refers to showing hospitality to strangers. When some showed  
hospitality to strangers [the *this*] they actually were ministering to angels. What?  
Wow! Just think of it!

- a. What do you learn about hospitality and angels from the following  
accounts? See Gen. 18:1-8, 16-17, 22, 32-33; 19:1-3; Judges 6:11-24;  
13:6-21.

**Genesis 18:1–8** Now the LORD appeared to him by the oaks of Mamre, while he was sitting at the tent door in the heat of the day. When he lifted up his eyes and looked, behold, three men were standing opposite him; and when he saw them, he ran from the tent door to meet them and bowed himself to the earth, and said, "My Lord, if now I have found favor in Your sight, please do not pass Your servant by. "Please let a little water be brought and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree; and I will bring a piece of bread, that you may refresh yourselves; after that you may go on, since you have visited your servant." And they said, "So do, as you have said." So Abraham hurried into the tent to Sarah, and said, "Quickly, prepare three measures of fine flour, knead it and make bread cakes." Abraham also ran to the herd, and took a tender and choice calf and gave it to the servant, and he hurried to prepare it. He took curds and milk and the calf which he had prepared, and placed it before them; and he was standing by them under the tree as they ate.

**Genesis 18:16–17** Then the men rose up from there, and looked down toward Sodom; and Abraham was walking with them to send them off. The LORD said, "Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do,

**Genesis 18:22** Then the men turned away from there and went toward Sodom, while Abraham was still standing before the LORD.

**Genesis 18:32–33** Then he said, “Oh may the Lord not be angry, and I shall speak only this once; suppose ten are found there?” And He said, “I will not destroy it on account of the ten.” As soon as He had finished speaking to Abraham the LORD departed, and Abraham returned to his place.

**Genesis 19:1–3** Now the two angels came to Sodom in the evening as Lot was sitting in the gate of Sodom. When Lot saw them, he rose to meet them and bowed down with his face to the ground. And he said, “Now behold, my lords, please turn aside into your servant’s house, and spend the night, and wash your feet; then you may rise early and go on your way.” They said however, “No, but we shall spend the night in the square.” Yet he urged them strongly, so they turned aside to him and entered his house; and he prepared a feast for them, and baked unleavened bread, and they ate.

*The account with Abraham reveals that the men who came to him were angels and the pre-incarnate Lord Himself!*

**Judges 6:11–24** Then the angel of the LORD came and sat under the oak that was in Ophrah, which belonged to Joash the Abiezrite as his son Gideon was beating out wheat in the wine press in order to save it from the Midianites. The angel of the LORD appeared to him and said to him, “The LORD is with you, O valiant warrior.” Then Gideon said to him, “O my lord, if the LORD is with us, why then has all this happened to us? And where are all His miracles which our fathers told us about, saying, ‘Did not the LORD bring us up from Egypt?’ But now the LORD has abandoned us and given us into the hand of Midian.” The LORD looked at him and said, “Go in this your strength and deliver Israel from the hand of Midian. Have I not sent you?” He said to Him, “O Lord, how shall I deliver Israel? Behold, my family is the least in Manasseh, and I am the youngest in my father’s house.” But the LORD said to him, “Surely I will be with you, and you shall defeat Midian as one man.” So Gideon said to Him, “If now I have found favor in Your sight, then show me a sign that it is You who speak with me. “Please do not depart from here, until I come back to You, and bring out my offering and lay it before You.” And He said, “I will remain until you return.” Then Gideon went in and prepared a young goat and unleavened bread from an ephah of flour; he put the meat in a basket and the broth in a pot, and brought them out to him under the oak and presented them. The angel of God said to him, “Take the meat and the unleavened bread and lay them on this rock, and pour out the broth.” And he did so. Then the angel of the LORD put out the end of the staff that was in his hand and touched the meat and the unleavened bread; and fire sprang up from the rock and consumed the meat and the unleavened bread. Then the angel of the LORD vanished from his sight. When Gideon saw that he was the angel of the LORD, he said, “Alas, O Lord GOD! For now I have seen the angel of the LORD face to face.” The LORD said to him, “Peace to you, do not fear; you shall not die.” Then Gideon built an altar there to the LORD and named it The LORD is Peace. To this day it is still in Ophrah of the Abiezrites.

*Gideon talked with and prepared a goat and bread for The Angel of the Lord.*

**Judges 13:6–21** Then the woman came and told her husband, saying, “A man of God came to me and his appearance was like the appearance of the angel of

God, very awesome. And I did not ask him where he came from, nor did he tell me his name. “But he said to me, ‘Behold, you shall conceive and give birth to a son, and now you shall not drink wine or strong drink nor eat any unclean thing, for the boy shall be a Nazirite to God from the womb to the day of his death.’ ” Then Manoah entreated the LORD and said, “O Lord, please let the man of God whom You have sent come to us again that he may teach us what to do for the boy who is to be born.” God listened to the voice of Manoah; and the angel of God came again to the woman as she was sitting in the field, but Manoah her husband was not with her. So the woman ran quickly and told her husband, “Behold, the man who came the other day has appeared to me.” Then Manoah arose and followed his wife, and when he came to the man he said to him, “Are you the man who spoke to the woman?” And he said, “I am.” Manoah said, “Now when your words come to pass, what shall be the boy’s mode of life and his vocation?” So the angel of the LORD said to Manoah, “Let the woman pay attention to all that I said. “She should not eat anything that comes from the vine nor drink wine or strong drink, nor eat any unclean thing; let her observe all that I commanded.” Then Manoah said to the angel of the LORD, “Please let us detain you so that we may prepare a young goat for you.” The angel of the LORD said to Manoah, “Though you detain me, I will not eat your food, but if you prepare a burnt offering, then offer it to the LORD.” For Manoah did not know that he was the angel of the LORD. Manoah said to the angel of the LORD, “What is your name, so that when your words come to pass, we may honor you?” But the angel of the LORD said to him, “Why do you ask my name, seeing it is wonderful?” So Manoah took the young goat with the grain offering and offered it on the rock to the LORD, and He performed wonders while Manoah and his wife looked on. For it came about when the flame went up from the altar toward heaven, that the angel of the LORD ascended in the flame of the altar. When Manoah and his wife saw this, they fell on their faces to the ground. Now the angel of the LORD did not appear to Manoah or his wife again. Then Manoah knew that he was the angel of the LORD.

*The same thing occurred for Manoah and his wife. They too encountered The Angel of the Lord and prepared a goat for Him. The Lord declined eating the food, but accepted it as an offering.*

8. In what situations will you encounter believers who are strangers to you? Mostly when visitors come to church. It often happens when there is a need to house a missionary or a pastor as they travel through an area. Definitely when a church hosts a conference.

- a. What are some specific and creative ways you can show hospitality to them?

Invite them out to lunch. Invite them over to your home for lunch. Take time to visit with them. Look for ways to minister to them, like getting passes to a museum or local places. Make them feel welcome and part of the group. Host a dinner and show them honor for their labors on behalf of the gospel.

9. What else do the Scriptures teach about hospitality? See Matt. 25:34-46; Acts 16:15; Rom. 12:10-13; 1 Tim. 3:2; 5:9-10; Titus 1:7-8; Heb. 13:2, 16; 1 Pet. 4:7-11; 3 Jn. 5-8.

**Matthew 25:34–46** “Then the King will say to those on His right, ‘Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. ‘For I was hungry, and you gave Me something to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me something to drink; I was a stranger, and you invited Me in; naked, and you clothed Me; I was sick, and you visited Me; I was in prison, and you came to Me.’ “Then the righteous will answer Him, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry, and feed You, or thirsty, and give You something to drink? ‘And when did we see You a stranger, and invite You in, or naked, and clothe You? ‘When did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?’ “The King will answer and say to them, ‘Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me.’ “Then He will also say to those on His left, ‘Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was hungry, and you gave Me nothing to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me nothing to drink; I was a stranger, and you did not invite Me in; naked, and you did not clothe Me; sick, and in prison, and you did not visit Me.’ “Then they themselves also will answer, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not take care of You?’ “Then He will answer them, ‘Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.’ “These will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”

*When we practice hospitality, we are showing that same love and care toward the Lord. How incredible is that?!*

**Acts 16:15** And when she and her household had been baptized, she urged us, saying, “If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house and stay.” And she prevailed upon us.

*One of the first fruits of Lydia’s salvation was to show hospitality. She also wasn’t apathetic about it. She was insistent that she be allowed to express her love and gratitude to the Lord and the saints in this tangible way.*

**Romans 12:10–13** Be devoted to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one another in honor; not lagging behind in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; rejoicing in hope, persevering in tribulation, devoted to prayer, contributing to the needs of the saints, practicing hospitality.

*In this list of ways we can love one another, the list culminates with hospitality. But it’s not just a one-time deal but a habit, a continual, going back to and doing over and over again kind of thing.*

**1 Timothy 3:2** An overseer, then, must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable, able to teach,  
*Elders must practice this loving service to the brethren. They must be known by it and characterized by gracious, unselfish hospitality.*

**1 Timothy 5:9–10** A widow is to be put on the list only if she is not less than sixty years old, having been the wife of one man, having a reputation for good works;



and if she has brought up children, if she has shown hospitality to strangers, if she has washed the saints' feet, if she has assisted those in distress, and if she has devoted herself to every good work.

*Worthy widows who are to receive help from the church are also to be known as women who practice hospitality—even to strangers.*

**Titus 1:7–8** For the overseer must be above reproach as God's steward, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not addicted to wine, not pugnacious, not fond of sordid gain, but hospitable, loving what is good, sensible, just, devout, self-controlled,

*Same as 1 Timothy 3:2.*

**Hebrews 13:2** Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by this some have entertained angels without knowing it.

*We are not to neglect this specific and needful way of loving the brethren (Hebrews 13:1). There's even a bit of motivation thrown in to consider that our love toward strangers may actually be serving angels. How crazy cool is that?!*

**Hebrews 13:16** And do not neglect doing good and sharing, for with such sacrifices God is pleased.

*Not to neglect doing good, sharing. Hospitality it all that and more. These are sacrifices, of dying to self, that brings pleasure to God.*

**1 Peter 4:7–11** The end of all things is near; therefore, be of sound judgment and sober spirit for the purpose of prayer. Above all, keep fervent in your love for one another, because love covers a multitude of sins. Be hospitable to one another without complaint. As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. Whoever speaks, is to do so as one who is speaking the utterances of God; whoever serves is to do so as one who is serving by the strength which God supplies; so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belongs the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

*Right after the admonition to fervently love one another, we're to show hospitality to one another—without complaint. Oy! That really hits us where we live since we may show hospitality, but then we complain about it so others will know how hard we are working. Owie!*

**3 John 5–8** Beloved, you are acting faithfully in whatever you accomplish for the brethren, and especially when they are strangers; and they have testified to your love before the church. You will do well to send them on their way in a manner worthy of God. For they went out for the sake of the Name, accepting nothing from the Gentiles. Therefore we ought to support such men, so that we may be fellow workers with the truth.

*There's a commendation to serving the brethren, especially toward strangers—you are acting faithfully. You do well. You show you are a fellow worker with the truth.*

- a. What aspect of what you have just studied do you need to apply in your life?

Whoa! I am so encouraged and convicted to consider my attitudes in showing

hospitality. I think for me right now, the admonition to persevere and keep doing it is much needed for my heart.

- b. Can you think of someone who excels in the area you are struggling in? Consider meeting with them and glean wisdom in how they practice hospitality.

Yep! Such a blessing to consider how faithfully they serve the saints without complaint—dying to self.

10. Who are we to remember in verse 3?  
Remember the prisoners. And those who are ill-treated.

11. What attitudes are to accompany our “remembering” (verse 3)? See also 10:32-34.

We are to remember them *as if we were in prison with them*. This adds wings to our remembrance and changes our focus. It becomes more intentional and purposeful. Definitely more constant and caring. Hebrews 10:32-34 reveals that tender-hearted remembrance in their sympathy toward those in prison. We are also to remember those who are ill-treated. They may not be in prison, but are suffering, just the same.

**Hebrews 10:32–34** But *remember* the former days, when, after being enlightened, you endured a great conflict of sufferings, partly by being made a public spectacle through reproaches and tribulations, and partly by becoming sharers with those who were so treated. For *you showed sympathy to the prisoners* and accepted joyfully the seizure of your property, knowing that you have for yourselves a better possession and a lasting one.

12. What kinds of actions are implied when we remember those in verse 3? There’s a looking for ways to care for others in tangible actions. There’s a proactive, intentional looking for ways to be a blessing. It’s tender-hearted and a loving covering over of sins, differences of opinion, grievances.

- a. How did the New Testament saints minister to one another in this situation? See Acts 16:31-34; 24:23; 27:3; 1 Cor. 12:25-26; Phil. 4:14-16; Col. 4:18; 2 Tim. 1:16-18.

**Acts 16:31–34** They said, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household.” And they spoke the word of the Lord to him together with all who were in his house. And he took them that very hour of the night and washed their wounds, and immediately he was baptized, he and all his household. And he brought them into his house and set food before them, and rejoiced greatly, having believed in God with his whole household.

**Acts 24:23** Then he gave orders to the centurion for him to be kept in custody and yet have some freedom, and not to prevent any of his friends from ministering to him.

**Acts 27:3** The next day we put in at Sidon; and Julius treated Paul with consideration and allowed him to go to his friends and receive care.

**1 Corinthians 12:25–26** so that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it.

**Philippians 4:14–16** Nevertheless, you have done well to share with me in my affliction. You yourselves also know, Philippians, that at the first preaching of the gospel, after I left Macedonia, no church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving but you alone; for even in Thessalonica you sent a gift more than once for my needs.

**Colossians 4:18** I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand. Remember my imprisonment. Grace be with you.

**2 Timothy 1:16–18** The Lord grant mercy to the house of Onesiphorus, for he often refreshed me and was not ashamed of my chains; but when he was in Rome, he eagerly searched for me and found me—the Lord grant to him to find mercy from the Lord on that day—and you know very well what services he rendered at Ephesus.

13. You may not know some literal prisoners, but you may know some who are being ill-treated because of their faith in Jesus Christ. Write down that person's name and a specific way you intend to minister to them this week.

14. What are some issues the early church faced regarding marriage? See 1 Cor. 7:1-2, 5, 8-9, 26-28, 32-35, 39; Eph. 5:3-6; 1 Tim. 3:2, 12; 4:1-3; 5:11-15.

**1 Corinthians 7:1–2** Now concerning the things about which you wrote, it is good for a man not to touch a woman. But because of immoralities, each man is to have his own wife, and each woman is to have her own husband. *Immorality.*

**1 Corinthians 7:5** Stop depriving one another, except by agreement for a time, so that you may devote yourselves to prayer, and come together again so that Satan will not tempt you because of your lack of self-control. *Misunderstanding of the marriage relationship and how to serve the Lord.*

**1 Corinthians 7:8–9** But I say to the unmarried and to widows that it is good for them if they remain even as I. But if they do not have self-control, let them marry; for it is better to marry than to burn with passion. *Holiness doesn't come from abstinence if not called to singleness.*

**1 Corinthians 7:26–28** I think then that this is good in view of the present distress, that it is good for a man to remain as he is. Are you bound to a wife? Do not seek to be released. Are you released from a wife? Do not seek a wife. But if you marry, you have not sinned; and if a virgin marries, she has not sinned. Yet such will have trouble in this life, and I am trying to spare you. *Unsure of how to move forward in life while undergoing persecution.*

**1 Corinthians 7:32–35** But I want you to be free from concern. One who is unmarried is concerned about the things of the Lord, how he may please the

Lord; but one who is married is concerned about the things of the world, how he may please his wife, and his interests are divided. The woman who is unmarried, and the virgin, is concerned about the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and spirit; but one who is married is concerned about the things of the world, how she may please her husband. This I say for your own benefit; not to put a restraint upon you, but to promote what is appropriate and to secure undistracted devotion to the Lord. *The focus of a spouse and how we need to order our lives.*

**1 Corinthians 7:39** A wife is bound as long as her husband lives; but if her husband is dead, she is free to be married to whom she wishes, only in the Lord. *Misunderstandings about divorce and remarriage.*

**Ephesians 5:3–6** But immorality or any impurity or greed must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints; and there must be no filthiness and silly talk, or coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks. For this you know with certainty, that no immoral or impure person or covetous man, who is an idolater, has an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. *Immorality.*

**1 Timothy 3:2** An overseer, then, must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, *The need for fidelity in marriage and the example of it.*

**1 Timothy 3:12** Deacons must be husbands of only one wife, and good managers of their children and their own households. *The need for fidelity in marriage and the example of it.*

**1 Timothy 4:1–3** But the Spirit explicitly says that in later times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons, by means of the hypocrisy of liars seared in their own conscience as with a branding iron, men who forbid marriage and advocate abstaining from foods which God has created to be gratefully shared in by those who believe and know the truth. *False teachers saying God is more pleased with singleness than marriage.*

**1 Timothy 5:11–15** But refuse to put younger widows on the list, for when they feel sensual desires in disregard of Christ, they want to get married, thus incurring condemnation, because they have set aside their previous pledge. At the same time they also learn to be idle, as they go around from house to house; and not merely idle, but also gossips and busybodies, talking about things not proper to mention. Therefore, I want younger widows to get married, bear children, keep house, and give the enemy no occasion for reproach; for some have already turned aside to follow Satan. *Misunderstanding about how to live as a married woman and as a widow—what a reverent life looks like.*

15. What issues seem to be plaguing the Hebrew believers (verse 4)?

It seems there were immorality issues and not an understanding of how to be devoted in marriage to our spouse.

16. Why will God judge fornicators and adulterers? See 1 Cor. 6:9-11; Eph. 5:1-10; Titus 3:3-7.

**1 Corinthians 6:9–11** Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of God. Such were some of you; but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God.

**Ephesians 5:1–10** Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children; and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma. But immorality or any impurity or greed must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints; and there must be no filthiness and silly talk, or coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks. For this you know with certainty, that no immoral or impure person or covetous man, who is an idolater, has an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. Therefore do not be partakers with them; for you were formerly darkness, but now you are Light in the Lord; walk as children of Light (for the fruit of the Light consists in all goodness and righteousness and truth), trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord.

**Titus 3:3–7** For we also once were foolish ourselves, disobedient, deceived, enslaved to various lusts and pleasures, spending our life in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another. But when the kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind appeared, He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by His grace we would be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

All sin is judged, not just fornication and adultery. The focus may be on those who practice it, who won't turn from it, and prove they aren't actually in the faith. It may also deal with believers who won't turn from their sin—which God always faithfully judges and brings us to repentance about.

17. What are some ways we can honor marriage and keep it undefiled?

Be faithful to our spouse. A one man woman and vice versa. Be purposeful in loving our husbands and making them our priority. Be faithful to eagerly engage in intimacy in our marriages and see to it that we minister to our husbands in this way.

18. What command are we given in verse 5?

Make sure your character is free from the love of money.

19. Define *character* (ESV *life*; NKJV *conduct*; NIV *lives* [Strong's #5158]).



Manner, way of life, deportment. The way in which you live. Moral disposition. Behavior.

20. What are the dangers of falling into this sin? See Luke 8:14; 12:15-21; 16:13-14; Col. 3:5; 1 Tim. 6:9-10.

**Luke 8:14** “The seed which fell among the thorns, these are the ones who have heard, and as they go on their way they are choked with worries and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to maturity. *Caring for things of this world chokes out and diminishes our hunger for heaven.*

**Luke 12:15–21** Then He said to them, “Beware, and be on your guard against every form of greed; for not even when one has an abundance does his life consist of his possessions.” And He told them a parable, saying, “The land of a rich man was very productive. “And he began reasoning to himself, saying, ‘What shall I do, since I have no place to store my crops?’ “Then he said, ‘This is what I will do: I will tear down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. ‘And I will say to my soul, “Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years to come; take your ease, eat, drink and be merry.” ’ “But God said to him, ‘You fool! This very night your soul is required of you; and now who will own what you have prepared?’ “So is the man who stores up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.” *We are commanded not to be greedy or worried about our money, especially when we think that money is a way to security.*

**Luke 16:13–14** “No servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.” Now the Pharisees, who were lovers of money, were listening to all these things and were scoffing at Him. *We have to choose between loving God and loving our money. We can’t do both.*

**Colossians 3:5** Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry. *Greed is idolatry. It is making money our god we want to worship.*

**1 Timothy 6:9–10** But those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a snare and many foolish and harmful desires which plunge men into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs. *Desiring riches above God can tempt us and will ensnare us in all sorts of ways that can bring ruin and destruction. There is evil within this love of money and only produces grief in our hearts.*

21. What is the antidote to this deadly poison according to verse 5?  
Be content with what you have.

22. How can you train your character to be free from the love of money? See verse 5. By remembering that Jesus Himself is with us. We don’t need the security that comes from money because we have all the security our heart needs in Jesus. We need to rehearse these truths to our hearts and live them out by faith.



- a. What else do you learn from the following verses? See Matt. 6:25-34; Phil. 4:10-14; 1 Tim. 6:6-8.

**Matthew 6:25–34** “For this reason I say to you, do not be worried about your life, as to what you will eat or what you will drink; nor for your body, as to what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? “Look at the birds of the air, that they do not sow, nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth much more than they? “And who of you by being worried can add a single hour to his life? “And why are you worried about clothing? Observe how the lilies of the field grow; they do not toil nor do they spin, yet I say to you that not even Solomon in all his glory clothed himself like one of these. “But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace, will He not much more clothe you? You of little faith! “Do not worry then, saying, ‘What will we eat?’ or ‘What will we drink?’ or ‘What will we wear for clothing?’ “For the Gentiles eagerly seek all these things; for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. “But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. “So do not worry about tomorrow; for tomorrow will care for itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own. *Don’t worry about tomorrow, about your life, about what you’re going to wear or eat because the Lord knows what you need. Worry won’t help.*

**Philippians 4:10–14** But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at last you have revived your concern for me; indeed, you were concerned before, but you lacked opportunity. Not that I speak from want, for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am. I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need. I can do all things through Him who strengthens me. Nevertheless, you have done well to share with me in my affliction. *We can learn contentment and most likely it will be learned in going without rather than enjoying all kinds of bounty, though there is a kind of contentment we need to learn in prosperity.*

**1 Timothy 6:6–8** But godliness actually is a means of great gain when accompanied by contentment. For we have brought nothing into the world, so we cannot take anything out of it either. If we have food and covering, with these we shall be content. *Godliness must be content as well. Be content with food and covering.*

23. Think about what you learn about God in verses 5-6. Why are those truths about God essential to understand if you want to be content in this life?  
He makes sure we know these truths. He wants us to stand firm in them and be changed by them. He will never leave us. He will never forsake us. He is our helper. We don’t need to fear.

24. What clues in verses 5-6 hint at the position these Hebrew believers were in

because of their faith? Why would this admonishment be an encouragement to them?

“What can man do to me?”

Needed the encouragement that they would never be left alone by the Lord.

Be content with what you have—however little it may be.

They so needed to know that the Lord was with them in their trials.

25. Here is a context question: What do the commands of Heb. 13:1-6 have to do with 12:28-29? How does that motivate you to apply these commands more faithfully in your own life?

Because we serve a living, holy and unchanging God, we are to serve Him gratefully and wholeheartedly. Hebrews 13:1-6 is the outworking of our love and devotion to Him.

I WILL NEVER LEAVE YOU, NOR WILL I EVER FORSAKE YOU.

THE LORD IS MY HELPER, I WILL NOT BE AFRAID.  
WHAT SHALL MAN DO TO ME?

## Hebrews Part Two

### Lesson #27, Chapter 13:7-16

#### TEACHER'S GUIDE

Keep seeking the Lord for His help as you study His Word. You'll be so glad you did!

1. What are we to do according to verse 7?  
Remember those who led you.
2. List everything you learn about "those" you are to remember from verse 7.  
We are to remember those who led us.  
They did lead us.  
They spoke God's Word to us.  
We are to imitate their faith.  
We are to imitate them because we've observed their conduct.  
Their conduct resulted in a good testimony.
3. Who is like that in your own life? What results of their conduct have borne fruit in you? How do you imitate their faith? Consider taking some time right now to call or write that person to encourage them in the way God has used them in your life.  
The person who leads me and speaks God's Word to me the most is my hubby. I'm so thankful for his consistent, clear, unswerving devotion to teach God's Word, God's way, according to God's will without inserting his ego or plans into it. He is consistent in living upon the Word of God, going to the Word of God, seeking the Word of God for all things. I'm so thankful for him!

One person who has been hugely instrumental in my more recent years has been Kris Goertzen. Her intentional and give-it-all-for-Jesus faith strengthens and motivates me to live on a higher, more heavenly plane. I love how she denies herself for the sake of others and how she enthusiastically jumps in to love someone—even someone who is difficult because Jesus placed that woman in her path. I definitely want to imitate her faith.

4. What was the foundation of those godly leader's faith? See 2 Tim. 1:13; 3:15; Rev. 14:12.  
**2 Timothy 1:13** Retain *the standard of sound words* which you have heard from me, in the faith and love which are in Christ Jesus.  
**2 Timothy 3:15** and that from childhood you have known *the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation* through faith which is in Christ Jesus.  
**Revelation 14:12** Here is the perseverance of the saints who *keep the commandments of God and their faith in Jesus*.

Sound words that come from the Word of God which they implement and obey in their lives.

5. What do you learn about Jesus Christ in verse 8?  
He is the same today as He was yesterday, and He'll be the same tomorrow as He is today and was yesterday.
6. What are the Hebrew believers cautioned against (verse 9)? What reason is given?  
Don't be carried away by varied or strange teaching.  
Because it's good for the heart to be strengthened by grace and not by foods—which when they occupy us so much, don't even benefit us spiritually.

7. What dangers come from paying attention to such teaching? See Acts 20:28-30; Rom. 16:17-19; Col. 2:8, 16-23; 1 Tim. 4:1-5; Heb. 9:9-10.

**Acts 20:28–30** “Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. “I know that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, *not sparing the flock*; and from among your own selves men will arise, *speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples* after them.

*Danger arises from false teachers who only care about themselves. They scatter a flock and devour those who are weak with their poor or false teaching.*

**Romans 16:17–19** Now I urge you, brethren, *keep your eye on those who cause dissensions and hindrances contrary to the teaching which you learned, and turn away from them. For such men are slaves, not of our Lord Christ but of their own appetites; and by their smooth and flattering speech they deceive the hearts of the unsuspecting.* For the report of your obedience has reached to all; therefore I am rejoicing over you, but I want you to be wise in what is good and innocent in what is evil. *There is a danger of being terribly deceived by false teachers. They captivate by their smooth and flattering speech.*

**Colossians 2:8** See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ. *False teaching holds us hostage and deceives us.*

**Colossians 2:16–23** Therefore no one is to act as your judge in regard to food or drink or in respect to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath day— things which are a mere shadow of what is to come; but the substance belongs to Christ. Let no one keep defrauding you of your prize by delighting in self-abasement and the worship of the angels, taking his stand on visions he has seen, inflated without cause by his fleshly mind, and not holding fast to the head, from whom the entire body, being supplied and held together by the joints and ligaments, grows with a growth which is from God. If you have died with Christ to the elementary principles of the world, why, as if you were living in the world, do you submit yourself to decrees, such as, “Do not handle, do not taste, do not touch!” (which all refer to things destined to perish with use)—in accordance with the commandments and teachings of men? These are matters which have, to be sure, the appearance of wisdom in self-made religion and self-abasement and severe treatment of the body, but are of no value against fleshly indulgence.

*Misguided and false teaching filled with dos and don'ts has no value against the flesh.*

**1 Timothy 4:1–5** But the Spirit explicitly says that in later times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons, by means of the hypocrisy of liars seared in their own conscience as with a branding iron, men who forbid marriage and advocate abstaining from foods which God has created to be gratefully shared in by those who believe and know the truth. For everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with gratitude; for it is sanctified by means of the word of God and prayer. *False teaching can lead the unsuspecting astray so that they fall away from the faith.*

**Hebrews 9:9–10** which is a symbol for the present time. Accordingly both gifts and sacrifices are offered which cannot make the worshiper perfect in conscience, since they relate only to food and drink and various washings, regulations for the body imposed until a time of reformation. *Lists of dos and don'ts have no power over the flesh and cannot make us perfect in conscience.*

8. What is the danger of trying to strengthen your Christian walk with food or anything else other than grace according to Hebrews 13:8 and the other verses we just examined?

There is no benefit. Focusing on lists of dos and don'ts does not heal our hearts, make us holy, or draw us into deeper and better fellowship with the Lord. They hinder and harm us and leave us in greater danger than before.

9. Now let's look at verse 8 again. What is the significance of that information about Jesus Christ stuck in between the commands of verses 7 and 9? *Context, context, context.*

The context is about consistency. Nothing has changed and nothing should change even if the Hebrew believers' circumstances change. They have the example of those who spoke the Word of God to them—their message was the same message as those who came before them. Jesus Himself is the same. And then in verse 9 we have the admonition not to pursue *new* things. The information about Jesus in verse 8 is the glue between verses 7 and 9. Jesus' character, nature, purpose, and will do not, have not, nor will not change, so we can keep teaching the same old message in the same old way, while living out and clinging to that old message, disdaining what is new or deviates from the same old message.

10. While continuing in the same vein of thought from verse 9, the author now introduces some new concepts in verse 10. First, identify what kind of people fit into the “we” category. Next, identify what people fit into the “serve the tabernacle” category.

The “we” people are the believers who have hoped in Christ alone for salvation. The “those who serve the tabernacle” people are those who live by the law of Moses without hoping in Jesus for their salvation and cleansing. Those who

serve the tabernacle are the Jews who don't believe in Jesus as Messiah, even though they may be the Levites and priests—the most privileged in Jewish society.

- a. Now, consider what kind of altar “we” have. See 9:11-14; 10:4, 14; 12:28; and 13:9.

**Hebrews 9:11–14** But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things to come, He entered through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this creation; and not through the blood of goats and calves, but through His own blood, He entered the holy place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption. For if the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling those who have been defiled sanctify for the cleansing of the flesh, how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

**Hebrews 10:4** For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.

**Hebrews 10:14** For by one offering He has perfected for all time those who are sanctified.

**Hebrews 12:28** Therefore, since we receive a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us show gratitude, by which we may offer to God an acceptable service with reverence and awe;

**Hebrews 13:9** Do not be carried away by varied and strange teachings; for it is good for the heart to be strengthened by grace, not by foods, through which those who were so occupied were not benefited.

They have an altar for the blood of bulls and goats which has value to cleanse the flesh, but cannot cleanse the conscience (9:11-14). They have an altar that cannot take away sins (10:4). They have an altar based on foods that will not strengthen their hearts. They are not benefitted from those deeds (13:9).

We have an altar that resides in that greater and more perfect tabernacle (9:11), not made with hands. We have an altar that cleanses our conscience from dead works to serve the living God (9:14). We have an altar where the sacrifice cleanses us for ALL time (10:14). We have an altar that cannot be shaken because it resides in that heavenly tabernacle (12:28). This altar also allows anyone who places their faith in Jesus to serve at that altar and offer their sacrificial worship. There is not a need for an intermediary like the priests were to Israel (12:28). We have an altar that benefits our souls because it strengthens our hearts by grace (13:9).

- b. Those who serve the tabernacle have no right to eat from our altar. Why is that? (1 Cor. 9:13; 10:18 will help provide insight.)



**1 Corinthians 9:13** Do you not know that those who perform sacred services eat the food of the temple, and those who attend regularly to the altar have their share from the altar?

**1 Corinthians 10:18** Look at the nation Israel; are not those who eat the sacrifices sharers in the altar?

If you share in the earthly tabernacle's sacrifices and rely on those offerings for sanctification and salvation, then you cannot also partake from that heavenly altar. Whatever "altar" we share in, that is the altar we are looking to for salvation and sanctification. Those who have not turned from works to place their faith in the once for all, finished work of Christ have no right to "share" in that altar while not leaving the former one. The author of Hebrews is reminding the believers of the choice that all men must make in following Jesus. We must "leave all" and follow Him.

**Matthew 16:24** Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me.

**Mark 8:34** And He summoned the crowd with His disciples, and said to them, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me.

11. What choice and warning were being presented in verse 10 to those who still wanted to cling to Judaism? What encouragement was given to those who were clinging to Jesus?

*Warning:* They have no right to eat from Christ's altar if they cling to the old covenant ways.

*Choice:* They need to choose whether or not they will follow Christ and share in His altar or whether they will reject Him and go back to the law and the old covenant.

*Encouragement:* For those who were clinging to Christ, there was the reminder that they have the right to eat at Christ's altar—to share in it, to partake of His sacrifice. Just as the priests and Levites were able to share in the sacrifices and offerings for their food and maintenance, so we too are sustained by sharing in and serving at Christ's altar.

12. What phrase is repeated in verses 11-13? How does that repetition provide a clue about the point the author is making?

Outside the gate, outside the camp is repeated and used in each of those three verses. Well, it obviously shows that he wants them to understand and know this truth.

Verse 11 is a real-life example of that the carcasses of the sin offerings are taken *outside the camp*.

Verse 12 the author begins the comparison between the real-life animal offerings being taken outside the camp and Jesus, the perfect, all-sufficient sin offering being taken *outside the gate*. Interesting to note that the animals in verse 11 were taken outside after they had suffered inside the temple, while in verse 12

Jesus suffered outside the gate for a purpose, so He might sanctify the people. Verse 13 the author then uses that to encourage the believers to join in suffering with Jesus—to identify with Him and be known as His followers.

13. Where does our altar reside according to verses 10-13? Where does the altar of those who serve the tabernacle reside, according to verses 10-13?

Their altar resides in the Holy of holies while our “altar” resides with Jesus, who is outside the gate, which is the place of reproach.

**Therefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people through His own blood, suffered outside the gate.** I do not think the analogy can be pressed any further. It is simply a picture of Christians, following their Lord, separating themselves from the things of sin. As our Lord was crucified outside the walls of the city of Jerusalem, so we are to be spiritually outside the walls of sinning people. [John F. MacArthur Jr., [Hebrews](#), MacArthur New Testament Commentary (Chicago: Moody Press, 1983), 441.]

14. How do verses 10-13 illustrate the cost that every person must count if they are going to be followers of Christ? See also Matt. 10:24-25; 16:24-26; 2 Cor. 5:15; 2 Tim. 2:3-4.

Verses 10-13 with the repeated phrase of “outside the camp/gate” is making the point that we need to be willing and ready to suffer the reproach and humiliation and persecution that Christ endured. By going out to Him, so to speak, they are aligning themselves with Him, no matter the cost.

**“So, let us go out to Him”** This is a key verse in the book. It is a PRESENT MIDDLE (deponent) SUBJUNCTIVE, which speaks of continuous action and adds an element of contingency (this is the final admonition and warning against “shrinking back”). Believers need to publicly identify with Him and bear His reproach regardless of the consequences. This is the clear call for these “sheltered” synagogue believers to move into the full light of Great Commission Christianity (cf. Matt. 28:19–20; Acts 1:8). [Robert James Utley, [The Superiority of the New Covenant: Hebrews](#), vol. Volume 10, Study Guide Commentary Series (Marshall, Texas: Bible Lessons International, 1999), 139.]

Make sure we read these verses out loud with a bit of silence afterward to emphasize the importance of what they are teaching us.

**Matthew 10:24–25** “A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a slave above his master. “It is enough for the disciple that he become like his teacher, and the slave like his master. If they have called the head of the house Beelzebul, how much more will they malign the members of his household!

**Matthew 16:24–26** Then Jesus said to His disciples, “If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me. “For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. “For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his

soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?

**2 Corinthians 5:15** and He died for all, so that they who live might no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died and rose again on their behalf.

**2 Timothy 2:3–4** Suffer hardship with me, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. No soldier in active service entangles himself in the affairs of everyday life, so that he may please the one who enlisted him as a soldier.

15. Each day brings with it a call to “go out to Him outside the camp, bearing His reproach.” Are you prepared to go out to Him today? What are some ways you prepare your heart to go out to Him?

Prepare by spending time with Him, worshiping Him, loving, and praising Him. Prepare by confessing sin and removing any encumbrance to following Him. Then I can go out to Him by talking about Him to those I meet, in obeying Him, in living each day for Him. I must be willing to suffer or give up all in following Him. He did for my sake and now asks me to follow Him.

16. Explain the connection between verses 13 and 14.  
The connection is about shunning reproach and going outside the camp to identify yourself with Jesus. As you do this, it communicates that you are seeking that lasting city which is to come. When we go outside the camp to Jesus (leaving behind whatever encumbers us and holds us back from following Him) then we are seeking the city which is to come. We understand the world’s “city” has no value for our souls.

17. As we identify ourselves with Christ and seek that city which is to come, how do we follow in the footsteps of the “by faith” people we studied in Chapter 11? See 11:13-16, 26, 39-40.

**Hebrews 11:13–16** All these died in faith, without receiving the promises, but having seen them and having welcomed them from a distance, and having confessed that they were strangers and exiles on the earth. For those who say such things make it clear that they are seeking a country of their own. And indeed if they had been thinking of that country from which they went out, they would have had opportunity to return. But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for He has prepared a city for them.

**Hebrews 11:26** considering the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for he was looking to the reward.

**Hebrews 11:39–40** And all these, having gained approval through their faith, did not receive what was promised, because God had provided something better for us, so that apart from us they would not be made perfect.

The “by faith” people of Hebrews 11 also looked in faith to that city which is to come. In Hebrews 11:13-16 they died without receiving the promises, but made it clear that they were still seeking a better country, that heavenly country. God is pleased with this intentional, purposeful, faith-filled choosing. Moses was another

example of looking ahead to the reward, rather than looking for one in this life. The “by faith” people didn’t receive the promises but looked forward to the day when those promises would be fulfilled in Jesus Christ. We too can follow their example and focus on what is to come rather than what is, not looking to the past or even the present, but to the future.

18. How would a daily reminder of “what is to come” versus “here” transform your life? How can you remind yourself of this fact *daily*?

If I really lived this out daily, hourly, I would be more steadfast, calmer, resting the Lord, enjoying the unfolding of His perfect plan. I need to post these verses or similar ones to remind me to look forward to heaven. I can meditate on these verses that also remind me of my heavenly home:

**Colossians 3:1–3** Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth. For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God.

**Philippians 3:12–14** Not that I have already obtained it or have already become perfect, but I press on so that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus. Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

**2 Corinthians 5:14–15** For the love of Christ controls us, having concluded this, that one died for all, therefore all died; and He died for all, so that they who live might no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died and rose again on their behalf.

**Psalms 73:25** Whom have I in heaven but You? And besides You, I desire nothing on earth.

**2 Corinthians 4:16–18** Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day. For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison, while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.

**2 Corinthians 5:8** we are of good courage, I say, and prefer rather to be absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord.

**2 Corinthians 5:14–15** For the love of Christ controls us, having concluded this, that one died for all, therefore all died; and He died for all, so that they who live might no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died and rose again on their behalf.

19. What are we to do according to verse 15? How is this possible according to verse 15?

Offer up—continually—a sacrifice of praise to God. The phrase “sacrifice of praise to God” is defined by the next one—the fruit of lips that give thanks to His

name. How cool is that?! Yet this act of worship is only possible *through Him*.

- a. Why would we do this (verses 10-14)?

We worship the Lord with grateful, exulting hearts because the blood of bulls and goats cannot cleanse us. Jesus' sacrifice provided perfect, complete, ongoing, and sufficient atonement for our sins. We worship because our great High Priest suffered for us personally, facing reproach, persecution, and humiliation in bearing our sins. In response we face the same in proclaiming our allegiance to Him. We worship joyfully, gratefully because this world is not all there is—thankfully! We look forward to that heavenly city when we will be united with Christ and see Him in His kingly glory.

20. What fruit is produced in a believer (verse 15)? How often is this to be given to the Lord according to verse 15?

The fruit is on our lips—so our words and the thoughts of our hearts that produce the words. These words are grateful, thankful, worshipful, praising anthems of worship to God for all He has done.

How often? Only *continually*. 🙄 Oh Lord, how often I fail in keeping this command! Forgive me for my negligent and sporadic joy in Your works of grace and wonder toward me and for all those who know the Lord Jesus as Savior and Lord.

- a. How are you doing in that area? See also Ps. 145:10; Eph. 5:4, 20; Col. 3:15-17; 1 Thess. 5:18.

**Psalm 145:10** All Your works shall give thanks to You, O LORD, And Your godly ones shall bless You.

**Ephesians 5:4** and there must be no filthiness and silly talk, or coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks.

**Ephesians 5:20** always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father;

**Colossians 3:15–17** Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body; and be thankful. Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God. Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father.

**1 Thessalonians 5:18** in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

- b. Can you think of some specific ways you could implement this command more faithfully?

I can't do it faithfully unless I am leaning on the Lord, living with my eyes on Him, relying on Him for help.

21. We are told in verse 16 not to neglect or forget doing good or sharing, which means we need to make this area of our life a priority. What do you learn about doing good and sharing from the following Scriptures: Ps. 37:3; Acts 20:35; Gal. 6:10; Eph. 4:28; 1 Thess. 5:15; 1 Tim. 6:17-19; Heb. 13:1-2; James 1:27; 1 Jn. 3:17-18?

**Psalms 37:3** Trust in the LORD and do good; Dwell in the land and cultivate faithfulness.

**Acts 20:35** "In everything I showed you that by working hard in this manner you must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He Himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.' "

**Galatians 6:10** So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith.

**Ephesians 4:28** He who steals must steal no longer; but rather he must labor, performing with his own hands what is good, so that he will have something to share with one who has need.

**1 Thessalonians 5:15** See that no one repays another with evil for evil, but always seek after that which is good for one another and for all people.

**1 Timothy 6:17–19** Instruct those who are rich in this present world not to be conceited or to fix their hope on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly supplies us with all things to enjoy. Instruct them to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, storing up for themselves the treasure of a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is life indeed.

**Hebrews 13:1–2** Let love of the brethren continue. Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by this some have entertained angels without knowing it.

**James 1:27** Pure and undefiled religion in the sight of our God and Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world.

**1 John 3:17–18** But whoever has the world's goods, and sees his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him? Little children, let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth.

- a. Can you think of some specific ways you could implement this command more faithfully?

22. Out of everything we have studied in this lesson, what excites you the most to think about or put into practice in your life? Why?

To live with my eyes on that heavenly city which is to come. Why? Because I can't wait to see Jesus, because this world has little to entice me, because I long for heaven, because I need that focus to help me live well on earth as long as God has me here.



The Christian's reason for leaving the camp of the world's sin and religion is not because he loves to be singular, but because Jesus did so; and the disciple must follow his Master. ~Charles Spurgeon<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Charles H. Spurgeon, *Morning and Evening: Daily Readings*, Complete and unabridged; New modern edition. (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2006), April 6 AM.

## Hebrews Part Two

### Lesson #28, Chapter 13:17-25

#### TEACHER'S GUIDE

As you finish this final lesson in the book of Hebrews, take time to thank the Lord for all He's taught you. Ask for His help to finish well.

1. The author of Hebrews continues to exhort the believers in godly living. How do the commands in the rest of the chapter flow from Hebrews 12:28-29?

**Hebrews 12:28–29** Therefore, since we receive a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us show gratitude, by which we may offer to God an acceptable service with reverence and awe; for our God is a consuming fire.

Since we have received this incredible kingdom that cannot be shaken, then my gratitude must spill out in love and obedience to the Lord. Truly, there should be nothing I am not willing to do out of love for Him, like obeying and submitting to my leaders, praying for leaders, to do good, to “bear” with exhortation.

2. How are we to respond to the leaders God has given us according to verse 17? Obey and submit to them. My obedience and submission allows them to lead with joy which is profitable for me.

- a. What else do the Scriptures say about how we are to respond to our leaders? See 1 Cor. 4:1; 16:16; 1 Thess. 5:12-13; 1 Pet. 5:5.

**1 Corinthians 4:1** Let a man regard us in this manner, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God.

**1 Corinthians 16:16** that you also be in subjection to such men and to everyone who helps in the work and labors.

**1 Thessalonians 5:12–13** But we request of you, brethren, that you appreciate those who diligently labor among you, and have charge over you in the Lord and give you instruction, and that you esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Live in peace with one another.

**1 Peter 5:5** You younger men, likewise, be subject to your elders; and all of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, for GOD IS OPPOSED TO THE PROUD, BUT GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE.

*Regard them as servants, be in subjection to those who work and labor among us, appreciate those who diligently labor, esteem them very highly, be subject to the elders and be humble toward one another.*

3. Why is such regard to be given to the spiritual leaders of the church? See verse 17.

Because they keep watch over our souls—as those who will give an account to God for their care. This also implies that they take this charge seriously and see it to it with faithfulness and diligence.

- a. What else do you learn about how the leaders are to care for the church from the following verses? See Acts 20:27-28, 31; 1 Cor. 4:2; 2 Tim. 2:2-6; James 3:1; 1 Pet. 5:1-4.

**Acts 20:27–28** “For I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole purpose of God. “Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.

*Faithful leaders don't shrink from declaring the whole purpose of God. They don't pick and choose what they like or want to implement. They trust the Lord that all His Word is good for growing in grace.*

**Acts 20:31** “Therefore be on the alert, remembering that night and day for a period of three years I did not cease to admonish each one with tears.

*Faithful leaders admonish lovingly, passionately, and persistently. They don't give up.*

**1 Corinthians 4:2** In this case, moreover, it is required of stewards that one be found trustworthy.

*Faithful leaders are stewards who are required to be trustworthy.*

**2 Timothy 2:2–6** The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also. Suffer hardship with me, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. No soldier in active service entangles himself in the affairs of everyday life, so that he may please the one who enlisted him as a soldier. Also if anyone competes as an athlete, he does not win the prize unless he competes according to the rules. The hard-working farmer ought to be the first to receive his share of the crops.

*Faithful leaders are faithful men who teach others who are faithful. They are like good soldiers, willing to suffer hardship. They don't entangle themselves in the affairs of everyday life because they desire to please their Master. They are like an athlete, seeking to do what is right, so they won't be disqualified from the race. They are like the farmer and work hard so they can gain the harvest.*

**James 3:1** Let not many of you become teachers, my brethren, knowing that as such we will incur a stricter judgment.

*Faithful leaders incur a stricter judgment for their teaching.*

**1 Peter 5:1–4** Therefore, I exhort the elders among you, as your fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ, and a partaker also of the glory that is to be revealed, shepherd the flock of God among you, exercising oversight not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to the will of God; and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness; nor yet as lording it over those allotted to your charge, but proving to be examples to the flock. And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.

*Faithful leaders shepherd the flock voluntarily according to the will of God. They aren't motivated by sordid gain. Instead, they serve eagerly as examples.*

4. When you obey the command in verse 17 what are the leaders then able to do? They can have joy in their ministry, rather than grief.

5. What kinds of actions or attitudes lead to not being able to profit from your leader's ministry?

On my part, holding a grudge, not liking them personally, being unforgiving, not respecting them, basically, all sinful responses and all things that God would have me repent of.

I may not be able to profit from my leaders if they aren't faithful to study, teach, or shepherd, yet this is something they must stand before God to give an account. If my leaders depart from the Scriptures, then I will have trouble profiting from them or if they aren't qualified or disqualify themselves in some way.

6. Would your leaders have joy or grief over your soul about how you are responding to them, to the teaching of the Word, or to life's ups and downs?

Oh, what a good question! May I bring joy and not grief to our leaders by my faith, trust, joy, and uncomplaining spirit so they have joy in shepherding me. May I express my regard better for their faithful labors!

7. The author asks for something that every wise leader knows he needs. What is it (verse 18)?

Prayer!!!! He wants prayer that he conduct himself honorably in all things. Amen and amen and amen!!!

- a. See Rom. 15:30-33; Eph. 6:19-20; Col. 4:2-4; 2 Thess. 3:1-2; and Heb. 13:18 for some specific ways to apply this command.

**Romans 15:30–33** Now I urge you, brethren, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, *to strive together with me in your prayers to God for me, that I may be rescued from those who are disobedient in Judea, and that my service for Jerusalem may prove acceptable to the saints; so that I may come to you in joy by the will of God and find refreshing rest in your company.* Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen.

**Ephesians 6:19–20** *and pray on my behalf, that utterance may be given to me in the opening of my mouth, to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in proclaiming it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.*

**Colossians 4:2–4** *Devote yourselves to prayer, keeping alert in it with an attitude of thanksgiving; praying at the same time for us as well, that God will open up to us a door for the word, so that we may speak forth the mystery of Christ, for which I have also been imprisoned; that I may make it clear in the way I ought to speak.*

**2 Thessalonians 3:1–2** Finally, brethren, *pray for us that the word of the Lord will spread rapidly and be glorified, just as it did also with you; and that we will be rescued from perverse and evil men; for not all have faith.*

**Hebrews 13:18** Pray for us, for we are sure *that we have a good conscience, desiring to conduct ourselves honorably in all things.*

8. One pastor jokingly stated, “You get what you pray for.” Though said with a smile, this statement is absolutely true. Are you faithfully applying this command to pray for your leaders?

I need to pray more!!! How distressing it is to consider how little I pray like the verses above for him. Oh Lord, please place this on my heart as a regular and ongoing desire, that I would follow through with it, and consider the privilege and solemn duty that it is to pray for my pastor.

9. Why would the author would make a statement like he did in verses 18-19? Because after writing verse 17, “Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they keep watch over your souls as those who will give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with grief, for this would be unprofitable for you.”, there is a profound sense of insufficiency for this weighty task in shepherding the sheep. Pastors need prayer!!! He had the sense that he’s trying to live with a good conscience toward God and men, and to conduct himself honorably, yet in the end, people can still find fault and criticize. We must live before the Lord alone for commendation so we can rest easy in our conscience.

- a. Paul made similar statements in his letters. What were some situations he faced when he spoke like that? See Acts 23:1; 2 Cor. 1:12; 1 Tim. 1:5.

**Acts 23:1** Paul, looking intently at the Council, said, “Brethren, *I have lived my life with a perfectly good conscience before God up to this day.*”

**2 Corinthians 1:12** For our proud confidence is this: *the testimony of our conscience, that in holiness and godly sincerity, not in fleshly wisdom but in the grace of God, we have conducted ourselves in the world, and especially toward you.*

**1 Timothy 1:5** But the *goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith.*

In the end, this is all we can do. We live before God. His commendation is the only one that matters. If He doesn’t fault us, then we can be at ease, even when men find many faults and quickly accuse us.

10. What do you learn about God’s character in verse 20? What do you learn from Rom. 15:33; 16:20; 1 Cor. 14:33; 2 Cor. 13:11; Phil. 4:9; 1 Thess. 5:23; 2 Thess. 3:16 about God?

**Hebrews 13:20** Now the God of peace, who brought up from the dead the great Shepherd of the sheep through the blood of the eternal covenant, even Jesus our Lord. *He is the God of peace. He is the primary mover and shaker, the One who with great power brought Jesus up from the dead. He is compassionate, mighty, just, holy, full of mercy, wrath, kindness, holiness, and love.*

**Romans 15:33** Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen. *He is the God of peace. He draws near. He is ever ready to help and aid His children.*

**Romans 16:20** The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The

grace of our Lord Jesus be with you. *He is the God of peace who wars with Satan. The God of peace will bring Satan's rule to an end. And that same God of peace generously allows His children to take part in the process of crushing Satan.*

**1 Corinthians 14:33** for God is not a God of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints. *The God of peace brings order out of confusion. The God of peace desires all churches to function in peace.*

**2 Corinthians 13:11** Finally, brethren, rejoice, be made complete, be comforted, be like-minded, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you. *Because He is the God of love and peace, we are to live just like Him in how we interact with the brethren.*

**Philippians 4:9** The things you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you. *The God of peace draws near. The God of peace is not far from His obedient children, which motivates me to live more obediently for so want the Lord to be near me!*

**1 Thessalonians 5:23** Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. *The God of peace, because He is at peace with us through Jesus, will sanctify us, that is, make us holy, setting us apart for His service.*

**2 Thessalonians 3:16** Now may the Lord of peace Himself continually grant you peace in every circumstance. The Lord be with you all! *The God of peace personally grants us peace in every circumstance.*

- a. How does understanding this part of God's character help you see His purpose in sending Christ to redeem mankind? See 1 Pet. 1:3-5.

**1 Peter 1:3-5** Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

Because He is the God of peace, then His character desires peace between God and man. He desires that a way be made for us in obtaining peace with Him. He went out of His way to obtain a way for peace between us and Him, all given in Jesus. All things in history leading up to the end of history show us that God desires peace. The end is all about establishing peace and putting an end to conflict, sin, chaos, and separation. Oh Father, thank YOU!!

11. Verses 20-21 are a benediction. What does the author want to impart to his readers in this blessing?

**Hebrews 13:20-21** Now the God of peace, who brought up from the dead the great Shepherd of the sheep through the blood of the eternal covenant, even Jesus our Lord, equip you in every good thing to do His will, working in us that



which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

The author wanted to convey that the God of peace, who raised Jesus from the dead, is ready and willing to give them all the help and aid they need to do His will. What a blessing for such burdened and weary saints. They needed to know that the Lord would help them.

12. Read other benedictions in the Bible: Num. 6:24-26; Acts 20:32; 2 Cor. 13:14; 1 Thess. 3:11-13; 2 Thess. 3:5; Heb. 13:25; Jude 24-25. Which one is your favorite and why?

**Numbers 6:24–26** The LORD bless you, and keep you; The LORD make His face shine on you, And be gracious to you; The LORD lift up His countenance on you, And give you peace.'

**Acts 20:32** "And now I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified.

**2 Corinthians 13:14** The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all.

**1 Thessalonians 3:11–13** Now may our God and Father Himself and Jesus our Lord direct our way to you; and may the Lord cause you to increase and abound in love for one another, and for all people, just as we also do for you; so that He may establish your hearts without blame in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all His saints.

**2 Thessalonians 3:5** May the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God and into the steadfastness of Christ.

**Hebrews 13:25** Grace be with you all.

**Jude 24–25** Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to make you stand in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy, to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen.

I think I'm drawn to both 1 Thessalonians 3:11-13 and Jude 24-25 because they are similar. I love the benediction of being able to stand blamelessly before the Lord.

13. How can the use of blessings be a potent way to encourage someone?  
It sums up the highest thoughts and hopes we might have for someone. To hear a benediction often feels as though the Lord were speaking through them directly to you. It pulls the thoughts and information together into one final push of warmth and favor.

14. What are some practical ways you can employ the use of blessings to those in your life?

Close in prayer that way. Close an email. Use it at the end of a counseling or

discipling session.

15. What insights do you gain about the author from verse 22?

**Hebrews 13:22** But I urge you, brethren, bear with this word of exhortation, for I have written to you briefly.

He is insistent and longing to know the brethren were heeding his words. He desires them to consider his loving letter. He knows it might be hard for them so urges them to “bear” with the letter. He thinks he’s written briefly!!!

16. Define *bear with* [Strong’s #430].

Either translated listen or bear with. To bear means to endure, suffer with. That is not to become impatient with him or his counsel. Wuest translates it, “And I beg of you, please, patiently permit the word of exhortation...”

a. Define *exhortation* [Strong’s #3874].

Word of exhortation refers to the entire letter. Exhortation comes from *paraklesis* which covers the gamut of encouragement, comfort, admonishment, urging, etc.

17. Why do we need to be reminded *to bear with exhortation*? See 2 Tim. 4:3; Heb. 3:12-13.

Because we might be tempted not to listen, to grow impatient, or to simply respond with unbelief. We need to learn to listen to and consider the words preached rather than discounting them and searching for something we like better. This is the one area in life that we don’t get to exercise our preferences. Think about that!

**2 Timothy 4:3** For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires,

**Hebrews 3:12–13** Take care, brethren, that there not be in any one of you an evil, unbelieving heart that falls away from the living God. But encourage one another day after day, as long as it is still called “Today,” so that none of you will be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.

18. When are you tempted to become impatient with exhortation from the Word?

What is the remedy for this impatience?

When I am in sin. When I pridefully think I know better. When I don’t respect the preacher. When my heart is hard, unbelieving, lacking faith.

Repentance. Always repentance. To humble myself under the mighty hand of God, remembering that God is opposed to the proud but gives grace to the humble (1 Peter 5:5-7).

**1 Peter 5:5–7** You younger men, likewise, be subject to your elders; and all of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, for GOD IS OPPOSED TO THE PROUD, BUT GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE. Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time, casting all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you.

19. After a few more closing remarks, the author of Hebrews finished his letter. What a letter! His words have challenged and changed us. Think about how this book has made an impact on you as you answer the questions that follow.

a. What truth or encouragement stands out to you from Chapter 8?

The incredible riches God gives in the New Covenant. Reading the promises of the New Covenant against the backdrop of the Old Covenant is magnificent and humbling!

b. What truth or encouragement stands out to you from Chapter 9?

I love the devoted nods to the Old Covenant and how it was just what was needed at the time until God peeled back time and inserted Christ into the timeline of history and instituted the New Covenant. The repeated idea that there has to be, there must be death in order for there to be forgiveness of sins is incredible and worth much meditation.

c. What truth or encouragement stands out to you from Chapter 10?

I love the preciseness and complexity of the argument in this chapter. The idea that God prepared a body for Jesus so He could offer Himself as a sacrifice is fabulous!

d. What truth or encouragement stands out to you from Chapter 11?

The idea that all these faithful saints died looking forward to God's promises. They died fully trusting though not receiving the promises in their fulfillment. How fabulous is that?! It makes me want to be like them and be as faithful in that way.

e. What truth or encouragement stands out to you from Chapter 12?

The comfort the author of Hebrews wants to communicate about the Father's good purposes toward His children in allowing and ordaining trials and affliction for them.

f. What truth or encouragement stands out to you from Chapter 13?

The "choose you this day who you will serve" call to go out to Jesus outside the gate and align yourself with Him.

20. What encouragement do you have for others who haven't yet studied the book of Hebrews? What do you want them to know?

I want them to know the book is full of riches for them. It's not the hard book many have thought it was. The truths unfold as the author of Hebrews slowly

makes his case that Jesus is better, more, and superior in every way for salvation. The depth and richness to the Father's plan is seen in how He planned and purposed the covenants and unveiled Jesus at the appointed time.

Now the God of peace, who brought up from the dead the great Shepherd of the sheep through the blood of the eternal covenant, even Jesus our Lord, equip you in every good thing to do His will, working in us that which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

Hebrews 13:20-21