

Hebrews

The Heart Of The Gospel



a study by Lee M. Ancell
in "Practical Christology"
2010 & revised in 2019

This is a general bible class booklet for the Coffs Coast Church of Christ in Coffs Harbour, New South Wales, in Australia. The author is Lee Marvin Ancell. 2019

One of the most famous opening lines of any novel from any time is that of Charles Dickens , A Tale Of Two Cities. This line stands out in my mind because a Tennessee preacher and university president, Athens Clay Pullias, used it as his opening line when I first started going to Lipscomb University. On the night when we all began to meet the professors and staff of the university, he spoke to me just like it was the most natural thing to do. I was greatly impressed, that Sunday night after Sunday evening services at Granny White Pike Church of Christ.

On Monday morning at my first Chapel service, he was the speaker and he started his talk by saying, **"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair, we had everything before us, we had nothing before us, we were all going direct to Heaven, we were all going direct the other way."**

Another voice commented on the opening line and said, "— In short, the period was so much like the present period, that some of its noisiest authorities insisted on its being received, for good or for evil, in the superlative degree of comparison only. It was also an example of how the very best can break the rules the rest of us should wisely try to live by. How many English teachers would recommend writing such a long sentence? Yet even to modern eyes, it flows easily and clearly."

Athens Clay Pullias had some very difficult moments at Lipscomb; good times and bad times. It was the start of the 1970's, after all, and the world was changing. Man oh man was it changing. What to hold on to? What to let go? Who to listen to? Who to discard? Who to believe in and who to turn a deaf ear? The first century was much the same. The world was under the grip of powerful militaries and maniacal leaders'. Petulance reigned supreme, from Spain all the way to China and the Japans; north and south, east and west. ---YET GOD SENT HIS SON !!! Who would have thought that would be the great time, the perfect time, the right moment of all time?

When we sit down and just read the words on the page, we can, at best only get 1/3 of the total message of the Hebrews letter. Yet at so many training schools, this is seen as the whole message, minimal though it is.

What was happening to the people on the street? What was happening to the people on the run? What was happening to the people hiding down among the rotting, recently *dead*, corpses in the Catacombs? How did this 'other' community receive the words of this letter? Yes, there is a totally different world down in those catacomb societies, not so unlike the world we live in today with the jihadists of the middle east and their anger and irrational prejudices against the God of All Sovereignty, and His Son, of Prince of all Peace. What do we do? What do we think about? What do we rally around today? **Hebrews, you say???**



Let us live our lives this day with a compassion for all lost souls. Let us continue to strengthen our legs, our feet, our hearts with that same passion that motivated Jesus, and then to stand up and shoulder the burden of the cross carrying that message of salvation to them all.

He showed us the way, the courage, the dedication, even the very focal point of all our living, and He did so every day of His life, back there in Judea. in the streets and paths of Galilee, in front of opposition, closed ears and in front of former 'friends'. He told us all to "go out" and preach the gospel message to those who have lost there way, and to those who have never found it, - yet. This is our mission.

Pointedly, the text of the letter to the Hebrews is a very powerful and current reminder of the biblical history that has brought us to this particular crossroad in our faith.

We must know 'why' we should be willing to serve as God's voice to the world, each and everyone of us, and 'why' we must know what it may require of us in the performance of this most stressful and all consuming of missions.

Therefore, we must be prepared to go out, as the old missionary did, to Greenland's icy mountains and to India's sunny sands. That means we are to be prepared to go to wherever there are souls who are longing to hear the real story of the gospel message. That is a big-big-big call, and it takes a very dedicated heart. It is the real way of the cross, today.

**"On a Hill far away,
stood an old rugged
cross, the emblem of
suffering and shame ....."**



GETTING STARTED ON THE TEXT OF LETTER TO THE 'HEBREWS'

WHAT IS AN INTRODUCTION STUDY, ANYWAY?

An “introduction study” is one that looks at the who, when, where, and how. It looks at the vocabulary, syntax, and even the audience of a letter. It is a very “full on” type of study that is not usually needed in a local congregational setting, except in very short form. The interpretation of most New Testament letters and books are not changed by any introduction material found. This type of a study is more needed in canonical work than in congregational work.

A Short Introduction To The Hebrew's Letter: Authorship and Date of the Letter

The letter to the Hebrews is rather hard to classify. First, we do not know the author of the book, other than to say it was probably not Paul. It does not even say, specifically, to whom it was written, thus we can but assume it was written to the Hebrews. We also have trouble with finding a date other than the general time period is about the second half of the first century.

As for authorship and date of writing, it does tell us that it was written by one who was not one of those who walked with Christ during His earthly ministry. {In **Hebrews 2:3** it says, that “it was confirmed to us by those who heard Jesus.” } Thus all of the other apostles, except Paul, would be eliminated as authors. All that we do know is that the author knows Timothy and has some connection with those from Italy. (**Hebrews 13:23-24**)

The center piece of the Hebrews
letter is Jesus, and only Jesus.



More On: “GETTING STARTED ON ‘HEBREWS’”

Now, in [Hebrews 11:32](#), the writer does use a masculine participial form, suggesting that the author was a male. However, Clement of Rome in the 90's wrote that he believed that Paul did write the letter, but that he used a more Hebraic form of writing because of his audience. This is more evidence of a vocabulary change rather than a historical or contextual evidential change as to our observations on authorship and first destination. It may also denote the use of a scribe.

The significant change to this more Hebraic vocabulary is enhanced, however, as there is a large number of [hapax-legoumena](#), [present](#). A hapax-legoumena is the usage of certain words, found here in this letter, that are only found in use in this one particular text. There are lots of other vocabulary words that are more in common with Paul's writings which are found in this text, but there are more of these 'one-off', hapax-legoumena words, that are found here in this letter than are found in any of Paul's other letters. So this debate continues as to authorship.

At the conclusion of things, this vocabulary conflict is simply seen as insufficient evidence to suggest Paul as the most possible author. Some have suggested that Luke translated a letter by Paul, written in Hebrew, into Koine Greek, but there is no evidence, either way, for this idea. It does not change the letter's message at all.

That is very significant, for the church today. The message remains as plain and straight forward as any letter in the New Testament !! Everyone who reads this letter gets the exact same message: some interpreters' will emphasize one idea over others, but the message as a whole unit, retains its integrity and readability.

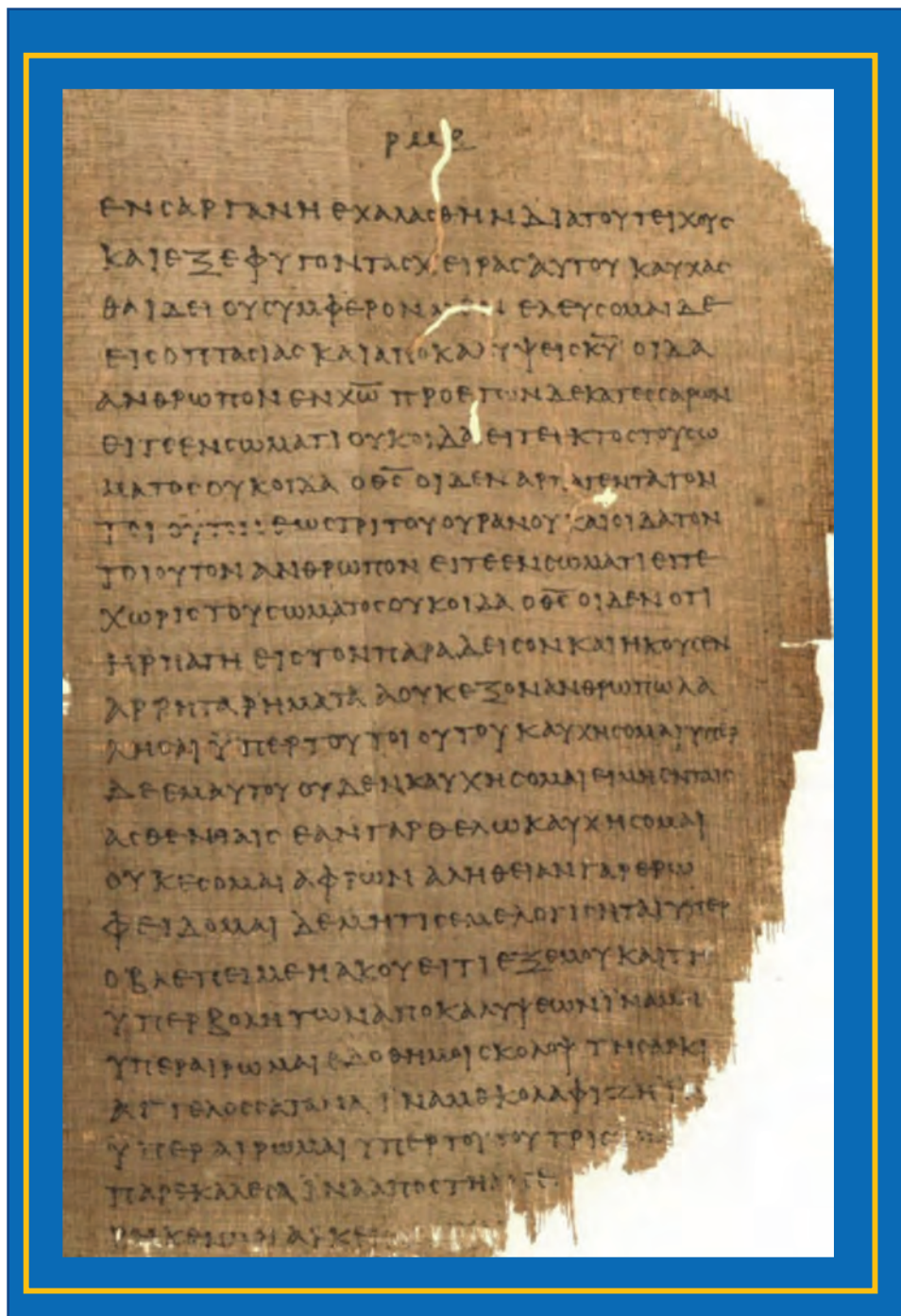
BEWARE: Any interpreter who deviates from the one clear, presented message, is running the great risk of being wrong, fully 'across the board', be his error extant in the realm of any authoritarianism, relativism, or ecclesiology or any other study of that denigrates "the primacy of the Christ and the centrality of His Christology". Unique, "one man", interpretations are more than likely simply 'evil and wrong!'

Quick Answers to "When was the letter to the Hebrews written?"

1. **Textual:** Time has passed since the readers of this letter were first converted. Thus...
  - A. **Heb. 3:12** The audience is urged not to forsake their Christian Confession thus time has elapsed
  - B. **Heb. 5:11-12** They are told that they are not progressing in their faith, but are becoming dull of hearing {Progress is a time built idea}
  - C. **Heb. 10:25** They are chided from stopping meeting together {What once characterized them is no longer characterizing them.}
  - D. **Heb. 6:10** The audience has a history of meeting the needs of those of like faith.
  - E. **Heb. 10: 32-34** The audience has suffered a form of persecution for their faith in the past some time
2. **Bracketing:** Timothy is still alive at the time of the writing, therefore it is first century
  - A. **Heb 13:23** "...take note that Timothy has been released..." This is news to the audience.
  - B. **Acta Santa Timothei**, a tract from the fourth century says that Timothy died in 94 ad.
  - C. **The Temple** in Jerusalem is still operating. In the letter of Barnabas, he mentions the fall of the temple to underline the point that the Levitical sacrificial system was no longer functioning. **Therefore, the Hebrew letter was probably written before 70 ad and not after 94 ad.** No sign of rebellion against Rome yet, at all.
  - D. **Heb. 8:13** says that the new covenant has made the old covenant obsolete and that the old covenant will soon disappear.
3. **The Dead Sea Scrolls**, written in the years preceding the advent of Jesus uses phrases suggests that the language of Hebrews was common prior to the coming of Jesus and therefore open to daily considerations, thus defining the vocabulary of the text to the age of Jesus and the 1st Century.

Contrary to popular thought, the simple first century Jewish student could read a great deal, due to their schooling in the established Synagogue School System where read in the Pentateuch, in Hebrew, was taught, along with philosophy and other crucial textual studies.





- First chapter of Codex Sinaiticus' copy of the "Letter to the Hebrews", beginning with **Hebrews 1:1 ff.**
- This is written in Koine Greek, with uncials, thus all individual letters used are capital letters. This indicates both a style of writing, being more formal, and thus more important. It is as if this could possibly be a biographical follow-on to prove the historicity of Jesus as is done in the four primary gospels.
- This codex is on papyrus thus showing the fiber weave at the bottom of the page and at the top.
- Folding of the papyrus has caused the other cracks in the codex.

HEBREW S



Jesus preaching the "Sermon On The Mount"

By Karl Heinrich Bloch

**CHRIST,
THE ONLY
SOVEREIGN
LORD !!**

The Study prepared by
L. M. Ancell , 2010 Australia

OUR START: GETTING READY FOR 'HEBREWS'

What do we need to know about this letter to gain the most from it?

Questions: - To Prepare Us For A Study On Hebrews

1. Who is your favourite biblical prophet and why is he / she your favourite? What have you learned from them?
  2. Who is the person in the bible, other than Jesus, that you use the most as an example by which to model yourself?
  3. Do you believe that Francis of Assisi was a true seeker of the light? What about Mother Theresa? What about John Calvin? What about Martin Luther? { -- All of these are people that have large followings today, using their examples as models for living. Did they have anything correct in their thinking? If so, what was it, do you think? }
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4. Who do "I" personally use as my Christian models, today? (As an person, to whom do you see yourself beholding to from the past, sing as a "model" in your life?)
Paul said, "...be imitators of me as "I am of Christ..."
  5. How does the first chapter of Hebrews help us with our ultimate modelling questions?
  6. Have "we" finished restoring the New Testament Church? If not, what needs to be worked on, still? What needs to always remain central to our thinking? Why is this so?
  7. Does any other 'doctrine' really mean anything today, then? Is there any other doctrines that we must stand for against all alternative ideas and models? If so, what are the top ten in your mind? Why are these the top ten to you?
"One false turn can take us a long way out of the way, if my primary model and concern is just man and how well I can serve God this week." John Gray
  8. How do you go about deciding which ideas to keep as central and which ones to make as secondary, and which ones to possibly allocate to the "doesn't matter" barrel?

Your Added Questions: *to be brought up next week*

OUR START: GETTING READY FOR 'HEBREWS'

What do we need to know about this letter to gain the most from it?

REFLECTION 101a Paul said, "...be imitators of me as 'I am of Christ...'"

Some of the greatest enemies of the church today:

1. **Works oriented faith vs Grace supreme faith**
2. **Monergism** ("God does all the work for me" and no corresponding 'synergism in my actions')
3. **Pietism / Puritanism** (no rules, no action, nothing but 'wait on God and just pray' with everyone 'happy')
4. **Pentecostalism**
5. **Relativism** (no hard faith rules in anything)
6. **Drug cultural - centricism**
7. **Non-residential home life for children**
8. **Environmental theologies**
9. **Jihadism**
10. **Conservative Politicism**

"One false turn can take us a long way off of the real way. So, if my primary model and concern for me is just man, then how openly can I serve God this week without human rights getting in the way, or politics, or." John Gray

What can Hebrews do to help me in my personal Christian walk?....

Moses, David, Elijah were the Jewish models, not the 'messiah'. Notice the events at the mount of transfiguration closely.

I. Primacy: We are all affected in some way by the things that we have read and considered. We may be affected in a positive way and or we may be affected in a negative way, but we will be affected if we read and then stop to think about what we have read. This is the 'premise' upon which we can found our lives. Hebrews gives the premise.

- A. The Jewish people saw the Messiah as the coming 'king', the anointed one who would lead them out of their time of subjugation. **They saw this as His role: 'Sonship' was not part of it. The Messiah was their hope, not their model. Moses, was their model**
- B. They saw the Messiah as the highest of the high, the 'saviour'. It coloured their thinking for all of the days of the prophets and patriarchs. It sustained them as a nation. **This was His 'Saviourship', His 'Sovereign Role', in their eyes.**

Paul spoke against this type of modelling in I Corinthians 1, they were "of Moses".

C. How we see Jesus will like-wise sustain us today

II. Perception: The second great thing that we get from this book is a deeper understanding of the necessity and way of His sacrifice. This is our perception of Jesus, -as our only hope. There was no other way that the sins of mankind could have been taken away but by the blood of this lamb.

- A. This deeper understanding is what redefines our whole concept of ministry. **It takes the 'me' out of every thought and replaces it with the divine "Him".** I will yet have a place, but only at His pleasure.
- B. It gives us a deep and over-powering willingness to go and do what ever we can to express our love of God and our gratitude for what He did for us, something that we cannot do for ourselves.
- C. **How we perceive Jesus will become the definition of our centre of our entire universe, the very light of all things good, the holiness of all things holy, the pearl of the greatest possible price, the only hope, my every life moment.**
- D. **I use 'the' primacy to sustain my perception, thus to venerate His absolute Sovereignty in my life.**
- E. **Who do I devote the most of my time to serving, right now, realistically? Is this entity Jesus or is Jesus a side issue, if I have time and if it is convenient? Be harshly real with yourself as you and God will be the only two who need to hear your honest answer. Why is this important???**

...FINISHING DISCUSSIONS QUESTIONS FROM LAST SUNDAY...

1. The text of Hebrews says that the worlds were formed by the word of God. Does this mean that 'God just spoke and the world came into being', or does it mean 'God spoke the command and natural law took it from there', or does it mean something in between these two extremes? **How is this important to the development of my spiritual life?**
2. What could you say about the problem of potential apostasy that the writer is trying to combat? Do we know what that problem would be, specifically? What others could it possibly confront?
3. How should we handle the various winds of doctrine that blows through the church ?

 New Discussion questions for this week

4. **NOTE:** There are many avenues of study open to us in the book written to the Hebrews. We will be looking at its big-picture, primary message, that of its Christology. In the conservative side of the Church of Christ, this is not the common way in which this book is approached, much to the denigration of the text's first and most significant message.
5. **NOTE:** Most studies in Hebrews are focused on the sacrificial system and how the new differs from the old, as well as how they are alike. That is a good study. Many other studies are focused on bits and pieces that constitute some practical improvement to our Christian lives, and that too is a good study.
6. **NOTE:** What is the highest good in your evaluation of all things in everyday life? Where do we practice this "highest good" in reality?
7. **NOTE:** what is the first point that all of us need to focus on anew, be we immigrants or second / third / fourth generation arrivals? Am I doing it currently? If I am not doing it all, or if I need some minor adjustments, as we all do, from time to time, what must I do, honestly? Am I willing to do it?
8. **NOTE:** why should Jesus be first, honestly and realistically, before all family, before all jobs, before all things!!!

What can the letter to the Hebrews do to help me in my personal Christian walk?:

One of the great questions in biblical study is why does the Hebrews letter start off so different from all of the other letters? “Don’t those first century Christians know that Jesus is the Son of God, and thus much higher than the angels?” Why is this chapter the way that it is and what does it continue to do for us in our day?

I am given the rock solid foundation upon which I build my ‘house’.

Premise: We are all affected in some way by the things that we have read and considered. We may be affected in a positive way and or we may be affected in a negative way, but we will be affected if we read and then stop to think about what we have read. This is the ‘premise’ upon which we can found our lives. Hebrews gives the premise.

- A. The Jewish people saw the Messiah as the coming ‘king’, the anointed one who would lead them out of their time of subjugation. **This is His ‘Sonship’.**
- B. This was a true interpretation, but it was not to be a physical one, but a spiritual one. Nevertheless, they saw the Messiah as the highest of the high, the ‘saviour’. It coloured their thinking for all of the days of the prophets and patriarchs. It sustained them as a nation. **This is His ‘Saviourship’ – ‘Sovereignty’**

C. How we see Jesus will, like-wise, sustain us today

Perception: The second great thing that we get from this book is a deeper understanding of the necessity and way of His sacrifice. This is our perception of Jesus as our only hope. There was no other way that the sins of mankind could have been taken away but by the blood of this lamb. This is the starting point for modelling of my heart: the Lordship Principle.

- A. This deeper understanding is what redefines our whole concept of ministry. **It takes the ‘me’ out of every thought and replaces it with the divine “Him”.** I will yet have a place, but only at His good pleasure. → → like in marriage we undergo the ‘pronoun shift’ from “me” to “I”
- B. It gives us a deep and over-powering willingness to go and do what ever we can to express our love of God and our gratitude for what He did for us, something that we cannot do for ourselves.

C. Who we perceive Jesus will become the definition of our centre of the entire universe, the very light of all things good, the holiness of holies, the pearl of the greatest possible price, the only hope.

D. I use ‘the’ Jesus model to sustain my perception, thus to venerate His absolute Sovereignty in my life.

Symbiotic

Added symbols of ‘change’ in my personal life:

Text of Hebrews 1 and Its General Old Testament Heritage In The Modern Church

Assignment: Bring a list of things that you see the book of Hebrews teaching us that is practical and useful today?

1:1 God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, 2 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. 3 And **That Son** is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high; 4 having become as much better than the angels, as He has inherited a more excellent name than they.

1. **Problem #1:** I wonder sometimes, “*Didn’t those first century Christians know that Jesus was superior to the angels?*”
2. **Problem #2** *How does Jesus talk to us today? What*
3. **Why did the author of Hebrews begin his letter in this fashion?** Why would he refer to the Son in this way, using these particular Old Testament quotes?
4. **What does this actually “teach” us today?** Is it even still a relevant chapter, or is it just knowledge?
5. Is it just an introduction to the letter? **What do we do with all of the quotes from the Old Testament that the writers uses in the second half of this chapter?**
6. **What does Hebrews 2:1 want us to hold on to: simple doctrine, or to the superiority of Jesus?** Why? How are we better Christians by revisiting Jesus all so often?
7. **Just how significant is the very frequent / constant remembering of our history and our relationship to Christ?** How does one build a mindset?
8. What does this chapter tell us about what the current role of Jesus should be in today’s Christian church? Why?
9. Is this chapter any practical help in the building of your personal Christian life today? How so, specifically?

Text of HEBREWS 1

Class Question: *As we read, take note of #1, “What stands out in your own mind about Hebrews 1, in particular?” And #2, “Why would someone put these particular words together, in this form? – What do you know about the Hebrews’ letter, from the very beginning?”*

God’s Final Word: His Son

¹ In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, ² but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe. ³ The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven. ⁴ So he became as much superior to the angels as the name he has inherited is superior to theirs.

The Son Superior to Angels

⁵ For to which of the angels did God ever say, “You are my Son. Today I have become your Father”? Or again, “I will be his Father, and he will be my Son”?

⁶ And again, when God brings his firstborn into the world, he says, “Let all God’s angels worship him.”

⁷ In speaking of the angels he says, “He makes his angels spirits, and his servants flames of fire.”

⁸ But about the Son he says,

“Your throne, O God, will last for ever and ever;
a sceptre of justice will be the sceptre of your kingdom.

⁹ You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness;
therefore God, your God, has set you above your companions
by anointing you with the oil of joy.”

¹⁰ He also says,

“In the beginning, Lord, you laid the foundations of the earth and the heavens. They are the work of your hands. They will perish, but you remain. They will all wear out like a garment. You will roll them up like a robe, like a garment and they will be changed. But you remain the same, and your years will never end.” .... but to which of the angels did God ever say, “Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet”?

¹⁴ Are not all angels ministering spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation?

**Text of Hebrews 1 and Its General Old Testament
Heritage In The Modern Church**

1:1 God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, 2 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. 3 And **That Son** is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high; 4 having become as much better than the angels, as He has inherited a more excellent name than they. 5 For to which of the angels did He ever say,

"Thou art My Son, today I have begotten Thee"?

And again,

"I will be a Father to Him and He shall be a Son to Me"?

6 And when He again brings the first-born into the world.

He says,

"And let all the angels of God worship Him."

7 And of the angels He says,

"Who makes His angels winds, and His ministers a flame of fire."

8 But of the Son He says,

"Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever, and the righteous sceptre is the sceptre of His kingdom. 9 "Thou hast loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; Therefore God, Thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness above Thy companions."

10 And, "Thou, Lord, in the beginning didst lay the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the works of Thy hands; 11 They will perish, but Thou remain; and they all will become old as a garment, 12 And as a mantle Thou wilt roll them up; as a garment they will also be changed. But Thou art the same, and Thy years will not come to an end. "

13 But to which of the angels has He ever said,

"Sit at My right hand, Until I make Thine enemies footstool for Thy feet "?

14 Are they not all ministering spirits, sent out to render service for the sake of those who will inherit salvation?

The Hebrews Legacy**Psalm 2:7****II Sam. 7:14****Psalm 97:7****Psalm 104:4****Psalm 45:6-7****Psalm 102:25-27****Psalm 110:1****Added notes:**

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1. What do you think God was concerned about when He inspired Hebrews 1? Who was He talking to? Why was He saying these particular words?
2. What was the 'premise' of last week's sermon? What perception do we need to carry around with us each day? Why do we need to do this and to what extent?
3. We are asked to "hold on, least we drift away" In Hebrews 2:1. Please name five different, modern, situations where this could be of significance today?
4. To what extent should we take these words as the members of the church today? What is the 'legacy' of these words today, for me, personally? Why?

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5. Are angels to be worshipped? What do we know about our worship from Hebrews 1?
6. How should the church today look at the idea of angels? Do they still have a role in the daily work of the church?
7. What is the role of the angels as to the Christ today? Do we know any real particulars or do we work from assumptions primarily when we look at angels?
8. How can a study of angels be practical today? What does it tell us about God? About God's love for us? About God's knowledge of what is going on in the world?
9. What should be the primary reason that we come together on Sunday morning? Veneration or Education?
10. Can these two ideas, 'veneration' and 'education' exist at the same time.

Practical points found in homework assignment.



HEBREW W S



Jesus preaching the "Sermon On The Mount"

By Karl Heinrich Bloch

CHRIST, VIKTORIA AND GEORGE

The Study prepared by
L. M. Ancell , 2010 Australia

THE STORY OF TWO VOICES: Resurrection Foundations (Viktoria Brezhnev and George Bush)

As Vice President, George Bush sr. represented the U.S. at the funeral of former Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev. Bush was deeply moved by a silent protest carried out by Brezhnev's widow. She stood motionless by the coffin until seconds before it was closed. Then, just as the soldiers touched the lid, Brezhnev's wife performed an act of great courage and hope, a gesture that must surely rank as one of the most profound acts of civil disobedience ever committed: She reached down and made the sign of the cross on her husband's chest. There in the citadel of secular, atheistic power, the wife of the man who had run it all hoped that her husband was wrong. She hoped that there was another life, and that that life was best represented by Jesus who died on the cross, and that the same Jesus might yet have mercy on her husband. (Used with permission)

She preached about her faith in Jesus even in the face of the world's agnosticism and doubt. She spoke not a word, but her voice was deafening in its silence that day. This is the first voice.

In like circumstances, what would we do? Would we go against the crowd, or would we go with the crowd? Peter, the second great voice, had to answer that same question, in similar circumstances. Peter, even though he had been walking with Jesus for 3 years, heard the cock crow the third time, before he caught himself.

How many times have we heard the cock crow and allowed our fear, or our un-surety to speak with its own voice? Each moment is really our own moment of reckoning. We may believe that Jesus is the Son of God, but we may be focused on the periphery and not on the man. We must build on the man that God sent, His Son. That is the opening message of Hebrews.

The nature of our mission will not allow for any thing less that a crystal clear declaration, made daily, of our faith and devotion to Jesus. Peter made a lesser choice than did Brezhnev's widow.

The simple truth is, is that convictions need solid foundations upon which they are built. It is just a fact of life. If we do not have solid convictions then, this building that we are building will crumble and fall. The responsibility of the preacher is to build such a wall. It is his first duty, as advocated by no less that Jesus himself in the Great Commission.

L.M. Ancell

The Voice of Hebrews 2

2:1 For this reason we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away from it. 2 For if the word spoken through angels proved unalterable, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense, 3 how shall 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, 4 God also bearing witness with them, both by signs and wonders and by various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit according to His own will.

5 For He did not subject to angels the world to come, concerning which we are speaking. 6 But one has testified somewhere, saying, "What is man, that Thou rememberest him?

Or the son of man, that Thou art concerned about him?

7 "Thou hast made him for a little while lower than the angels; Thou hast crowned him with glory and honour, And hast appointed him over the works of Thy hands;

8 Thou hast 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. 9 But we do see Him who has been made for a little while lower than the angels, namely, Jesus, because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honour, that by the grace of God He might taste death for everyone. 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. 11 For both He who sanctifies and those who are sanctified are all from one Father; for which reason He is not ashamed to call them brethren, 12 saying,

"I will proclaim Thy name to My brethren,
In the midst of the congregation I will sing Thy praise."

13 And again,

"I will put My trust in Him."

And again,

"Behold, I and the children whom God has given Me."

14 Since then the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil; 15 and might deliver those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives. 16 For assuredly He does not give help to angels, but He gives help to the descendant of Abraham. 17 Therefore, He had to be made like His brethren in all things, that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. 18 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.

Fact:
Angels
are as far
above us
as Jesus
is above
the
angels,
but He
came
here for
our
needs.

↓
We
are
called
to
Him,
not
to
just
being
religious.

How can
we make
a 'bigger'
case for
"Jesus" in
our lives
today?

Freedom
from
power of
death and
from
slavery to
sin

Text of Hebrews 2

THE STORY OF TWO VOICES: Resurrection Foundations (Viktoria Brezhnev and George Bush)

As Vice President, George Bush sr. represented the U.S. at the funeral of former Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev. Bush was deeply moved by a silent protest carried out by Brezhnev's widow. She stood motionless by the coffin until seconds before it was closed. Then, just as the soldiers touched the lid, Brezhnev's wife performed an act of great courage and hope, a gesture that must surely rank as one of the most profound acts of civil disobedience ever committed: She reached down and made the sign of the cross on her husband's chest. There in the citadel of secular, atheistic power, the wife of the man who had run it all hoped that her husband was wrong. She hoped that there was another life, and that that life was best represented by Jesus who died on the cross, and that the same Jesus might yet have mercy on her husband. (Used with permission)

She preached about her faith in Jesus even in the face of the world's agnosticism and doubt. She spoke not a word, but her voice was deafening in its silence that day. This is the first voice.

In like circumstances, what would we do? Would we go against the crowd, or would we go with the crowd? Peter, the second great voice, had to answer that same question, in similar circumstances. Peter, even though he had been walking with Jesus for 3 years, heard the cock crow the third time, before he caught himself.

How many times have we heard the cock crow and allowed our fear, or our un-surety to speak with its own voice? Each moment is really our own moment of reckoning. We may believe that Jesus is the Son of God, but we may be focused on the periphery and not on the man. We must build on the man that God sent, His Son. That is the opening message of Hebrews.

The nature of our mission will not allow for any thing less than a crystal clear declaration, made daily, of our faith and devotion to Jesus. Peter made a lesser choice than did Brezhnev's widow.

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L.M. Ancell

Contrary to conservative thinking, God does have a purpose and plan for the role of Jesus.

Notice The "Logic" Of Hebrews 2

2:1 For this reason we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away from it. 2 For if the word spoken through angels proved unalterable, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense, 3 how shall 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, 4 God also bearing witness with them, both by signs and wonders and by various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit according to His own will.

5 For He did not subject to angels the world to come, concerning which we are speaking. 6 But one has testified somewhere, saying, "What is man, that *You even remember him?*

Or the son of man, that *You are even concerned about him?*

7 "Thou hast made him for a little while lower than the angels; Thou hast crowned him with glory and honour, And hast appointed him over the works of Thy hands;

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We must make Jesus apart of our 'Christian thinking

Why??

God had Jesus come down for a reason...

...to taste death for everyone

Jesus is thus the author of our salvation, -perfect in all aspects

If God focuses on Him so, shouldn't we do the same thing

Point One: The first voice says, **He is now the definition of our life / service ministry. He is not an aside!!!**

Text of Hebrews 2

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Point

Jesus is the one that God proclaims and the one in whom He puts our future ...

Jesus is the heart
and soul of
Christianity

Jesus is the one that God has given us as the perfect centrepiece of all Christian thought and all Christian thinking... He is the one we are to obey...

We must never let Jesus be ancillary to any thing, what so ever !!!!

Freeing ourselves from the
primacy of rules

After going back and reviewing many of the preachers of the church in the 40's, 50's, 60's, and 70's, we can say that out of the traditions and preaching topics of all of the early restoration preachers came a maximum focus on doctrine and the plan, with an unintended minimalizing of Jesus himself. It still defines so much of the church today, particularly in the more conservative congregations.

First and Primary
Practicality

Jesus knows and understands my struggles. He understands the difficulty of living under a purely legalistic system.

In fact, He came to liberate us from all forms of legalism, and to give us directions to avoid antinomian confusion.

Jesus gives us the mercy and the laws we need to survive and build on / with.

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Angels in Jewish Thought

1. The term angel in Hebrew is Mal'ah Elohim (messenger of God), Mal'ah Adonai (messenger of the Lord), or Ha'Qodeshim (the 'Holy Ones').
2. Names, such as Metatron, are given to specific angels in the Talmud, but only a few are actually named in the Biblical text. [Metatron is the chief of the chief of angels in Talmudic thought.]
3. Gabriel, Michael are two names that are found in Old Testament thought. [Cf. Daniel 8:15-17 and Daniel 10:13]
4. There is no evidence of any worship of the angels in the Old Testament, or in the Talmud. They may have been called on to help, to deliver messages from God, to serve God's will in the Old Testament, but they avoided being worshiped themselves. (c.f. the case of Lot)
5. Even though there is no mention of the worship of angels, they were held in high esteem by the prophets. They saw the angels as messengers, and or servants, of God Himself.
6. From the days of the Old Testament prophets on, the Jews saw angels as being very powerful voices of God. This was a point that was often visited in their worship when they remembered the Exodus and the coming of the death angel. He was not worshipped, but held in awe and fear. They then turned to worship the Lord, Adonai.
7. Maimonides, the great medieval Jewish philosopher and rabbi, said of angels, they are 'disembodied intellect', the movers of the universe. He was continuing the growth of the idea of angels that typified his era of Jewish Talmudic scholarship.

“...This leads [Aristotle](#) in turn to the demonstrated fact that God, glory and majesty to Him, does not do things by direct contact. God burns things by means of fire; fire is moved by the motion of the sphere; the sphere is moved by means of a disembodied intellect, these intellects being the 'angels which are near to Him', through whose mediation the spheres [planets] move... thus totally disembodied minds exist which emanate from God and are the intermediaries between God and all the bodies [objects] here in this world.

– *Guide of the Perplexed II:4, Maimonides*

8. *So what. What does this mean for us today?* Much of our current understanding of angels is Old Testament based. More is learned about the idea of angels in the Old Testament than in the New. From the perspective of “The Letter To The Hebrews”, however, the logic given is one that says that Jesus was afforded a much higher place in God's eye than the angels, having a much more significant contribution to make than did the angels, therefore focus on Jesus, letting Him become the thought from which all other thoughts are produced.

Question for Sunday Morning Discussion

1. What does 'worship', fundamentally, mean to you? What comes to your mind first when you hear the term worship?
2. Is worship more of a completion of the required acts or a movement of the heart for you? Can it be both?
3. How can we use Hebrews 2 today interject a spirit of holiness into our worth-ship / a.k.a., worship?
4. Why would we need to be reminded, as Christians, of the wrath of God being visited upon those who did not listen and obey the word of God as delivered by the angels?
5. If God would punish those who did not heed the word delivered by angels, what would He do if we did not heed the word delivered by the Son? Why?
6. Why did Jesus ask the disciples not to announce Him as Christ in Matthew 17 and Luke 9? Why does Hebrews ask us to announce Him as Christ?
7. What do we need to do to improve our perspective of 'worship'? How can we be more like Viktoria Petrovna?

HEBREW S



Jesus preaching the "Sermon On The Mount"

By Karl Heinrich Bloch

A STUDY IN PRACTICAL CHRISTOLOGY FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

The Study prepared by

L. M. Ancell , 2010 Australia

Text of Hebrews 1 and Its General Old Testament Heritage In The Modern Church

Assignment: Bring a list of things that you see the book of Hebrews teaching us that is practical and useful today?

1:1 God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, 2 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. 3 And **That Son** is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high; 4 having become as much better than the angels, as He has inherited a more excellent name than they.

1. **Problem:** I wonder sometimes, *“Didn’t those first century Christians know that Jesus was superior to the angels?”*
2. **Why did the author of Hebrews begin his letter in this fashion?** Why would he refer to the Son in this way, using these particular Old Testament quotes?
3. **What does this actually “teach” us today?** Is it even still a relevant chapter, or is it just knowledge?
4. Is it just an introduction to the letter? **What do we do with all of the quotes from the Old Testament that the writers uses in the second half of this chapter?**
5. **What does Hebrews 2:1 want us to hold on to: simple doctrine, or to the superiority of Jesus?** Why? How are we better Christians by revisiting Jesus all so often?
6. **Just how significant is the very frequent / constant remembering of our history and our relationship to Christ?** How does one build a mindset?
7. What does this chapter tell us about what the current role of Jesus should be in today’s Christian church? Why?
8. Is this chapter any practical help in the building of your personal Christian life today? How so, specifically?

Text of Hebrews 1 and Its General Old Testament Heritage In The Modern Church

The Hebrews Legacy

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"Thou art My Son, today I have begotten Thee"?

And again,

"I will be a Father to Him and He shall be a Son to Me"?

Psalm 2:7

6 And when He again brings the first-born into the world.

He says,

II Sam. 7:14

"And let all the angels of God worship Him."

7 And of the angels He says,

"Who makes His angels winds, and His ministers a flame of fire."

Psalm 97:7

8 But of the Son He says,

"Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever, and the righteous sceptre is the sceptre of His kingdom. 9 "Thou hast loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; Therefore God, Thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness above Thy companions."

Psalm 104:4

10 And, "Thou, Lord, in the beginning didst lay the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the works of Thy hands; 11 They will perish, but Thou remain; and they all will become old as a garment, 12 And as a mantle Thou wilt roll them up; as a garment they will also be changed. But Thou art the same, and Thy years will not come to an end. "

Psalm 45:6-7

13 But to which of the angels has He ever said,

"Sit at My right hand, Until I make Thine enemies footstool for Thy feet "?

Psalm 102:25-27

14 Are they not all ministering spirits, sent out to render service for the sake of those who will inherit salvation?

Psalm 110:1



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1. What do you think God was concerned about when He inspired Hebrews 1? Who was He talking to? Why was He saying these particular words?
2. What was the 'premise' of last week's sermon? What perception do we need to carry around with us each day? Why do we need to do this and to what extent?
3. We are asked to "hold on, least we drift away" In Hebrews 2:1. Please name five different, modern, situations where this could be of significance today?
4. To what extent should we take these words as the members of the church today? What is the 'legacy' of these words today, for me, personally? Why?

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5. Are angels to be worshipped? What do we know about our worship from Hebrews 1?
6. How should the church today look at the idea of angels? Do they still have a role in the daily work of the church?
7. What is the role of the angels as to the Christ today? Do we know any real particulars or do we work from assumptions primarily when we look at angels?
8. How can a study of angels be practical today? What does it tell us about God? About God's love for us? About God's knowledge of what is going on in the world?
9. What should be the primary reason that we come together on Sunday morning? Veneration or Education?
10. Can these two ideas, 'veneration' and 'education' exist at the same time.

Practical points found in homework assignment.



L4

- 1. Jesus is the “prime apexial thought”, the one central thought above all other thoughts, and above all other people, and all other things.**
- 2. “Lordship” is the finding of that one God-given supreme apex idea and thought and then organizing all living around that idea.**
- 3. Jesus said that “if anything or any person stands between you and His absolute sovereignty, then cut that problem area off.**
- 4. Salvation depends on this point from Hebrews 1.**

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Question For Sunday Morning Discussion And Friday Morning Table Talk

1. What does 'worship', fundamentally, mean to you? What comes to your mind first when you hear the term worship?
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6. Why did Jesus ask the disciples not to announce Him as Christ in Matthew 17 and Luke 9? Why does Hebrews ask us to announce Him as Christ?
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We become what we talk about in formal meetings and in casual settings. Both are essential to real spiritual health. Do not put people down for their ideas, in either place, formal or casual. Rather, seek to understand them, first.

HEBREW S



Jesus preaching the "Sermon On The Mount"

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THOSE CONTEMPORARY GOLDEN CALVES

Have you ever really stopped to think about the story of the Golden Calf? How in the world could that group of people have ever even thought of making a Golden Calf, considering all that they had seen in the last two years?

There, at the foot of Mount Sinai, the Jews waited for Moses who had gone up the mountain to talk to God. They were down below, left without a leader. Never having been in a position where individual choice was so open, they choose the path of consolation and built a golden calf.

Mankind always returns to those things that he has learned to fall back on in times of trouble. It is not so unusual then, for the Jews to go back to their 'training' at the hand of the Egyptians, even though they were walking daily in the very presence of the Lord and His miracles. The point is, is that He was not yet their Lord, individually and personally. He was a random thought, when you took your eyes off of your feet as you walked the rock strewn ground of the desert.

They were having to watch for sharp rocks, scorpions, snakes, sinking sand, and avoiding the ever present heat. Yes, they followed their leaders, but they kept their own eyes on the ground ahead. They were just doing what they had been taught down in Egypt as a subjugated people. It was resigned survival. Don't think, don't get involved personally, just do your job and follow the man ahead of you, watching where you place your feet.

That was life for these people, all of their lives. But when choice entered the moment, teamed as it were without an immediate leader, without a clear goal that they were personally responsible for maintaining, and without a personal faith, -they found themselves unprepared for the temptation. They fell, there, beneath the mountain into idolatry.

Idolatry can be honestly defined as that which is a familiar answer in fulfilling our needs, that to which we turn to as our primary focus when things are in disarray and our fears are raging. It is the place we go to all too often when we feel alone and lost. It will be filled with excuses, rationalizations, and a return to the last thing that was used to form the foundation of our 'faith / life', prior to that confliction.

However, in the story of the golden calf, there are two men down there among the Israelites who learn a very significant lesson, one that will sustain them through 40 years in the wilderness, and on into the very land of Canaan. They were the two who made a choice for God, His way, and they sang His praises for the entire 40 years of wandering: Joshua and Caleb.

L.M. Ancell

The Four Therefore's Of Hebrews 3

3:1 **Therefore**, holy brethren, partakers of a heavenly calling, consider Jesus, the Apostle and High Priest of our confession. 2 He was faithful to Him who appointed Him, as Moses also was in all His house. 3 For He has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses, by just so much as the builder of the house has more honour than the house. 4 For every house is built by someone, but the builder of all things is God. 5 Now Moses was faithful in all His house **as a servant**, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken later; 6 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.**

7 **Therefore**, just as the Holy Spirit says,

"Today if you hear His voice,

8 Do not harden your hearts as when they provoked Me,
As in the day of trial in the wilderness,

9 Where your fathers tried Me by testing Me,
And saw My works for forty years.

10 "Therefore I was angry with this generation,
And said, 'They always go astray in their heart;
And they did not know My ways';

11 As I swore in My wrath,
'They shall not enter My rest.' "

12 **Therefore** Take care, brethren, lest there should be in any one of you an evil, unbelieving heart, in falling away from the living God. 13 But encourage one another day after day, as long as it is still called "Today," lest any one of you be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.

14 For we have become partakers of Christ, if we hold fast the beginning of our assurance firm until the end; 15 while it is said, **"Therefore**, today if you hear His voice, **Do not harden your hearts, as when they provoked Me."** 16 For who provoked Him when they had heard? Indeed, did not all those who came out of Egypt led by Moses? 17 And with whom was He angry for forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose bodies fell in the wilderness? 18 And to whom did He swear that they should not enter His rest, but to those who were disobedient? 19 And so we see that they were not able to enter because of unbelief. .

Therefore is implied in Greek.

The Four Therefore's Of Hebrews 3

3:1 **Therefore**, holy brethren, partakers of a heavenly calling, consider Jesus, the Apostle and High Priest of our confession. 2 He was faithful to Him who appointed Him, as Moses also was in all His house. 3 For He has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses, by just so much as the builder of the house has more honour than the house. 4 For every house is built by someone, but the builder of all things is God. 5 Now Moses was faithful in all His house **as a servant**, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken later; 6 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**.

1. **Therefore # 1...**
2. **For all of us who are Christians, we must remember and exalt in the fact that Jesus is the central picture of New Testament Christianity, the apostle and High Priest of our confession.**
3. **Jesus holds a higher position than Moses, given more glory than Moses.**
4. **Moses was a servant, and a very great man, but Jesus is the actual Son of God.**
5. **We are to hold fast our confidence and the boast of our hope until the end, in the face of all opposition.**
6. **This is all predicated "in Jesus". We are commissioned to let Him live in our lives. This is much more than just a righteous type of living; it is more than an avoidance of all of the little foxes that can trap and ensnare us. It requires a full on, dedicated submission and glorification of Jesus as the Son of the Builder, God.**
7. **Remember Joshua and Caleb and then the spies who saw the enemies and obstacles in the land as being so big as to be unconquerable. (Invictus) They said that the Israelites were like grasshoppers in their sight. But Joshua and Caleb did not agree. Their voice was one of faith and commitment.**

The Four Therefore's Of Hebrews 3

3:7 **Therefore**, just as the Holy Spirit says,
"Today if you hear His voice,
8 Do not harden your hearts as when they provoked Me,
As in the day of **trial in the wilderness****,
9 Where your fathers tried Me by testing Me,
And saw My works for forty years.
10 "Therefore I was angry with this generation,
And said, 'They always go astray in their heart;
And they did not know My ways';
11 As I swore in My wrath,
'They shall not enter My rest.' "

** Can be the 'calf' episode, and the spies episode, and the general personal growth episodes, or all combined.

1. **Therefore #2...**
2. **When He speaks listen !!!!!!! ...and then act !!!!!**
3. **Avoid a like fall to that which the Jews faced as they left Egypt.**
  - a) They had seen ten plagues
  - b) They had crossed the red sea on dry land
  - c) They had been given water to drink from a rock in the middle of the desert
  - d) They were being fed by manna from heaven every day
  - e) They were seeing the awesome manifestations of God every day
  - f) And yet they lost heart after Moses was gone for a very short time and built a golden calf. They returned to the theology that was easy, to that which was just a rote part of their minds-hearts.
  - g) It was a total catastrophe !!!
  - h) They who had been walking before a pillar of cloud and fire every day, grew weary and focused on the easy and **did not discipline their minds and hearts to follow God with the chant of 'Jesu Gloria' on their tongues.**

The Four Therefore's Of Hebrews 3

3:12 Take care, (Therefore) brethren, lest there should be in any one of you an evil, unbelieving heart, in falling away from the living God. 13 But encourage one another day after day, as long as it is still called "Today," lest any one of you be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. 14 For we have become partakers of Christ, if we hold fast the beginning of our assurance firm until the end; 15 while it is said, "Therefore, today if you hear His voice, Do not harden your hearts, as when they provoked Me." 16 For who provoked Him when they had heard? Indeed, did not all those who came out of Egypt led by Moses? 17 And with whom was He angry for forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose bodies fell in the wilderness? 18 And to whom did He swear that they should not enter His rest, but to those who were disobedient? 19 And so we see that they were not able to enter because of unbelief.

1. Therefore #3 (:12)
2. Take care and build your heart around Jesus and subsequently His way as well. (This is the context of what is being said here !! – It is only an adjunct idea to follow the ways of Jesus, although they are essential in their own right, the first point is a “Jesus centre that is there for all to see without any questions”)
3. Remember that it was the Jews who hardened their own hearts when they chose to minimize the Jehovah centrality that had seen and been requested to take up whole heartedly in those very last days in Egypt.

Remember: We are never more venerable than when we are alone. “Therefore as a principle, encourage one another.

4. Therefore #4 (:15)
5. God was justifiably angry with those that minimized Him and tried to balance Him with a golden calf.
6. Punishment was meted out and those that had succumbed were not allowed to enter the land of Palestine. Great object lesson to all of the others who later would have stumbled as well. Remember your foundation point and stay with it.
7. If ‘belief’ is surrender, then ‘unbelief’ is holding on to something of-for self ...It is seeing with the eyes of the foolish spies

The Four Therefore's Of Hebrews 3

Question for Sunday Morning Discussion

1. Why would someone use a "therefore" in a paragraph? Why would someone use more than one "therefore" in four subsequent paragraphs?
2. How do you build your sense of courage and conviction? What are the essential elements that help you to hold fast to the faith, today?
3. Is boasting in the Lord 'good and proper behaviour for a Christian? How can you actually 'boast' in the Lord?
4. What are some 'golden calves' that mankind today bows down to? Should we speak to fellow Christians about the obvious 'golden calves' in their lives? If so, how do we do this?
5. How can we maximize the role of Jesus in our daily lives? What are some good practical tools that we can use to help us?
6. Will God still punish us if we minimize Jesus in our lives as He punished the Jews who minimized Him in the desert

Some Thoughts About The Israelites Out In The Desert With Their Calves

1. After crossing the Red Sea, the Jews were in the region of the Sinai Peninsula, somewhere. Exodus 12:41ff There is no definitive point that archaeologist have found that confirms any point of landing on the other side of the Red Sea or on the other side of the Reed Sea. It is a matter we have to take with simple faith at this time.
2. There is a lot of disagreement about where the Jews actually crossed, and some subsequent geographic changes to be navigated as well. The idea of Red and Reed being confused is a possibility, but just as problematic one way as the other.
3. The number of people who left Egypt has been estimated by some to be between 1 million and 2.5 million people. But if this were so, the 2.5 million number would require a line of march that the world has never seen before or since. To illustrate this then, marching 10 abreast, in military format, the line would be 300 km long, and much longer in caravan format. (This is all based on the number of fighting men, 600,000 who left Egypt as given in Exodus 12:37 and the more exact number of 603,550 in Numbers 1:46. The logistics of controlling and communicating to so large a group would have been astronomical. (But, God would have helped in any situation.) The Egyptian army of that day was estimated to be about 20,000 to 30,000 in total. With only line of sight communication and simple verbal communications available, a larger number was an extreme liability, not an assets.)
4. The number describing the amount of men in 'the army' of Israel at this time, as found in the English text, can be translated differently in the Hebrew text.. It can be used to refer to clans and military units with the idea of thousands being reduced considerably. It can also be used in such a way in Hebrew as to reduce the actual number of fighting men in the Israelite 'army' down to 5000 to 6000, rather than the more common English interpretation of 600,000, by the way that the plural is constructed . This makes the line of march much less that the common one million plus mark given today. This makes the defeat at Ai, where 36 men were lost a much more real problem for the Jews. (See Abraham Malamat of Hebrew Union University on his thoughts on this problem.)
5. While in the desert, the Israelites were given shoes that did not wear out. They were given water, manna and quail. (They were even given the ability to catch quail in quantities large enough to eat and sustain the people. This is remarkable, given the speed of quail and their ability to avoid traps, within the space of time where a people who had only marginal experience in hunting of any kind could have learned and succeeded. It too requires an eye of faith and or the assistance of the Lord.)

HEBREW S



Jesus preaching the "Sermon On The Mount"

By Karl Heinrich Bloch

A STUDY IN PRACTICAL
CHRISTOLOGY FOR THE 21ST
CENTURY

Running with Cliffy

The Study prepared by

L. M. Ancell , 2010 Australia

Cliff Young and Me.....oohh my aching feet

Cliff Young – the farmer who inspired a nation

“ The whole nation thought he was a crazy old man to undertake an almost impossible feat. Most feared that he would die trying. But this humble old man proved all the critics wrong.

Cliff Young, at 61 years of age, participated in 1983's Sydney to Melbourne race. Considered to be the world's toughest race, with the distance of 875 kilometers and took at least 6 to 7 days to finish, Cliff Young entered the race against world-class athletes.

The Beginning

Every year, Australia hosts an 875-kilometer endurance racing from Sydney to Melbourne – considered to be the world's longest and toughest ultra-marathon. It's a long, tough race that takes a week and normally participated by world-class athletes who train specially for the event. Backed by big names in sports like Nike, these athletes are mostly less than 30 years old men and women equipped with the most expensive sponsored training outfits and shoes.

In 1983, these top class runners were in for a surprise. On the day of the race, a guy named Cliff Young showed up. At first, no one cared about him since everybody thought he was there to watch the event. After all, he was 61 years old, showed up in overalls and galoshes over his work boots.

As Cliff walked up to the table to take his number, it became obvious to everybody he was going to run. He was going to join a group of 150 world-class athletes and run! During that time, these runners don't even know another surprising fact – his only trainer was his 81-year-old mother, Neville Wran.

Everybody thought that it was a crazy publicity stunt. But the press was curious, so as he took his number 64 and moved into the pack of runners in their special, expensive racing outfit, the camera focused on him and reporters started to ask: “Who are you and what are you doing?”

“I'm Cliff Young. I'm from a large ranch where we run sheep outside of Melbourne.” They said, “You're really going to run in this race?” “Yeah,” Cliff nodded. “Got any backers?” “No.” “Then you can't run.”

“Yeah I can.” Cliff said. “See, I grew up on a farm where we couldn't afford horses or four wheel drives, and the whole time I was growing up– until about four years ago when we finally made some money and got a four wheeler– whenever the storms would roll in, I'd have to go out and round up the sheep. We had 2,000 head, and we have 2,000 acres. Sometimes I would have to run those sheep for two or three days. It took a long time, but I'd catch them. I believe I can run this race; it's only two more days. Five days. I've run sheep for three.”

Cliff Young and Me.....oohh my aching feet

Cliff Young – the farmer who inspired a nation

When the marathon started, the pros left Cliff behind in his galoshes - gumboots. The crowds smiled because he didn't even run correctly. Instead of running, he appeared to run leisurely, shuffling like an amateur.

Now, the 61-year-old potato farmer from Beech Forest with no teeth had started the ultra-tough race with world-class athletes. All over Australia, people who watched the live telecast kept on praying that someone would stop this crazy old man from running because everyone believed he'll die even before even getting halfway across Sydney.

Turtle vs rabbits

Every professional athlete knew for certain that it took about 7 days to finish this race, and that in order to compete, you would need to run 18 hours and sleep 6 hours. The thing is, old Cliff Young did not know that!

When the morning news of the race was aired, people were in for another big surprise. Cliff was still in the race and had jogged all night down to a city called Mittagong.

Apparently, Cliff did not stop after the first day. Although he was still far behind the world-class athletes, he kept on running. He even had the time to wave to spectators who watched the event by the highways.

When he got to a town called Albury he was asked about his tactics for the rest of the race. He said he would run through to the finish, and he did.

He kept running. Every night he got just a little bit closer to the leading pack. By the last night, he passed all of the world-class athletes. By the last day, he was way in front of them. Not only did he run the Melbourne to Sydney race at age 61, without dying; he won first place, breaking the race record by 9 hours and became a national hero! The nation fell in love with the 61-year-old potato farmer who came out of nowhere to defeat the world's best long distance runners.

He finished the 875-kilometre race in 5 days, 15 hours and 4 minutes. Not knowing that he was supposed to sleep during the race, he said when running throughout the race, he imagined that he was chasing sheep and trying to outrun a storm.

When Cliff was awarded the first prize of \$10,000, he said he did not know there was a prize and insisted that he had not entered for the money. He said, "There're five other runners still out there doing it tougher than me," and he gave them \$2,000 each. He did not keep a single cent for himself. That act endeared him to all of Australia. Cliff was a humble, average man, who undertook an extraordinary feat and became a national sensation

Opportunity and Faith / Faith and Opportunity

4:1 Therefore, let us fear lest, while a promise remains of entering His rest, any one of you should seem to have come short of it.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. 3 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. 4 For He has thus said somewhere concerning the seventh day, "And God rested on the seventh day from all His works"; 5 and again in this passage, "They shall not enter My rest." 6 Since therefore it remains for some to enter it, and those who formerly had good news preached to them failed to enter because of disobedience, 7 He again fixes a certain day, "Today," saying through David after so long a time just as has been said before, "Today if you hear His voice, Do not harden your hearts." 8 For if Joshua had given them rest, He would not have spoken of another day after that. 9 There remains therefore a Sabbath rest for the people of God. 10 For the one who has entered His rest has himself also rested from his works, as God did from His.

11 Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall through following the same example of disobedience. 12 For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart. 13 And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.

14 Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, **let us hold fast our confession**. 15 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. 16 **Let us therefore draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and may find grace to help in time of need.**

I. The Value of Fear:

- A. One of the reasons that I have never been eaten by a tiger is that I have a very healthy respect of tigers and their teeth. I stay away. I stay away from everything that spells my name with a 's', a 'u', two 'p's', an 'e' and an 'r': supper!
- B. One of the reasons why I like pumpkin soup, is that I like the cook and she makes it for me. I do not go out and buy it for myself, but she makes it and it is good, and I fear the absence of that soup while loving the time in which that soup is shared.
- C. There is a great deal of difference between these two perspectives on fear. One is a recognition of evil, followed by a really bad outcome. And one is the acceptance of another's love thus fulfilling the moment of opportunity with action. There is a price to pay, and a reward to be received in both cases.
- D. One is a recognition of evil and a respect for that which I have heard and been taught by others who have brought to me the message, "Tigers bite. Don't go and play in the tiger cage!" One is a message that says, "come and let's sit down together in peace and harmony."
- E. The writer of Hebrews says that we have an opportunity, open right now, to come into the rest of the Lord. It is a bargain that we can not pass by.....like garage sales are for some people.
- F. **"Fear" is best understood as a physics term which means to resonate at a given frequency so that disharmony is obvious and so that noticeable harmony is achieved when proper intonation-resonance is achieved, such as when the strings on a guitar are tuned to resonate against one another in proper modulation, founded upon the primary note / point of orientation. To put it more simply, it is vibration control and organization of all things so that harmony is achieved. Biblically it is then putting my life in a position of harmony with God, through an search for an understanding of God and an acceptance of God as the ultimate and constant point to which we seek to tune our lives in all matters.**
- G. **POINT: An opportunity has been given to us to enter the "rest of the Lord". This is a rest that is here and available right now, as well as in the future.**
- H. Those who have heard, and have not done what was requested of them, will still get left out in the desert. You can count on that.
- I. **Maybe we may just need to go back and recheck to make sure we have the right 'Lord' in our sights and hearts.**

II. The “Rest Of The Lord” Part One

- A. The Lord has made a provision for those who are ‘His people’, those who honour Him as Lord – Master – King. And one for those that set themselves up as the new king.
- B. I had a discussion with a man once who said that he believe that we can preach a more conservative doctrine than the bible and be just fine with God. That is an act of setting up a new king and God does not allow that to happen. He sends in His wrath to thrash things out. Ask the people at the Tower, back in Babel. Ask the graves out in the desert, the one whose shoes are still good. Ask the dead at Ai. Ask Moses. **Does God really mean what He says? Will He follow through?**
- C. **The first requested response is then “Do not harden your hearts”**
- D. **How can we do that?**
1. By saying I leave me alone right now and let me think about it. I will get back to you.’ It can sound nice and contemplative, but often it is nothing more than “Get lost. You bug me boyo.”
  2. By saying “I need more questions answered, give me more time”, when in reality it is nothing more than a put off.
  3. I do not really believe all that I have heard to be true. I am too sceptical. IT ALL SOUNDS TOO MUCH LIKE A MYTH AND A STORY TO ME.
  4. I don’t like things done this way so I will do my own thing.
- E. **What do we need to do to ‘not harden our hearts’?**
1. Make sure that the Lord is The Lord and that self is not the Lord. In 99.99999% of all cases, that is the primary issue.
  2. Most have heard the good news out there to some degree, but they have allowed other voices to come in and to distract and dishevel them, to convince them of aberrant things, to listen to satanic voices. This is very serious.
  3. You can not listen to Rome and the words of some Caesar. You must listen to the Lord. Have only one ‘Master voice’. **Hurry to your knees !!!**
  4. **There is a finish line coming. Stay the course.**

Remarks are connected to the first paragraph of the text.

II. The “Rest Of The Lord” Part Two

11 Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall through following the same example of disobedience. 12 For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart. 13 And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.

- A. We hear a lot about the ‘rest of the Lord’ being ‘heaven. That is the ultimate place of eternal rest an fulfilment.
- B. BUT, there is a part of that rest to be experienced here in knowing that I stand with that which is guaranteed and true to God. [It does not mean that I can not slip and fall flat on my nose, but it does mean that God’s promises are in “the bag”-”done”-”fait accompli”. This side of things is seen in John 3:16 (PEB - Pain English Bible) when Jesus says that “those who commit themselves to Him will have eternal life.” It is not just a possibility, it is a fact.
- C. It requires, as the Hebrews writer says, “let us be diligent”. That is a constant tuning of our lives to His way – world – to His Son (holy fear). That maybe something that we of the restoration movement may struggle to accept, If we see the world from a perspective that says we have got it all figured out correctly; all work done.”
- D. This is why the very next passage calls us to the word, that which is sharper than any two edged sword.

It is at this point that I want you to remember Cliff Young’s mother’s advice. I will tell you about it in a second.

All too often, when we run, we hit a wall, a threshold of pain, and we stop. The sword is an instrument of offense and defence for those moments of survival.

[Two edging of a weapon does not mean have a blade with an edge on both the top and the bottom. It does mean that when sharpened the edge is ground from both sides to make what amounts to a serrated edge, thus cutting on the field of battle will last longer and inflict the deepest wound possible. In the American Civil War, this was called “rough sharpening a sword”. When once sharpened in this fashion, both the victim and the wielder need to be careful for the blade can and will cut them both, just like broken glass cuts everyone who has to handle it. Therefore all must be aware of the power of the word as it is given by God; Christian and Non-Christian.]

II. The “Rest Of The Lord” Part Two

14 Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, **let us hold fast our confession**. 15 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. 16 **Let us therefore draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and may find grace to help in time of need.**

What more needs to be said?

THE END OF THE STORY: When Cliff Young was awarded the first prize of \$10,000, he said he did not know there was a prize and insisted that he had not entered for the money. He said, “There’re five other runners still out there doing it tougher than me,” and he gave them \$2,000 each. He did not keep a single cent for himself. That act endeared him to all of Australia. Cliff was a humble, average man, who undertook an extraordinary feat and became a national sensation

You may well ask, “How did 61 year old Cliffy do it? You say that he ran in work boots, with out a team to assist him and he just never stopped ?!?! How did he win? How did he do it?”

1. The “young Shuffle” was an ungainly looking gait that actually used ½ of the energy of all other running styles. Many long-long distant runners use it today and it has won the Sydney to Melbourne race some eight times!! (The most difficult marathon race of all.) **He ran at his speed.**
2. **He never stopped** to rest, he just kept on running, shuffling along constantly.
3. When he reached the threshold, **he kept a picture in his head** of chasing sheep and a storm a-comin’: “Gotta be done....gotta be done”.
4. His only training partner was his mother who kept on telling him “...just one more hill, Cliff, just one more hill. They are out there still.” **He listened to his mother.**

Opportunity and Faith Faith and Opportunity

Question for Sunday Morning Discussion

1. *What do you remember about Cliff Young's feat? Do you remember what you were doing when he won? How did you feel?*
2. How does Cliff Young's story assist you in understanding Hebrews 4? What is the writer's big picture point for the whole of this chapter?
3. What is your definition of fear?
4. What do you fear the most in this life? What really scares you? How do you use that fear positively?
5. Do you see a modern day need to preach the word to all of the world, even the neighbours across the street?
6. What happens if someone does not respond to the gospel message the first time I try to talk to them about it? How do I treat those that have not yet accepted the idea of Jesus, as God's Saving Son? What do I need to do next? Do I need to continue my friendship with them? (Remember Cliff Young)
7. What do I need to say when someone gives out a very good rebuttal to the elements of my faith? Where do I need to stand strong?
8. What can I do to prepare myself to give out better answers to critics? Do I have to have a Ph.D. in the study of apologetics to go out and serve? How much do I need to know?
9. What does the words of the song mean when it says that there "is a sure and strong retreat, tis found beneath the mercy seat." Does it speak of heaven or is there a mercy seat here? How does this speak to the idea of the Lord's rest for us"?



HEBREW S



Jesus preaching the "Sermon On The Mount"

By Karl Heinrich Bloch

The Study prepared by

L. M. Ancell ,

David Milton's War: One Man's Story

Studs Terkel in his book, The Last Good War, noted that in the war, there in the Atlantic Ocean during the height of the u-boat campaign, a freighter carrying Sherman tanks from North America began to cross the ocean from Halifax, Nova Scotia. They were sailing for the Allied Forces, but they found themselves in a very bad storm. One of the men on that ship was an 18 year old merchant seaman named David Milton. It is 1942.

During this voyage to Europe, a storm came up and the tanks that were stored in the cargo hold broke loose and began to slide around the length of that hold. These twenty tons of loose and sliding metal slammed into the bulkheads and they threatened to go clean through the sides of the ship, sinking that ship, quick-smart. Something had to be done, now !!!

Down into the hold went several merchant seaman who were charged with securing the cargo. This is one of the most dangerous jobs at sea. One of these men was David Milton. No one expected to come up out of the hold alive. They climbed up on top of those sliding tanks and they began the famous 'tank round-up', a feat of pure muscle, frail rope, and steel cable.

The ship had to pull out of line in the convoy, placing itself at risk of the u-boats and out of reach of the protection of the convoy. For ten long hours they struggled, one tank at a time to get cables in place and secure those tanks. The ship had to head into the waves to help the men below, taking the ship farther and farther from the safety net of the convoy.

Eyewitnesses say that not one seaman was killed in this rather special rodeo, but there were several broken bones and smashed fingers. It took time, and it took a constant watchful, 'timed', eye to the roll of that ship. David Milton climbed out of the hold, alive and well. The ship was safe.

Yes, they succeeded in securing the lines, of 'corralling the tanks'. No other ship was lost, and no tanks were destroyed. It was the largest shifting of weight without any loss to have ever occurred at sea.

The effort of those merchant marines was exemplary. Their courage was immense, and the situation demanded every bit of effort and attention that they could muster. The greatest danger was not the enemy submarines, it was not even the waves of the sea. It was the internal danger of things being loose and not tied down properly inside for the trip across the ocean. **The stresses of the outside can only be handled when we are battered down on the inside.**

The Christian life is like that, every day. We are all called on to take a load from one side of our world to the other. It takes everything we have to keep it all centred and secured. One small mistake can make a lifetime of mistakes and regrets. Some can not be recalled. Some can. And some will cause our ship of faith to hang in the balance. We must make sure that no little foxes get in and spoil the sanctity and security of our ship of faith. We must let the reality of Jesus permeate the whole of our very being.

Story taken from "The Good War" by Studs Terkel, p104

This is 'sinking thinking'.

Pressing on to Maturity

Hebrews 6:1 Therefore leaving the elementary teaching about the Christ, let us press on to maturity, not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, 2 of instruction about washings, and laying on of hands, and the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment. 3 And this we shall do, if God permits. 4 For in the case of those who have once been enlightened and have tasted of the heavenly gift and have been made partakers of the Holy Spirit, 5 and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, 6 and then have fallen away, it is impossible to renew them again to repentance, since they again crucify to themselves the Son of God, and put Him to open shame. 7 For ground that drinks the rain which often falls upon it and brings forth vegetation useful to those for whose sake it is also tilled, receives a blessing from God; 8 but if it yields thorns and thistles, it is worthless and close to being cursed, and it ends up being burned.

9 But, beloved, we are convinced of better things concerning you, and things that accompany salvation, though we are speaking in this way. 10 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. 11 And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence so as to realize the full assurance of hope until the end, 12 that you may not be sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

13 For when God made the promise to Abraham, since He could swear by no one greater, He swore by Himself, 14 saying, "I will surely bless you, and I will surely multiply you." 15 And thus, having patiently waited, he obtained the promise. 16 For men swear by one greater than themselves, and with them an oath given as confirmation is an end of every dispute. 17 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, 18 in order that by two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we may have strong encouragement, we who have fled for refuge in laying hold of the hope set before us. 19 This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, a hope both sure and steadfast and one which enters within the veil, 20 where Jesus has entered as a forerunner for us, having become a high priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.

"We all are at war, every day, against sin and the wiles of Satan..."

The Elementary Principles About The Christ...

1. One of the passages where a great deal of mistaken theology has taken place in the church is that of Hebrews 6:1.
2. Traditionally we have read this passage to say that we need to be preaching on all of the things, all of the attitudes, all of the 'works' we are to do, now that we have accepted the reality of Jesus. It is the term 'leaving' that causes us problems. It is not suggesting that we abandon the discussion of Jesus / Christology, but rather it is saying that we can not dwelling on the moments of immaturity where we only partake of milk and do not get out on the road as servants of Jesus.
3. What the author of this letter is telling us, is now that we have established a life with Jesus, we need to let it permeate ever element and every action , every moment of our life. It is saying let Jesus reside as the central core of all our thinking in all matters.
4. Simply Put: ***This is not a statement of permission whereby we are now called on to only preach the periphery as the majority.***
5. The writer also tells us that we need to focus on more than just the first lessons. We need to go back to basics frequently and carefully, but we also need to grow. That is were we all need to put in some very hard yards, in the "...**PRESSING ON TO MATURITY...**"

...Pressing On To Maturity

1. Maturity / perfection is that way of thinking that will promotes a corresponding type of action and connection as we go on in life. It is that which will lead the person on to greater accomplishments and depths of understanding.
2. We are not to sit on our laurels, our past accomplishments, our concluded educations and to thus think that we have arrived. Real maturity in Christ is seen, and confirmed, every day of our lives, and in every event of those days.
3. We have learned who Jesus is, we have learned what Jesus means, we have learned what Jesus wants. Now, as we face the day, the road, the pressures of life, let us not loose sight of the fact of Jesus. Let us let Him live in our lives, today. That is the way of maturity.
4. This is the challenge we all face, the road to a lasting maturity. We all need to pay attention to where we are at in our Christian lives. We all will find that there are days, and actions, that are just difficult to undo and once we get lost in the down moments, the momentum towards maturity that we seek to develop and maintain is lost. Now things get hard.

... "Impossible To Renew Them" ...

Pandora's Proverbial Box

1. The great moment of crisis arises when someone has come to a point of obedient faith, and then found a way to set it aside as the prime directive in their lives. What do you do then?
2. By learning how to set Christian maturity and ideals aside, if even for one short moment, we find ourselves now venerable to our own misguided thinking, and it will affect us the rest of our lives. [cf .Eve]
3. Once I have figured out how to open the box, I know the secret to my own demise. It is the classic opening of "Pandora's Box". Once it is opened, it can never be closed.
4. NOTE: This passage is a discussion of the realities of knowledge, not the limits of grace.
5. We can say that because of what is said next... It is the classic tale of every abandoned or neglected garden.

Thistles or Veggies / Veggies or Thistles

The Questions of Production

1. When a garden is abandoned, or neglected in some way, there will be thistles that are getting in among the vegetables
2. The evidence of neglect-abandonment is seen in the way the thistles come in and begin to grow. You will always see a few weeds in every garden that need to be pulled. **Pull them!** Do not let them get ahead of you, for the work is then twice as hard to get it all back in shape.

This is 'stinking thinking' action cleaning time.

"Imitation Of The Good Saints"

3. What is sad, is that there will not be just one weed, --there will be many of them once we begin to look.
4. When a life in Christ is neglected, and or totally abandoned, it is like that garden and the first thing we have to restore is the purpose and direction in our lives.
5. Remember: God has not abandoned us. God will not abandon us, but we can all abandon and neglect Him.
6. We all are going to forced out, through the 'Exiles Gate'. The real question is "what do we take with us, that we will always have near us, is that which is in our hearts?".
7. When Nero forced all of the Jews and Christians out of Rome, they were not allowed to go home and to pack a bag. It was get out and get out now" command that they were facing. The prodding of the spear only helped to emphasise the 'point'. What you have to sustain your faith is that which is fundamentally know, understood and practiced daily. When it slips into a state of neglect, so does everything else. **It thus becomes 'sluggish'.**

Hebrews 6:12

This is the path to 'strategic thinking' .

The End of The Story: A Churches Example

David Milton's personal story is one of survival. It is not filled with any great latter day significance on his part. What it is filled with is the story of a young man who had a terrifying job to do and he went and did it. That is it.

We all are like the David Milton's of this world. We are just simple common seamen, who have had to go out and serve in this day and in this place, all in the manner most needed.

Oh, we need to take what we have learned and apply it. Not one man who went into that hold had every had to secure a load of tanks in a storm at sea before. They knew basic seamanship, and they knew the necessity of getting this particular job done right. They went into the hold without flinching, for the safety of the whole ship and their shipmates. It was just a natural thing to do, albeit, there was nothing natural about the doing of it.

We too are asked to take Jesus with us and then to go out and serve. It is not any different to David Milton. .... **All hail the common hero, who takes his lead from the foundations that stand eternal, and then goes about his business resolutely.**

By the way, those tanks that were saved down there in the hold, by the work of David Milton and his fellow sailors, - they were among the first tanks landed at a place called Normandy and they raced across France, Belgium, and Holland. They raced all the way into German and helped bring the end of the war under another man, one named Patton. Neither George Patton or David Milton knew one another, but together they served with one another, towards a common goal.

..... An Old Testament Perspective

AND THE SIX PART BLESSING of the Abrahamic Covenant Genesis 12:1ff

Hebrews 12:1 Now the LORD said to Abram,

"**Go forth** from your country,

And from your relatives

And from your father's house,

To the land which I will show you;

2 And I will make **you** a great nation,

And I will bless **you**,

And make **your** name great;

And so **you** shall be a blessing;

3 And I will bless those who bless **you**,

And the one who curses **you** I will curse.

And **in you** all the families of the earth shall be blessed. "

This is a request for a total break with all that Abraham has in this world, from the perspective of the Nuzi Laws. It is absolute total surrender of all personal sovereignty.

A

B

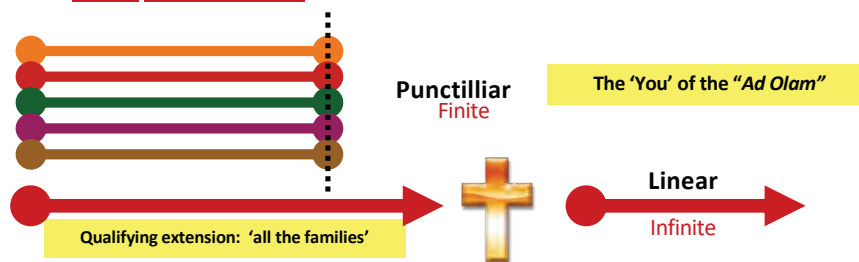
C

D

E

His loss is replaced with substance greater than loss.

---- F



Genesis 12:1-3, Genesis 17:1ff, Genesis 22:9-19 (:16)

The "Oath" of God To Abraham

Hebrews 6: 13 For when God made the promise to Abraham, since He could swear by no one greater, He swore by Himself, 14 saying, "I will surely bless you, and I will surely multiply you." 15 And thus, having patiently waited, he obtained the promise. 16 For men swear by one greater than themselves, and with them an oath given as confirmation is an end of every dispute. 17 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, 18 in order that by two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we may have strong encouragement, we who have fled for refuge in laying hold of the hope set before us. 19 This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, a hope both sure and steadfast and one which enters within the veil, 20 where Jesus has entered as a forerunner for us, having become a high priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.

1.Reference is to Genesis 22:16.

2.We have in Jesus a sure thing, because God took an oath to ensure that we have an anchor and a priest that owes no allegiance to anything but to God and righteousness.

3.As in all of the statements of the Abrahamic Covenant, the one point that is set in linear syntax is the part about all families / all peoples will be blessed in the progeny of Abraham.

4.Paul clarifies this when he says in Galatians 3 that the dual 'zerah' was in reference to the one and not to the many. [A dual is a word that is both singular and plural without and added letters. We have a few of these still in English: deer, sheep.]

The End of The Story: A Churches Example

Some Table Discussions and Question for Sunday Morning Discussion and Friday Morning Coffee's

1. What is essential that we preach, here in this place, today? Why?
2. What is there about this message that is going to take us from the world of the elementary to the world of the mature?
3. How do you determine what should be preached-taught and how much of each segment?
4. Why do you think that one who has once been enlightened, and then fallen away, has so hard a time getting things back right with God, restoring the purity of his faith?
5. How do we nurture and develop an individual? Give verses to support your thoughts.
6. Where do the seeds for sin and doubt come from in your own life? How do you handle the incursions of sin ?
7. What do you do to get back up again?
8. How do you handle 'negative criticism'? Do you think that you are unique in this reaction? What do you want people to say to you you to build you up?

HEBREW S



Jesus preaching the "Sermon On The Mount"

By Karl Heinrich Bloch

The Study prepared by
L. M. Ancell , 2010 Australia

The 'road' may be the way of exile, or it may be the way of hope. Either way, it is the same road. It all depends on what we think in our hearts.

Keep your eye on the leader !

L8

II. This Better Hope: The Text Says So !

1. What is the text telling us?

1. The way of the law was weak and useless.
2. But God is all wise and all knowing
3. And God inspires the word, purposefully
4. There fore God knew that the Law, and all forms of 'law codes' are not going to cure man's sin problem. They were a training course.
5. That which came in was the better / best hope mankind had, or will ever have. It is what we carry with us as we march to 'The Road'..
6. **Therefore, do not look back to the old way. Look forward to the new way. As you read Hebrews, remember the Christology**

It brings up the very serious question, "Are we to be, 'law bound'?, or Are we to be 'relationship bound'?,

or "Are we to be 'Jesus bound'?"

Jesus is the one who leads us up and over the mountains to God, perfectly, through the new Covenant. He is not only the leader, but the sacrifice. He is our bridge and we must not ever forget our mission's prime directive of following Him, and His leadership in all matters, and in all decisions.

A careful watching of the feet keeps one from stumbling over obstacles, but it does not necessarily keep one on track with the leader. Jesus is the leader who knows the way, and is thus the sure high priest. ← ← This is the reason for Hebrews as you let this big picture settle inside of your mind.

Let's return to the text...

26 For it was fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners and exalted above the heavens; 27 who does not need daily, like those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins, and then for the sins of the people, because this He did once for all when He offered up Himself. 28 For the Law appoints men as high priests who are weak, but the word of the oath, which came after the Law, appoints a Son, made perfect forever.

**"... enough said ... best said"
No one needs to commit on this at all!
He is the capable one !!**

A careful watching of the feet keeps one from stumbling over obstacles, but it does not necessarily keep one on track with the leader.

H E B R E W S



Jesus preaching the "Sermon On The Mount"

By Karl Heinrich Bloch

A STUDY IN PRACTICAL CHRISTOLOGY FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

The Study prepared by
L. M. Ancell , 2010 Australia

The Immigrant's Dream

“All of us, need to have an emergency road bag prepared. The great question is, what should we pack inside of it?”

One of the problems with being an immigrant, is in having to learn a new language and a new culture, let alone a new way to think. Not many expats find that to be easy. The Christian is called to always be prepared to be out on the road to somewhere. It may come as an individual move or it may come as a group exodus, but move we all will, several times in our lives.

I have lived in several countries now. I love Australia, but I still love my homeland as well. I have seen beautiful places in my travels and I have learned the ability to live in all of them, appreciating them for what they are. As a result of travel, I have learned how to go about the actual act of travel; to take what is really necessary and what is really going to be needed on that first trip to the ‘new place’.

The problem is, is that I always take a bit of the old place with me. Recipes, favourite music, friendships, heirlooms and nick-nacks to remind me of the places to which I have travelled. Some have been places where my expectations and excitement were high as I journeyed there. Some were not. You just do not know what to prepare for, other than ‘the road’.

I was asked to go to one place, Abilene, Texas, that was going to be a real dump in my mind. No mountains, no clear rivers, no friends, no beauty. Now, I like to take pictures and in Abilene, there was nothing to take pictures of at all in my mind, and I was getting very lonely and morose. Why would God send me here !!!

Just as it was getting hard to handle, God sent along a man named John Whitfield, who took me out to an old deserted Calvary post of the US Army, a place of ruins, a place from back in the Indian wars, called Fort Phantom. We shot pictures of cactus, of sunsets, of old buildings, of each other, of little lizards, and of tracks in the sand. What was once a place of no-beauty became a place of great beauty when this brother took time away from his family and showed me another picture of Abilene.

John Whitfield became one of the bright lights in my life at that time, along with a family that sort of adopted me and treated me as a son, the Stewarts. I carry with me, everywhere I go, a picture of a cactus with the son shining behind it and I remember Abilene as a very special place, filled with very special memories and even greater friends, like the Stewarts, the Longleys, the Whitfield's, the Connel's, and so many, many more.

When anyone gets called on to ‘immigrate, as a simple choice, or as an enforced choice, it is a scary thing. Who is going to look after me? Will I be safe? Will my needs be met? Will I find someone to be friends with there? **These questions are hard. In the Old Testament, these and many more were the job of the high priest, to “keep” the people.**

Hebrews 8:1 ff

8:1 **Now the main point in what has been said is this:** we have such a high priest, who has taken His seat at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, 2 a minister in the sanctuary, and in the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, not man. 3 For every high priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices; hence it is necessary that this high priest also have something to offer. 4 Now if He were on earth, He would not be a priest at all, since there are those who offer the gifts according to the Law; 5 who serve a copy and shadow of the heavenly things, just as Moses was warned by God when he was about to erect the tabernacle; for, "See," He says, "that you make all things according to the pattern which was shown you on the mountain." 6 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. 7 For if that first covenant had been faultless, there would have been no occasion sought for a second. 8 For finding fault with them, He says,

This quotation has been described by some as
The Song Of The Immigrant's Vision

"Behold, days are coming, says the Lord,
When I will effect a new covenant (a new land of promise)
With the house of Israel and with the house of Judah;
9 Not like the covenant which I made with their fathers
On the day when I took them by the hand
To lead them out of the land of Egypt;
For they did not continue in My covenant,
And I did not care for them, says the Lord.
10 "For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel
After those days, says the Lord:
I will put My laws into their minds,
And I will write them upon their hearts.
And I will be their God,
And they shall be My people.
11 "And they shall not teach everyone his fellow citizen,
And everyone his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,'
For all shall know Me,
From the least to the greatest of them.
12 "For I will be merciful to their iniquities,
And I will remember their sins no more."
13 When He said, "A new covenant," He has made the first
obsolete. But whatever is becoming obsolete and growing old is
ready to disappear.

Cf. Passages
Jeremiah 31:31
Luke 22:20
II Cor. 3:6

NOTE: When people immigrant they fall into three categories normally. 1) they completely reject their former culture and immerse themselves in the new one 2) they set up, as much as possible, the first country within the second country or 3) they find a happy balance between preserving some of the old within the new. It seems obvious to me that the third way, for the first generation at least, has got to be the most sensible. **We must be a people that embrace the new covenant as an immigrant embraces a new country, to the exclusion of the old.**

FIRST: Seven Quick Points On The Reality of Christ For Us Today

Hebrews 8:1-2 Now the main point in what has been said is this: we have such a high priest, who has taken His seat at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, 2 a minister in the sanctuary, and in the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, not man.

1. **Develop A Real Jesus Picture:** The reality that the 'Christian-out-on-the-road' must keep close to his heart is that **the Christ is not a myth, but a true reality**. We can count on Him. {We all are out on the road, in the field, having to carry our faith with us, each step of the way, -to work, -to class, -to our homes, -to life. If we only carry a general concept of behaviour, and consistently assume the reality of Christ in my life, or in the congregational life, then He will dim and fade into the darkest of backgrounds.

7 Things that have to be in our kit-bags and back packs... you have to work on these, they don't just happen

Be ready and prepared to immigrate...

Fighting's and turmoil will eventuate and destroy that person quickly. Keep the focus of Jesus, just as it says in Hebrews 2:1. This whole book is about keeping Jesus plainly in our focus and in our living. If all we do is 'improve the periphery' we will still destroy the centre.}

↑
↑
Mindset of Survival
↓
↓

3. **Defend the fact that He is The Real First Authority:** We must remember that He is at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens
4. **Remember That He is Always Active On Our Behalf,** not a passive, High Priest.-He continually ministers in the sanctuary / true tabernacle that God Himself has made.

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. 7 For if that first covenant had been faultless, there would have been no occasion sought for a second.

4. **He fulfils all.** The reality is, is that this Jesus, this Christ, has done what the earthly priests were to do, bringing both gifts and sacrifices. The pattern established by God is maintained in Jesus' ministry.
5. **But He brings to us a better covenant,** one that is faultless.

...these seven points are the facts and they are uncontested !!!

6. In God's eternally designed plan, **Jesus comes as the answer that God had always intended.** Thus a sense of dispensationalism is incorrect in any true biblical understanding as God has only had one plan, all along, by which man would be saved. There were different stages to this plan, but there was only one plan, and that came through the efforts of the High Priest, -Jesus-.

7. We are thus freed from what Paul called the 'curse of the law', a dependence on my own perfection for a dependence on the perfection that Jesus brings with Him. This is the "better" side to His work, perfect sacrifice and a new covenant to boot.

Second: Exercises for building a better 'Christ Picture'

- A. Make it a point to read through the gospels every four months. This is just a chapter per day, per month. Do it together as a couple / family.
- B. Using a wide margin bible, note all of the Old Testament prophecies that are answered in Jesus. Write these in the margins in archival red ink so it will not bleed through. You can make your own wide margin bible by using your computer and copying down chapters of the bible that are free on the internet.
- C. Set up a yearly 'family bible retreat' and challenge each other on one of the gospels in a 'bible bowl' style of competition and then make it an annual fun event, a tradition.
- D. Develop a habit of special prayer, where each day you talk to God about one of the stories in the gospels and ask Him the questions that you have regarding it. Discuss all things with God, regularly, but make it a point to focus on the things that Jesus has done and how I can communicate it better to the community around me.
- E. Read one book per year that is on some part of Jesus life and ministry. Get to be very well read on the subject of Jesus.
- F. Find some one who is willing to be a pen pal with you on the subject of Jesus on the internet and share your thoughts and observations with that person. You can even go in for teaching on the WBS format and just write to some students as they take the course. Get involved in sharing the very hearty of the gospel with someone every day.
- G. Write cards to people in moments of travail and encourage them through the works and heart of Jesus. Help them know that they are not alone.

Covenants In Christian Thinking - A

The idea of a covenant needs to be understood from an Old Testament perspective.

Covenant: an agreement / promise between God and His people, where God makes certain promises and the people pledge themselves to certain behavioural responses. Both sides are 'promising' to do something in the contract. The term 'covenant' comes from the Hebrew term 'be'rith', which means a cutting of an animal in to parts with the contracting parties passing through them. [To understand the Word of God accurately one must become familiar with the eight BIBLICAL covenants. They fall into two classes:

(A) **CONDITIONAL** A covenant which guarantees that God will do His part when the human requirements stipulated in that covenant are met.

(B) **UNCONDITIONAL** Distinguished from a conditional covenant by the fact that its ultimate fulfilment is promised by God and depends upon God's power and sovereignty for its fulfilment.

1. Primary Covenants:

1. Edenic Covenant   Genesis 1:26-31 2:16-17 (innocence)
2. Adamic Covenant   Genesis 3:16-19 (grace)
3. Noahic Covenant: Genesis 9:1-18
4. Abrahamic Covenant: Genesis 12:1ff 13, 15,17, 22:15-18
  - a. Isaccian Covenant: Genesis 26:3-24
  - b. Jacobian Covenant: Genesis 27:28-28:15
  - c. Josephian Covenant   Genesis 40:15
5. Mosaic Covenant   Exodus 20-31
6. Davidic Covenant: II Samuel 7:4-16 I Chron. 17:3-15
7. Precursive Covenant: Jeremiah 31:31-40

2. **Genesis** is the training of the eye, the building of the primary relationship between God and man. We first learn of God and his power and authority, and then we learn of His concerned involvement with His creature. The primary covenant that is cut, in Genesis is the one that begins with the knowledge and disclosure of God.

3. **Supersessionism:** The belief that the covenants of the Old Testament will be superseded by one final covenant, one that will be established in and by the messiah.

Covenants In Christian Thinking - B

The New Covenant:

1. The New Covenant is very different from the Old Covenant. The new covenant is based on what Jesus did for us, as opposed to the old covenant which was based on our having to fulfil to a law code perfectly.
2. Legalism, is not a good thing. The Law of Moses was designed to be weak and useless for a reason, -to show us the futility of trying to live off of our own merits. We can not do that. **Galatians 3:9-14**

So then those who are of faith are blessed with Abraham, the believer. 10 For as many as are of the works of the Law are under a curse; for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who does not abide by all things written in the book of the law, to perform them." 11 Now that no one is justified by the Law before God is evident; for, "The righteous man shall live by faith." 12 However, the Law is not of faith; on the contrary, "He who practices them shall live by them." 13 **Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law**, having become a curse for us — for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree" — 14 in order that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

3. The great difference between legalists and non-legalists is not the number of laws that one is required to obey and fulfil. It is the point in which we place our dependence.
4. **So what are you saying?** I am saying that as New Covenant Christians we have things we must do to please God. The New Covenant is not totally free from requirements !!
5. The **"First Requirement"** is to honour Jesus as the absolute Lord, the sovereign, the one who makes the rules. That is the first great point of the letter to the Hebrews.
6. The **"Second Requirement"** is to always focus on Jesus. If you do not know what He looks like, how will you know if you are following Him or not. (I do not speak of physical knowledge as to His looks, but to the spirit of Him and to what He asks us to stand for.)
7. This means that I use His words and the overtly simplicity that the New Covenant is already written in to expound the truths that define the New Covenant.

Covenants In Christian Thinking - C

Covenants of Law and Covenants of Promise

1. **Points of origin differ:** One is from Mt Sinai and one is from the "Jerusalem above" **Galatians 4:24-26**
2. **Points of purpose differ:** Paul said that the 'first covenant' is one of a 'ministry of death' and condemnation. **II Corinthians 3:7-9** **Romans 8:3**
3. **Points of efficacy differs:** The covenant of promise is one that says that God will provide what man can not provide, salvation in spite of man's inability to keep the law. **Ephesians 2:12**
4. **Points of authorship differ:** Jesus is the author of the 'better covenant'. **Hebrews 9:15**
5. **Focal Point of relationship differs:** Jesus death served as an oath of God promise that He would give us salvation **Hebrews 7:28**

Taken from Nelson's Bible Dictionary

Covenant of Blood (Covenant of Promise)

6. **Of the blood:** The new covenant is in the blood of Jesus. In **Luke 22:20**, Jesus is establishing the Lord's Supper, and here He describes the new covenant that is coming as being one 'in His blood'.
7. **Spiritual Liberty:** Christianity is built on blood. It is never to be forgotten that the church was brought into being by the blood of Jesus, shed on the cross for us. Just like in life today, our liberty will require the shedding of blood periodically. Our spiritual liberty required that Jesus shed His precious and unblemished blood for our sins.
8. **Sin Payment:** The entire concept of the 'covenant of promise' is based on the idea of the payment of sin debt of mankind, by the only source that is capable of doing the job. **Hebrews 8:6**

The immigrant sees a hope in the cities and farms of his 'new homeland'. It is natural and it is good. For the Christian immigrant, we see a relationship with Jesus that over-rides all other visions. The works of the law is the old country from which we fled with all of its impossibilities and legalisms.

Question for Sunday Morning Discussion

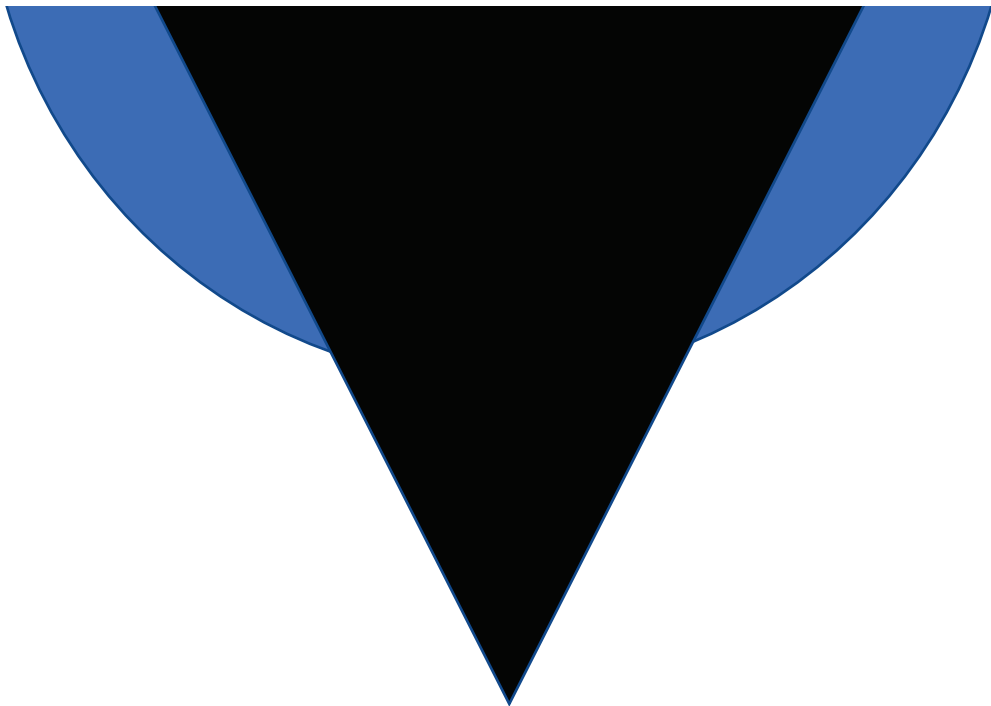
1. What is the covenant of promise mentioned in Ephesians 2:12? How does it affect the teachings in Hebrews 9?
2. In this chapter of Hebrews, is Jesus ruling or is He just beside the throne? What would be the difference between these two perspectives. How will it affect our concept of Heavenly authority?
3. What does 'copy and shadow' actually mean? What are type and antitypes in biblical study?
4. What does the phrase mean, "make all things according to the pattern"? How does a full 'pattern' sense of authority work today in the New Covenant?
5. What does the writer mean when he quotes the passage that says that God will put His laws in our minds and write them on our hearts."? What does the quote itself mean?
6. Can this be poetical? How would we know if it were poetical?
7. Is there a need for a written revelation from God if they are in our minds and on our hearts?
8. How will the Old Covenant 'disappear'? Will any part of it 'remain' in effect under the New Covenant? How do you know?
9. What is legalism, really? Is there legalism in the church today? Please give some examples if you believe so?

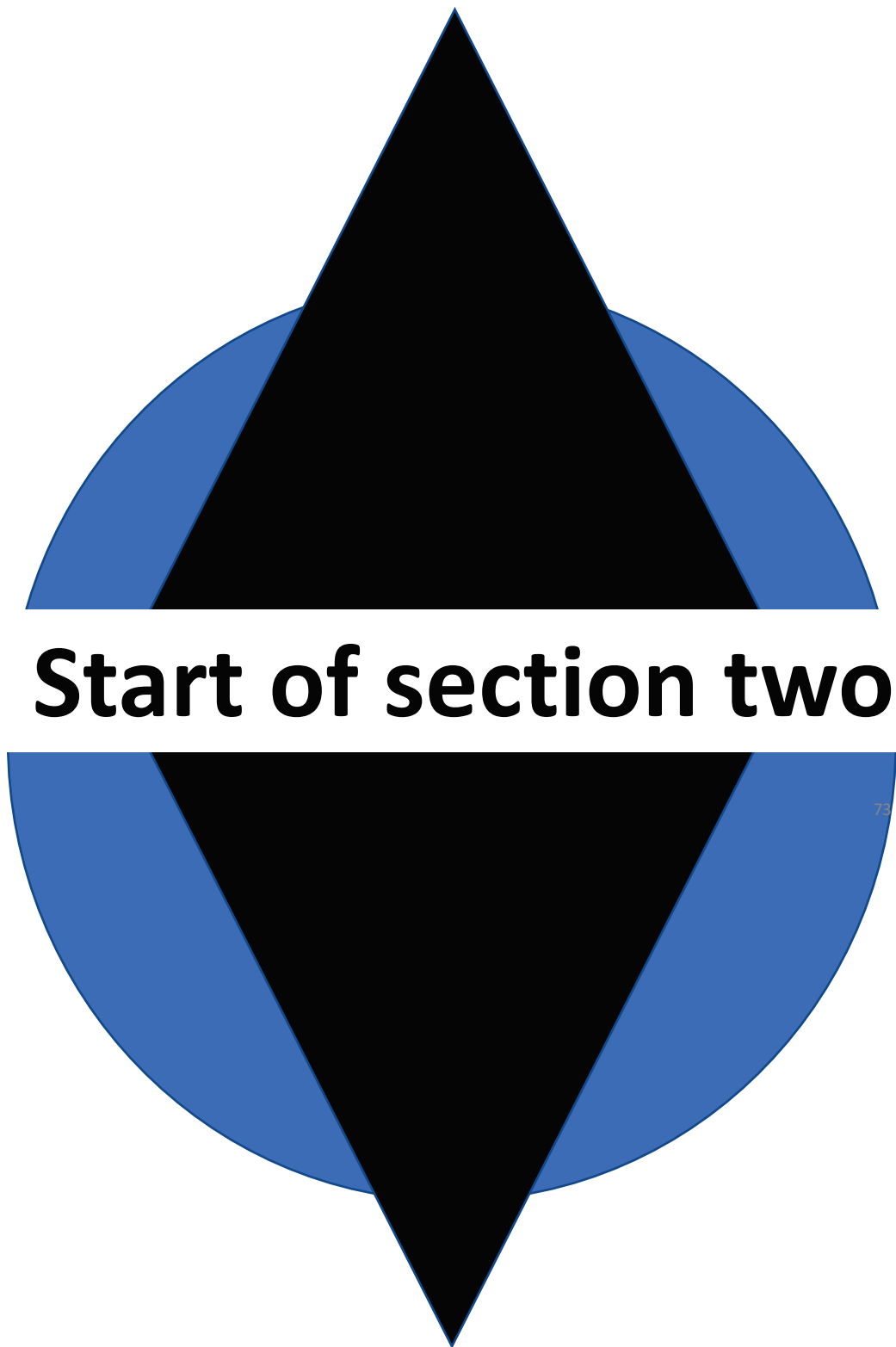
Homework For The Really Eager To Discuss Over Coffee

- A. Please name six points of difference between the Old Testament and the New Testament that are of personal significance to you, and be prepared to discuss them in class. You will need to give book chapter and verse for the Old Testament position and for the New Testament position.
- B. Why does the church have such a hard time with grace and law questions? What has caused the church to orient itself to the extremes in these areas?



End of section one.
Go to section two





H E B R E W S



Jesus preaching the "Sermon On The Mount"

By Karl Heinrich Bloch

A STUDY IN PRACTICAL CHRISTOLOGY FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

The Study prepared by
L. M. Ancell , 2010 Australia

When one sits down to read, Hebrews 9 and 10, one can not get beyond the monumentally big idea of sacrifice. It is an over powering topic in all of the letter to the Hebrews, but here it takes on the more substantial role of being the final work of Jesus' earthly ministry. He did for us what we can not do for ourselves, no matter how good we are at obeying all of the laws that are out there to guide us in living a Godly life.

Let us be clear at the outset, that we do have things that we are to do. There are things that are written down that we must obey. But even if we were to do the best job ever done in keeping the new covenants laws, we will be short. We need Jesus and what He has done for us.

Prayer --- Prayer

Sacrifices

James J Braddock was a man who loved his family dearly. He lived at a time in world history where just the idea of putting food on the table was a major concern. Jobs were day long events with no promise of a job tomorrow. You answered a 'cattle call' and worked, in his area, on the dock for one day at greatly reduced wages. You could barely call it a living and his yet he was determined to keep his family together and to do the best job possible to put some bit of food on the table and some heat in the stove. A noble heart, to say the least.

The one thing that he had going was a very strong chin and a very powerful right hand. So, he took on fights to put some extra money in the til. It all paid off. In the middle of the Great Depression, this man who became the hero of the downcast, keep on fighting to keep his family together. He keep on struggling, and he keep on winning, until he beat Max Baer to become the heavy weight champion of the world. He held this title until he was finally dethroned by Joe Louis, the greatest boxer of the last 100 years by many accounts.

James J. Braddock, fought not out of a love of boxing, but out of a necessity, a sacrifice that he was willing to make for his family. It was the only way out of the desperate situation that he and his family found themselves.

The press dubbed him the "Cinderella Man", for out of the diversity of the times came one single success that lifted the hearts of millions of others through out the depressed regions of New Jersey and New York. His sacrifice for his family, bolstered others, giving hope and focus to the people who were struggling just like he was struggling. Our actions today will touch other lives. That is a given. But it is in the sense of real sacrifice that we find the most significant gifts that mankind has ever had offered to himself.

Hebrews 9: 1 - 10

9:1 Now even the first covenant **had regulations** of divine worship and the earthly sanctuary. 2 For there was a tabernacle prepared, the outer one, in which were the lamp-stand and the table and the sacred bread; this is called the holy place. 3 And behind the second veil, there was a tabernacle which is called the Holy of Holies, 4 having a golden altar of incense and the ark of the covenant covered on all sides with gold, in which was a golden jar holding the manna, and Aaron's rod which budded, and the tables of the covenant. 5 And above it were the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat; but of these things we cannot now speak in detail. 6 Now when these things have been thus prepared, the priests are continually entering the outer tabernacle, performing the divine worship, 7 but into the second only the high priest enters, once a year, not without taking blood, which he offers for himself and for the sins of the people committed in ignorance. 8 The Holy Spirit is signifying this, that the way into the holy place has not yet been disclosed, while the outer tabernacle is still standing, 9 which is a symbol for the present time. Accordingly both gifts and sacrifices are offered which cannot make the worshiper perfect in conscience, 10 since they relate only to food and drink and various washings, regulations for the body imposed until a time of reformation.

Preliminaries

1. We live in a world that has regulations and bylaws by the boat load. It is not a new idea to have to live within the boundaries of some law. It is called **"governance"**.
2. Those that support the idea of no "governance" and absolutely no law are called **antinomianists**, or **anarchists**, -with some being called **Buddhists**. **This is still very much with us today.**
3. In the Old Testament, there were laws governing the temple and who could go where and who could do what with in it, even as Levites. There were rules upon rules, upon rules, upon rules.
4. There was one primary rule: that blood had to be shed for the sins of the people, and to cleanse the relationship with God.
5. The great question is "Why?" **Why was it necessary to have "blood" shed to cleanse the people? Why not water and soap?**
6. I personally believe it is because God had said at the beginning that if we go against Him we will die, and the price of blood was a reminder that that was so. Man did die at the Garden's 'Apple Eating Festival', just not in the way that he expected.

Hebrews 9: 11 - 22

11 **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; 12 **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**.** 13 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, 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?** 15 **And for this reason He is the mediator of a new covenant**, in order that since a death has taken place for the redemption of the transgressions that were committed under the first covenant, those who have been called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance. 16 For where a covenant is, there must of necessity be the death of the one who made it. 17 For a covenant is valid only when men are dead, for it is never in force while the one who made it lives. 18 Therefore even the first covenant was not inaugurated without blood. 19 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, 20 saying, "This is the blood of the covenant which God commanded you." 21 And in the same way he sprinkled both the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry with the blood. 22 And according to the Law, one may almost say, all things are cleansed with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no forgiveness!!" **...and neither can there be any without blood..."**

1. Christ's work here on earth was that of a priest who offered sacrifices. But the sacrifice that He made was one of perfection and not one contaminated with any element of carnality – sin. He did not use the things of this world to do the job, but He used His own blood which did the job completely, in one go. **(This is the perpetually effective way.)**
2. So stop and think, if you have the opportunity to be under the old and ineffective, repetitive way or under the new and eternal, continuously effective way, which would you choose? **Why choose the old way?**
3. The blood of Jesus will totally and absolutely cleanse you of all sins and all consequences of those sins. This is the value of the new covenant, and **there is no other way to achieve the needed results.**
4. We do not know all of the whys and wherefores, but it seems that we need to have the sin debt paid for, in full, and in Jesus that is just what is accomplished. Repeating this point of fact, **there is no forgiveness ever, without the shedding of His blood.**

Hebrews 9: 23 - 28

23 Therefore **it was necessary** for the copies of the things in the heavens to be cleansed with these, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. 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; 25 nor was it that He should offer Himself often, as the high priest enters the holy place year by year with blood not his own. 26 Otherwise, He would have needed to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now once at the consummation of the ages He has been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. 27 And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment, 28 so Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, shall appear a second time for salvation without reference to sin, to those who eagerly await Him.

Summation

1. In order for relationships to be brought back to a **point of real purity**, there needs to be a total and absolute cleansing of all elements that reflect the relationship between a man and God.
2. The things from the physical world can not accomplish this cleansing.
3. What is needed to reconstitute a true and holy relationship with God is something beyond the physical world's capability.
4. This real and lasting "cleansing process" requires a degree of perfection that is not attainable in the human-physical world.
5. What was required was Jesus going before God, offering Himself, to purify 'holy place', thus paying the entire sin debt.
6. He did this, **once for all**.
7. His work affected all of mankind then, **for all of history**.
8. Jesus is the ultimate sacrifice, and the final and absolute answer to the sin problem that was incurred way back at the Garden through the acts of rebellion that each individual has committed to destroy his relationship with God.

Note the universality of this passage, and the way that the return is phrased: - it is a return for all who await Him, not a select few of those who await.

This passage is written with a general audience, and it is all time, not sectored time as would be the case in a total preterist view.

Old Testament Sacrifices - Over-view 1

Sacrifices in the Old Testament are a bit of a mystery to the majority of Christians in the pews today. This is so because we do not spend a great deal of time looking at them, nor even reading the books of Leviticus and Deuteronomy. We are the less for this.

We must understand that New Testament Christianity is built on the back of the training that was accomplished in the Pentateuch. We do not use this material today as any form of a 'rule of faith/, but it still teaches us a great deal about God and what constitutes the realities of holiness.

The very first thing that the sacrificial system teaches us is the awful nature of sin. Sin is so bad that it breaks relationship with God and utterly pollutes every element of that relationship. It is a corroding influence that brings someone every lower until it devours them totally.

The great question is then, "What can be done to stop the rot of sin, the devouring of the individual, and bring about a freedom from guilt and a return to the purity of the relationship with God?" This is the great pursuit of "justice, mitigated by mercy and love": the payment of the sin price and the opening up of the opportunity for God to share His love with His creature.

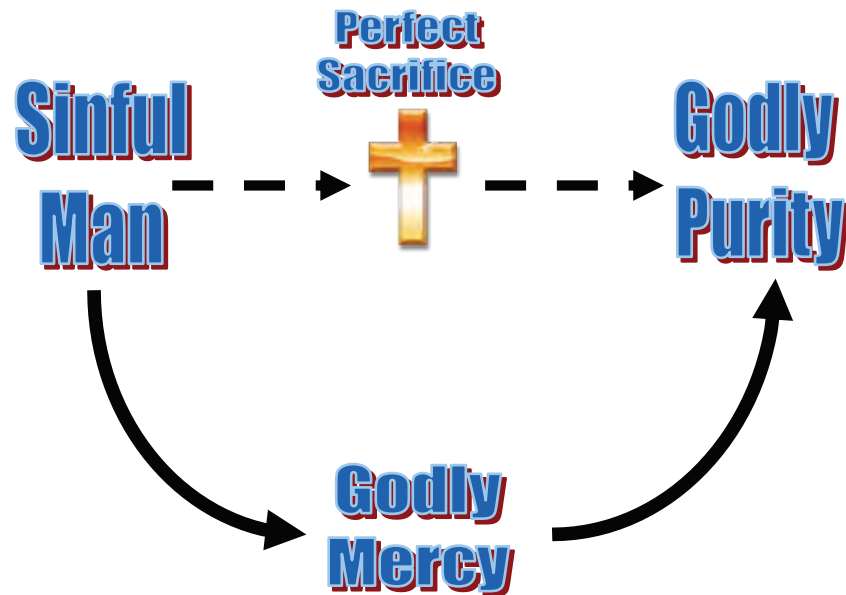
A sacrifice is the taking of the burden of the debt of sin, which to be just, requires execution, eternal capital punishment, by one innocent party and then for that party to pay the debt for others. As all elements of the relationship with God, absolute purity is required. It is only found in the work of Jesus. **"He paid a debt he did not owe. I owed a debt I could not pay. Christ Jesus paid the debt the debt that I could never pay."**, as the song says.

The sacrifices of the Old Testament were contingent upon the ultimate payment of the debt which was to occur latter in history when Jesus went to the cross.

Salvation is then by what Jesus did. It is not by that which we do. What of baptism, faith, repentance? Are they not essential? Yes they are! But, they are the acts of appeal that one is to make to avail themselves of God's mercy. It is like Naaman at the river: if we do what God asks, God will bless us with His mercy and forgiveness and allow the debt payment to cover our own particular sin problems. But if we do not do what He says, then we are still acting in a rebellious manner and setting ourselves up as adversarial authorities to God. Baptism is thus an act of submission to God.

Old Testament Sacrifices - Over-view 2

Sacrifices	OT Ref.	Elements	Purpose
Burnt Offering	Lev 1; 6:8-13; 8:18-21; 16:24	Bull, ram or male bird (dove or young pigeon for the poor); wholly consumed; no defect	Voluntary act of worship; atonement for unintentional sin in general; expression of devotion, commitment and complete surrender to God
Grain Offering	Lev 2; 6:14-23	Grain, fine flour, olive oil, incense, baked bread (cakes or wafers), salt; no yeast or honey; accompanied burnt offering and fellowship offering (along with drink offering)	Voluntary act of worship; recognition of God's goodness and provisions; devotion to God
Fellowship Offering	Lev 3; 7:11-34	Any animal without defect from herd or flock; variety of breads	Voluntary act of worship; thanksgiving and fellowship (it included a communal meal)
Sin Offering	Lev 4:1-5:13; 6:24-30; 8:14-17; 16:3-22	1. Young bull: for high priest and congregation 2. Male goat: for leader 3. Female goat or lamb: for common person 4. Dove or pigeon: for the poor 5. Tenth of an ephah of fine flour: for the very poor	Mandatory atonement for specific unintentional sin; confession of sin; forgiveness of sin; cleansing from defilement
Guilt Offering	Lev 5:14-6:7; 7:1-6	Ram or lamb	Mandatory atonement for unintentional sin requiring restitution; cleansing from defilement; make restitution; pay 20% fine



Obedience to “that form of doctrine is essential”!! But, and this is very crucial, the centrality of that form of doctrine is the cross and Jesus upon that cross, sacrificially, for appellant mankind.

If we allow Jesus to become diminished, or to ignore Him for the sake for mere obedience, then we are guilty of a gross form of sin, one that changes God plan of salvation by His grace, to one of salvation by our own efforts, regardless of the cross’s involvement.

Jesus’ sacrifice upon the cross did, once for all time, what needed to be done, pay the sin debt and cleanse the relationship totally. It is open and available to everyone who will avail themselves of His mercy. One will not need amnesty, for one will have purity, through the death of Jesus for our sins.

Conclusion

Sacrifices are always appreciated by those that are close to the moment of sacrifice best, to those who have indeed understood the real significance of what was done for some one else.

Today in our world, we do not often have any James J. Braddock's to turn to for a historic picture of the sacrifices on the behalf of others. Those that do have a possibility of being men who give hope and change the conditions of mankind are all too often found to be nothing more than morally deficit politicians, movie stars, and wayward sports stars. They hold a shining candle for a moment and then the reality of day dawns and we see them in another light.

These type of men, and these type of circumstances do not happen every day. Sacrifice in our world of self-indulgent, do your own thing type of thinking rarely has a place in our thoughts. We get so caught up in church with being right, with obeying the rules, that we slowly loose sight of the one who made our sacrifice possible. We need to remember Jesus, and to preach Him, and Him crucified. We can not afford to go about our preaching as if Jesus is just a topic among many topics. That kills churches! That kills the excitement of every thing Christian.

We must remember Jesus in every service, in every day, letting Him become the guiding light. This is what Hebrews has been saying all along. He is the epicentre of our thoughts, prayers, hopes, lives, families, and we must take pains to make sure that He stays as the epicentre. If we do not, the church is doomed to become nothing more that a series of rules, just like Judaism. We will know how much mint and cumin we need to give, but we will not know why, and what it took to get us to this position of a saved-cleansed soul before the awesome might of God.

Old Testament Sacrifices - Over-view 3

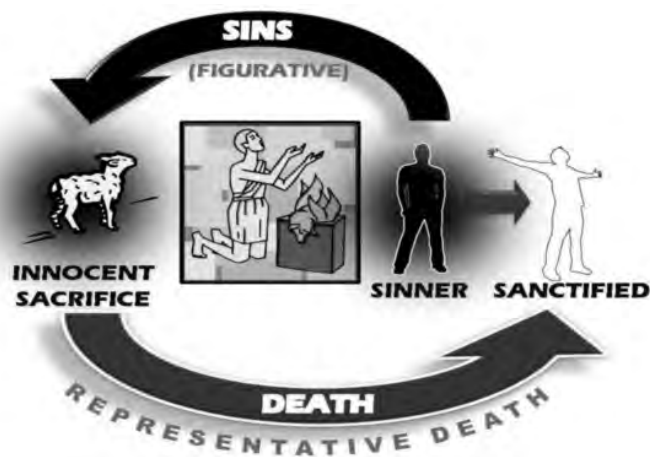
Animal Sacrifice in the Old Testament God's Love Allows the Price to be Paid by a Substitute

Fortunately, God loves His creation and decided to help pay this price even though it was undeserved, this is called *grace* (God gives us what we don't deserve – life). He showed His *mercy* (God doesn't give us what we do deserve – death) We deserved God's justice but we received God's mercy. How was His mercy shown? – by blood.

The Bible could be said to drip blood if you squeezed it. The Bible is bloody due to the problem and price of sin. God, in His love and His mercy, allowed the price of life to be paid through an innocent stand-in. This was the purpose of animal sacrifice instituted in the Old Testament. God showed His mercy by allowing the animal to pay the price of death owed by the sinner.

God made provision (or atonement) for the judicial price of sin to be paid by an animal. This is described in Leviticus 17:11 (emphasis added): *"For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you on the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood by reason of the life that makes atonement."* The life of the animal atones for (literally "covers") or cleanses the sins of the sinner. In this manner the sinner "died" representatively or through the animal as a substitute. What was the result? The removal of sin. For example, in Leviticus 16:30 this result was described as taking place on the Day of Atonement (the yearly sacrifice of animals): *"for it is on this day that atonement shall be made for you to cleanse you; you will be clean from all your sins before the LORD* (emphasis added)."

Why an animal? The animal was innocent of sin, thereby qualifying it to be a substitute for the guilty sinner. An animal was innocent of sin, however, because it was amoral, it couldn't sin. If an animal could have sinned it would have been liable for its own sin! Sinlessness was required for it to provide a representative or substitute death for the sinner.



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Question for Sunday Morning Discussion

1. Why in Hebrews 9:1-10 do we have a review of the nature of the Tabernacle and its set up?
2. What does this material in the start of this chapter tell us about the nature of the exclusive purity of God? How are we benefited by this material?
3. What is so essential about the shedding of blood? Why did God require the shedding of blood to purify and cleanse the relationship between Himself and mankind?
4. What are ten random laws that we need to uphold today to be Christians? Are there other laws that must be upheld?
5. If we are cleansed by the blood of Jesus, which was shed as a sacrifice on the cross, why do we need to “do” anything?
6. What is the value of ‘Christian laws’ if we can not repay the debt of our sins by our actions?
7. What does the text say is the reason that the new covenant is better than the old covenant? What does this really mean for us today?
8. What does it mean that “Christ will appear a second time for salvation”? Hebrews 9:28
9. What does it mean that this second appearance will be without “reference to sin”? Hebrews 9:28
10. What is the most difficult part of this chapter for you to understand? Please discuss your perplexities outside of class and then come back for some small group discussions on these issues.

H E B R E W S



Jesus preaching the "Sermon On The Mount"

By Karl Heinrich Bloch

A STUDY IN PRACTICAL CHRISTOLOGY FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

The Study prepared by
L. M. Ancell , 2010 Australia

"Once For All"

Recently, while looking for good human interest stories on the internet, I came across a site that had illustrations for preachers. I had found my pearl of great price. One of the stories that caught my eye was of a rather young girl who was in a hospital room, with her brother who was lying quietly in the bed. She was standing there, beside the bed, reached over and kissed him and said 'goodbye'.

Then she was taken by her parents into the adjacent room and the nurse began to hook her up to a blood transfusion system. The needle was inserted and the blood began to flow towards a transfusion bag. She looked at the needle and the flow and asked the remarkable question, "How long before I die?" You see, she thought that she was giving her life for her brother, and she was doing it, as a six year old, sacrificially and voluntarily. It sort of tugged on my heart strings, as it was supposed to.

Sacrifice and sacrifices that involve human beings giving themselves for others is one of the things that catches everyone's eye. The shedding of blood has an intimate relationship with the human character in every society and in every age. These special examples never cease to hold the attention of the observer and touch the heart of the readers.

What is really amazing is that we, you and I, have a personal gift of an even greater sacrifice given unto us in Jesus Christ and Him crucified. It cries into our senses and it pricks the hearts of everyman. To understand Christianity, is to understand the great and eternal nature of His sacrifice. To diminish it, or to minimize it, or even to rarely concentrate on it, is to destroy the very fundamental of our salvation, and thus to void our whole Christian relationship with God in favour of a neo-legalistic bit of pretend-Christianity centred in the practical world of the "obedience-Regina". We can not afford to take the death and sacrifice of Jesus for granted in any way. We can not afford to visit it just ever so often, like maybe one or twice every few years

The sensitivity that we have in the area of Jesus' sacrifice should be a major goal for all, open to understanding what occurred historically and what was required emotionally, as what has eventuated religiously because of His act of sacrifice. A bull or a goat is just a bull or a goat, but this was "The Son Of God", not just an option, but the only way in which mankind could have had his sin debt answered in full, **once for all**.

There have been great examples, through out history of people who were willing to share their last morsel, cup, and even their blood for the sake of others. One of those was the widow of Zarephath that we looked at last week. The greatest of all, however, was the one that affects you and me directly still, **Jesus of Nazareth**.

Hebrews 10:1-16

Looking again at the law

10:1 For the Law, since it has only a shadow of the good things to come and not the very form of things, can never by the same sacrifices year by year, which they offer continually, make perfect those who draw near. 2 Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered, because the worshipers, having once been cleansed, would no longer have had consciousness of sins? 3 But in those sacrifices there is a reminder of sins year by year. 4 For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins. 5 Therefore, when He comes into the world, He says, **"Sacrifice and offering Thou hast not desired, but a body Thou hast prepared for Me; 6 In whole burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin Thou hast taken no pleasure.**

7 "Then I said, 'Behold, I have come
(In the roll of the book it is written of Me)

To do Thy will, O God."

8 After saying above, "Sacrifices and offerings and whole burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin Thou hast not desired, nor hast Thou taken pleasure in them" (which are offered according to the Law), 9 then He said, "Behold, I have come to do Thy will." **He takes away the first in order to establish the second.** 10 By this will **we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.** 11 And every priest stands daily ministering and offering time after time the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins; 12 but He, having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, sat down at the right hand of God, 13 waiting from that time onward until His enemies be made a footstool for His feet. 14 **For by one offering He has perfected for all time those who are sanctified.** 15 And the Holy Spirit also bears witness to us; for after saying,

16 "This is the covenant that I will make with them
After those days, says the Lord: I will put My laws upon their heart,
And upon their mind I will write them,"

He then says,

17 "And their sins and their lawless deeds
I will remember no more."

18 Now where there is forgiveness of these things, there is no longer any
offering for sin.

I. Legalism And Christianity

- A. Legalism is often used as a weapon today to control the way some people, people who can be rather heavy handed in their methods, because they want to get others to back off of 'me personally' "Legalism" is always a very disagreeable term one that tends to brand a person as a semi-heretic. This should not be.
- B. Legalism can, however, be a problem in the church that we need to be clear on, before we use it.
1. **Practical Definition:** A very good definition of 'legalism' is **a dependence on my having kept all of the rules, perfectly and religiously**, so as to "obey my way into heaven." (The inveterate crosser of 't's" and dotter of "l's".)
  2. **Common Definition:** The continual harping about doing things according to the text to such a degree that **the impression that is left is one of my dependence on my having kept the rules perfectly and religiously.**
  3. **POINT:** Be it known that Christianity does have rules and lines of demarcation that set it apart from the world and all other world religions. We are not opposed to rules that tell us how to live and how to respond to God. But we should be opposed to the abuse of rules and the development of any mindset that would hold to a superiority of law over Jesus and the cross, be that as a perceived superiority or as a real superiority.
  4. The letter to the Hebrews says that the Law, at best, was only a shadow of the better things to come. **"How so ?"**
  5. The letter to the Hebrews says that the Old Law could only look forward to a better time when thing were done completely.
  6. The truth is, is that the blood of bulls and goats is no substitute for the blood of Jesus: **carnal can not replace spiritual perfection.**
  7. The letter to the Hebrews says that God has not taken pleasure in the continual giving of sacrifices, for it still left the debt unpaid and deferred until next year, just being held in anticipation of a full and permanent payment.
  8. What Jesus did, He did **once for all**, and **for all time**. It was the complete sacrifice an the total cleansing of the creature of his sin problems and the closure of the relationship once enjoyed between the man and God. Just like in Abraham and Sarah's case, **this is the covenant that was always promised.**

Galatians 4:24-26
II Corinthians 3:7-9
Ephesians 2:12
Hebrews 8:6

Hebrews 10:19-31

19 Since therefore, brethren, we have **confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus**, 20 by a new and living way which He inaugurated for us through the veil, that is, His flesh, 21 and since we have a great priest over the house of God, 22 **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. 23 **Let us hold fast the confession of our hope** without wavering, for He who promised is faithful; 24 and **let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds**, 25 **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.

26 For if we go on sinning wilfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, 27 but a certain terrifying expectation of judgment, and the fury of a fire which will consume the adversaries. 28 Anyone who has set aside the Law of Moses dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. 29 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? 30 For we know Him who said, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay." And again, "The Lord will judge His people." 31 It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

"To go on sinning wilfully" really means, because of its reflexive sense of the assumed supreme self authority found in all acts of sin, to so live as if to say that "none of this means anything really", that I will have a marginal relationship with God and God's people, but in the mean time, I will do what I want, when I want, because I want to do so. It is the ultimate act of self centeredness and self defined religion. Non-surrendered self authority.

1. The old law could not erase the reality of sin
2. With the old law, there was still the reality of sin left behind. It needed to be done over and over, with no real forgiveness granted.
3. But with the new covenant, it did erase the marks of sin against us and thus all is restored and there is no longer a need for continued sacrifices, because our relationship with God is fully restored, by the sacrifice on the cross.
4. ***This is the section of scripture that truly tells us these facts !! This is the section of scripture that fully explains the why to the question of "Why did Jesus have to actually die !!***

Point

1. Because we now have **confidence**, in and through Jesus and His **sacrifice**, to enter back into a unhindered relationship with God we are open to works that will reflect that new relationship. He did the job we could not do, a job we will never be able to do. Focus should therefore go to Jesus and not to man's efforts in every study we conduct.

2. What we need to do, every day, therefore...

... as a result of what He did, we need to ...

- a. **Draw near** with a sincere heart
- b. **Hold fast** the confession of our faith
- c. **Consider** how to **stimulate one another** to love and good deeds
- d. **No longer living to sin** and **doing what ever we want to do**, but ***doing what pleases Him***
- e. **Remembering the consequences of sin** all the while. This is especially true when we consider those sinful actions that demean and belittle Jesus, and also His way.
- f. **'Hang tuff'**: You have already endured a great deal in these times and acts of persecution. Do not give up and do not forsake the faith, nor your brothers and sisters in Christ.
- g. Ever mindful of what was done for us at Calvary.

We can not ever afford the luxury of a legalistic, obedience only, form of salvation. We must have the blood of Christ and our obedience working together, in harmony and in balance with one another.

Hebrews 10:32-39

Conclusion

32 But **(SO)** remember the former days, when, after being enlightened, you endured a great conflict of sufferings, 33 partly, by being made a public spectacle through reproaches and tribulations, and partly by becoming sharers with those who were so treated. 34 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 an abiding one.**

→ → 35 **Therefore, do not throw away your confidence**, which has a great reward. 36 **For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God, you may receive what was promised.**

37 For yet in a very little while,
He who is coming will come, and will not delay.

38 But My righteous one shall **live by faith**;
And if he shrinks back, My soul has no pleasure in him.

39 But we are not of those who shrink back to destruction, but of those who have faith to the preserving of the soul.

My sacrifice is to remember Him and to follow
His way all of my days. When will I die?
Right now to self and to the dictates of any
system that tries to justify me, before God, by
my actions alone.

The Zarephath Widow's Story

Beginning in **I Kings 17:8** we find the story of a widow that lived in the small town of Zarephath. There is a drought and she is facing the very last of her provisions. Elijah comes and finds her at a well. He asks her to get him some water and to get him some bread. She explains her problem and He gives to her the promise of God in the sustaining of her flour and oil. She is a person who was willing to make the last sacrifice while bestowing some degree of hospitality. She is not Jewish, but she is an example to all of Israel that speaks of the value of compassion and the power of God to touch all peoples.

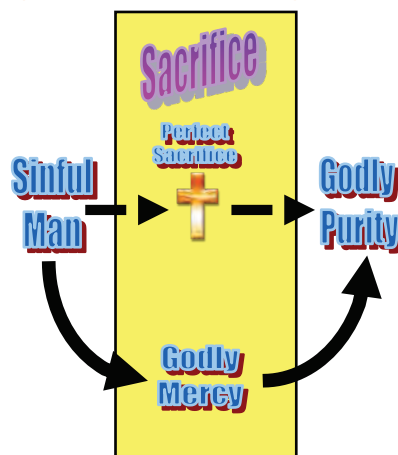
Later, in **I Kings 18** the son of this widow dies. Elijah restores the son to life. With this very early evidence of the power of God to resurrect life, the widow comes to a point of obedient faith. Elijah uses her home as a refuge from the oppression of Ahab who is seeking to rid the world of Elijah and his influence.

On the road, Elijah meets Obadiah. Between the two of them a discussion occurs where Obadiah voices his concern over being told to go to Ahab and announce the return of Elijah. This is the beginning of the great story of the contest between Elijah and the Prophets of Baal.

Make a list of the points of comparison between the story of the widow and Elijah and the New Testament church of today.

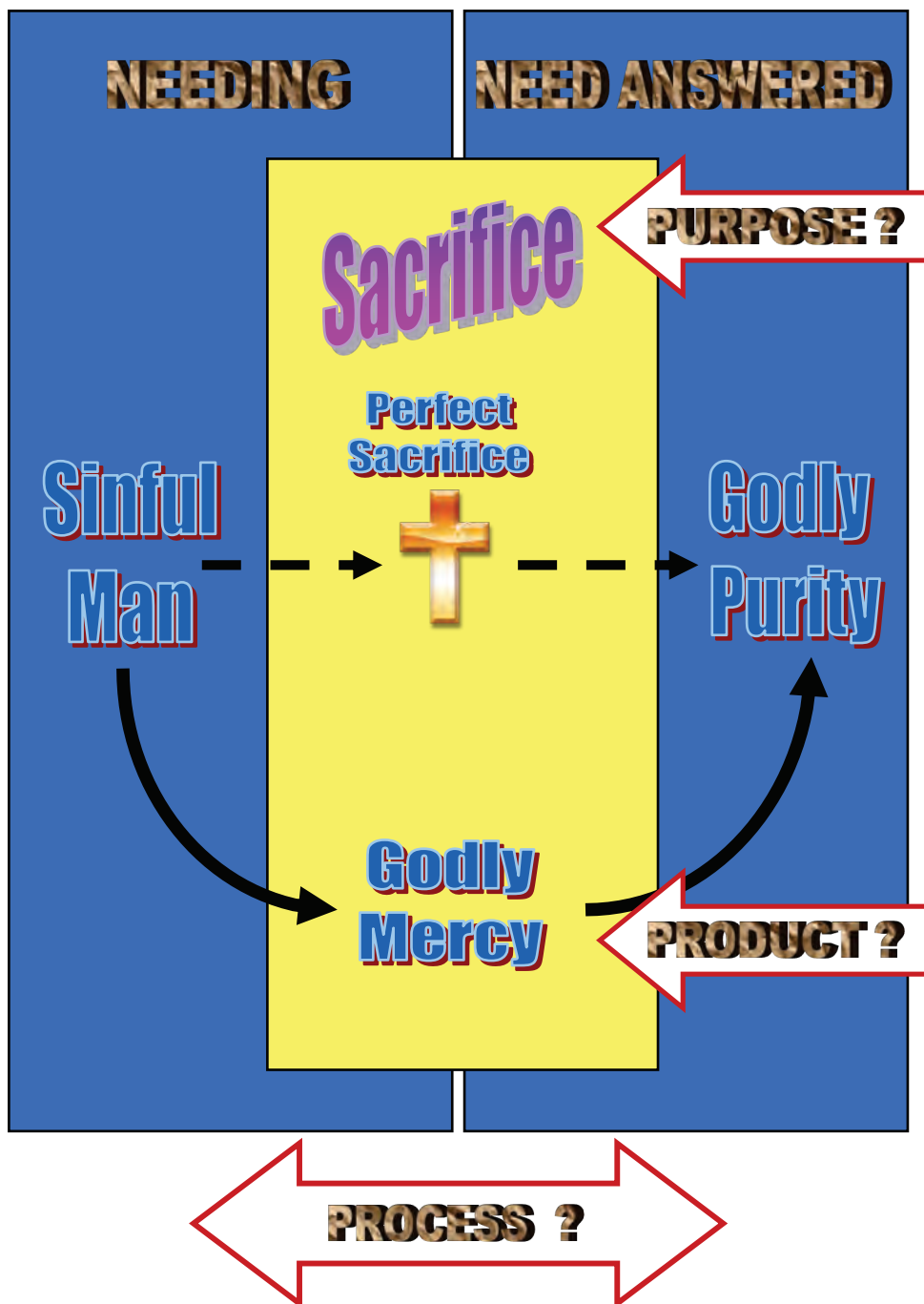
How do these two stories get reflected in the chart below?

Has God always cared about mankind in general, or has He had a singular care for Israel, up unto the time of Christ? How do you know?



The Sacrificial System And Me

As serving Christian 'missionaries' we must be able to explain the salvation 'process' at any time. We can not depend on 'inspiration', but rather it requires that we work on developing this side of our mission skills.



Question for Sunday Morning Discussion

1. What is actually meant by the terms 'type' and 'antitype', "shadow and substance"? Please give three examples of these in action in the biblical text.
2. Why can not the blood of bulls and goats cleanse the Holy places eternally?
3. What does it mean that "He will put His laws on our hearts.", and "upon their minds I will write them"?
4. What would be as totally practical way to respond to Hebrews 10:21-25 today? Is this a command we are to 'obey'?
5. What does it mean to 'go on sinning wilfully'?
6. Why would there be no longer be a sacrifice for sins for those that go on sinning wilfully?

HEBREW S



Jesus preaching the "Sermon On The Mount"

By Karl Heinrich Bloch

Mattingly's Moment

A STUDY IN PRACTICAL CHRISTOLOGY FOR THE
21ST CENTURY

The Study prepared by
L. M. Ancell , 2010 Australia

The Faith Of Apollo 13

"Houston. We have had a problem." With these cold and chilling words, one of the great dramas of the 20th century began. James Lovell, Jack Swigert, and Fred Haise were aboard **Apollo 13**, bound for the moon. We remember them for their bravery and their calm dependence on the men and women back in Houston who were assigned the task of bringing them home.

Ten hours into the flight to the moon, a tank had ruptured on the spaceship and everything changed very quickly. They were called on to show a remarkable degree of faith in the people back home on earth to get them back. There could be no hysterics and no collapses. They had only inches within which to live in and there they had to stay until they were brought home. Remarkable, truly a remarkable call was made on these three men.

But the most compelling side to this story is the faith that the men and women back in Houston had to exhibit to keep those three men focused on their safe return to earth. Their faith in getting done that which had never been done before, nor even really planned was challenging to say the least. It took everyone, doing his or her job, focused on the goal, praying for the best of outcomes, in the most intense of situations.

One of those who was called on to help was Ken Mattingly, one who had originally been scheduled to go on the flight. He was a test pilot, an astronaut, and an aeronautical engineer. An exposure to the measles had kept him back at the launch pad for Apollo 13 while the others in the team, and one replacement, Jack Swigert, took off on what was a once in a life time opportunity, a chance to actually walk on the moon. For Mattingly it must have been a hard knock to take. There was usually only one shot at walking on the moon and he had missed it.

But now, Ken Mattingly, the man most experienced with what was on that spaceship had a job to do in helping these three men get to the moon, slingshot around it so they could get back to earth, as they conserved the air and the water, and especially the electricity, necessary for the journey. A very big call for one left behind, a call for a true man of faith.

Ken Mattingly's mission, thrust upon him in the heat of the moment, was to coordinate the ground crews efforts to get the men home. He could have had a lot of angst at this change of events, but the mission and the lives of the men on that mission, however, was the bigger thing, and he was up to it. He had faith in his team, and he constantly keep sharing that faith with the men on the spacecraft. It was his faith that so many looked to for guidance.

He holds a special position in the annals of the US space program. He is a man who's faith, and his ability to share that faith with others, saved three men's lives from one of the most difficult of cases. He did so, a real team member, part of a group, willing to step in and serve when he was called on. He is known as a steady man, a man of faith, and a man you can trust. It is for this that he is a member of the Space Program's 'Hall of Fame', not for having flown to the moon.

There are lots of men of 'faith' in history, men whose ability to share that faith and conviction are what really made them the people they were.: for instance, one Winston Churchill

Read First, but tell them this is going to be a sermon about 30 minutes long.

Hebrews 11:1-16

11:1 Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. 2 For by it the men of old gained approval. 3 By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things which are visible. 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. 5 By faith **Enoch** was taken up so that he should not see death; and he was not found because God took him up; for he obtained the witness that before his being taken up he was pleasing to God. 6 And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him. 7 By faith **Noah**, being warned by God about things not yet seen, in reverence prepared an ark for the salvation of his household, by which he condemned the world, and became an heir of the righteousness which is according to faith. 8 By faith **Abraham**, when he was called, obeyed by going out to a place which he was to receive for an inheritance; and he went out, not knowing where he was going. 9 By faith he lived as an alien in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, fellow heirs of the same promise; 10 for he was looking for the city which has foundations, whose architect and builder is God. 11 By faith even **Sarah** herself received ability to conceive, even beyond the proper time of life, since she considered Him faithful who had promised; 12 therefore, also, there was born of one man, and him as good as dead at that, as many descendants as the stars of heaven in number, and innumerable as the sand which is by the seashore.

13 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. 14 For those who say such things make it clear that they are seeking a country of their own. 15 And indeed if they had been thinking of that country from which they went out, they would have had opportunity to return. 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 11:17-40

17 By faith **Abraham**, when he was tested, offered up **Isaac**; and he who had received the promises was offering up his only begotten son; 18 it was he to whom it was said, "In Isaac your descendants shall be called." 19 He considered that God is able to raise men even from the dead; from which he also received him back as a type. 20 By faith **Isaac** blessed **Jacob** and **Esau**, even regarding things to come. 21 By faith **Jacob**, as he was dying, blessed each of the **sons of Joseph**, and worshiped, leaning on the top of his staff. 22 By faith **Joseph**, when he was dying, made mention of the exodus of the sons of Israel, and gave orders concerning his bones. 23 By faith **Moses**, when he was born, was hidden for three months by **his parents**, because they saw he was a beautiful child; and they were not afraid of the king's edict. 24 By faith **Moses**, when he had grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; 25 choosing rather to endure ill-treatment with the people of God, than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin; 26 considering the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for he was looking to the reward. 27 By faith he left Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured, as seeing Him who is unseen. 28 By faith he kept the Passover and the sprinkling of the blood, so that he who destroyed the first-born might not touch them. 29 By faith **they** passed through the Red Sea as though they were passing through dry land; and the Egyptians, when they attempted it, were drowned. 30 By faith the **walls of Jericho** fell down, after they had been encircled for seven days. 31 By faith **Rahab** the harlot did not perish along with those who were disobedient, after she had welcomed the spies in peace.

32 And what more shall I say? For time will fail me if I tell of **Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets**, 33 who by faith conquered kingdoms, performed acts of righteousness, obtained promises, shut the mouths of lions, 34 quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, from weakness were made strong, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight. 35 Women received back their dead by resurrection; and others were tortured, not accepting their release, in order that they might obtain a better resurrection; 36 **and others** experienced mockings and scourgings, yes, also chains and imprisonment. 37 They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were tempted, they were put to death with the sword; they went about in sheepskins, in goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, ill-treated 38 (men of whom the world was not worthy), wandering in deserts and mountains and caves and holes in the ground. 39 And all these, *having gained approval through their faith*, did not receive what was promised, 40 because God had provided something better for us, so that apart from us they should not be made perfect.

This Hall Of Faith

1. **This chapter** calls the reader to remember some of the most famous of biblical characters and their remarkable displays of faith. Faith is a very essential thing and we are called on to demonstrate our faith to a watching world.
2. **What is faith, really?** Faith is the belief that that which I can not see is real and more important than anything that I can see. It is a conviction that say that which I have not experienced, nor that I am able to prove is true, and therefore I will devote my life to it, regardless of the absence of hard immediate evidence. It is life beyond the empirical bases that we have been taught to live on.
3. **The text** says of faith, "Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. 2 For by it the men of old gained approval. 3 By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things which are visible.
4. **"Faith" Sustains us.** Faith is what sustains us our on the road, in the dark of the night, and in the passage ways to the floors of the Coliseum. It is a precious thing and we have to be very careful with it to nurture it and to feed it the best of our efforts.
5. **True faith is distinctive.** It is what sets these men and women in Hebrews 11 apart from all of their contemporaries: they kept God as God, when reason and pressure said to abandon Him, when lives were threatened and when hope was weakened by controversy.
6. **So lived these giants:**
  - A. Abel
  - B. Enoch
  - C. Noah
  - D. Abraham
  - E. Sarah
  - F. Isaac
  - G. Joseph
  - H. Moses
  - I. The rest ....

- ▶ Each one of these giants of the faith has shared a piece of their 'faith' with us today.
- ▶ Each one of these giants stands as an eternal sermon, proclaiming the virtue of the living of our own faith-filled lives.
- ▶ Each one of these giants lived in expectation of that which was yet to come. They did not see the physical advent of Jesus and His new covenant, but they knew that God was in charge and that all would be better.
- ▶ Each one of these giants was willing to live as an exile, waiting patiently for God to work His plan.

Thus in that 'Mattingly Moment' ...

CONCLUSION: [The End Of The Story] When one considers the idea of 'The Mission', one must always see the self-sacrifice and faith that one has in dedicating themselves to the accomplishing that mission, before any element of self and self-pride steps in and derails the whole. The men of faith, believed, and they trusted, beyond themselves, focus all energy on their mission and the God who controls it all. **This is our 'Mattingly Moment'.**

The man that replaced Ken Mattingly was a Coloradan named Jack Swigert. He went to the moon an agnostic. He came back a believer, in part, due to the 'faith' and assurances of Ken Mattingly. Mattingly may never have walked on the moon, but he made it to the Hall of Fame.

Our mission is always there. We can only be "up to it", if we are filled with the faith that comes in knowing God, Jesus, and the plan that is built to save mankind.

SPEAK A GOOD WORD FOR JESUS TODAY, YOU NEVER KNOW THE GOOD IT WILL DO.

POINT: We are called on to be people of faith, people who live lives dedicated to God in good times and in bad times, in sunny moments and in depressive moments, people who may never see all of the plans God has in store, but who know that God is the one who holds it all together.

PROBLEM: This is not an easy assignment that we have been given. We are frail, we are carnal, we are assailed by the devil to give up and get discouraged and depressed all of the time. We have all sorts of obstacles to negotiate, everyday, and yet we have a mission to perform that requires that we be 'people of great faith' today. **Our assignment is to be the herald of the reality of Jesus in the midst of an unbelieving and misinformed world.**

A DEFINITION OF 'FAITH': Faith is the willingness to say I believe, and I trust, and I surrender myself to the ideas to which I do not yet have empirical proof. It is that which is just beyond my horizon, but the evidence is so real as to compel me to keep on going towards that which I believe to be true. It is thus an evaluation of the evidence and not a giant leap out into the absolute unknown. In so much of religion today, faith is a giant leap, but faith is the results of our eyes and our ears and our minds being employed to investigate the reality of the messages received. It is not conclusive for there is a step between actually knowing and believing.

Tuesday Night Discussion Group Assignment

Please define faith before starting this exercise.

My Own Personal 'Men of Faith'

1. From the Old testament, choose five men, other than the truly obvious and common ones, who are your own favourite men of faith.
2. What are three traits about them that fills you with courage and vision? Write these traits down and analyse what it would take to duplicate these traits in today's world.

One Of 'My Men Of Faith':

1. I have always found _____ to be a person that I could relate to easily.
2. He /She is a person that is an example to me because _____
_____
_____
_____
3. I see in him / her the following three admirable traits:
  - a. _____
  - b. _____
  - c. _____
4. These traits can be built and developed today by: _____
_____
_____
_____
_____

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2. He /She is a person that is an example to me because _____
_____
_____
_____
3. I see in him / her the following three admirable traits:
  - a. _____
  - b. _____
  - c. _____
4. These traits can be built and developed today by: _____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Question for Sunday Morning Discussion

1. If you were asked to explain to a child what 'faith' is, how would you define and explain the word 'faith' to that child?
2. For people today, what is the real value of the examples of faith that are found in this chapter?
3. Were these people of faith always perfect? Please give examples of their 'humanness'.
4. Are not our heroes seen as nearly perfect, normally? Then what constitutes 'faith' in these people?
5. Why was Jephthah included in this list? Where do we find the story of Jephthah? (When we read his story, what stands out as an act of 'faith'?)
6. What does the story of Jephthah and his inclusion tells us about the inspiration of the bible?
7. What are some false ideas about the concept of faith and its definition that you have experienced?

Songwriter Oscar Eliason wrote,

"Got any rivers you think are un-crossable? Got any mountains you can't tunnel through?"

He responded to these questions by saying,

"God specializes in things thought impossible."

Every Christian faces obstacles along life's pathway, and walking in God's will doesn't guarantee that our way will be easy. But no matter how difficult, we can trust God and go forward in faith.

At the entrance to a local hospital is an automatic gate designed to rise when a car activates a hidden sensor near the entrance. When I drive up the ramp toward the gate, it remains down, blocking the entrance. But as I get closer, the arm swings up, allowing me to proceed. If I were to park my car a few yards from the entrance, the gate would stay closed. Only when I move forward does it open.

Someone said, "If God built a bridge a yard ahead, it could not be a bridge of faith." It's the first step into the unseen that proves we have faith. Abraham, for example, "went out, not knowing where he was going" ([Heb. 11:8](#)). He obeyed God and relied on Him to clear the path.

When we walk in obedience to the Lord and come upon a closed gate, we can confidently take the next step of faith. As we move forward we will see God open the way. —P. R. Van Gorder

Faith is the gate between our peril and God's power

Tuesday Night Discussion Group Assignment

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One Of 'My Men Of Faith': Marvin's First Choice

1. I have always found Gideon to be a person that I could relate to easily. He is one of my favourite OT characters because of the similarity of his faith with mine personally, afraid and scared, but willing.
2. He /She is a person that is an example to me because He was not a person that fit easily into the centre stage of life, yet when he was called he went, even though he had questions and fears. He took on a job that had a very unreasonable sounding plan to it, but he relied on the Lord and it ended up victoriously.
3. I see in him / her the following three admirable traits:
  - a. Courage to do, even though afraid and self conscious
  - b. Was a simple man, who went and did a very uncommon job. The job was thrust upon him, he did not seek it, but he went out and did it, because the Lord said 'go'.
  - c. He believed in the Lord, after having been convinced of the reality of the Lord
4. These traits can be built and developed today by: seeking those things that are there for all to see and which give verification of the existence of the Lord and of His abiding presence. ...by working within the limitations set by God. (He did not seek to go out and buy any spears) He was a person who worked hard for God. It says of him that he was weary yet pursuing. I believe this is his greatest gift, the example of a true and complete servant.

HEBREW S



Jesus preaching the "Sermon On The Mount"

By Karl Heinrich Bloch

...Who Would Have Thought...

A STUDY IN PRACTICAL CHRISTOLOGY FOR THE
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The Disciplined Achiever: Doing The Impossible Through God

They said it could not be done, but there they were, sitting in the middle of the accomplished fact: man had just carved a canal all the way from the Caribbean Sea, clean across the Panama Isthmus to the Pacific Ocean. It was hard, but there they were there and it had worked! They had done it. They had dug a canal, fought off the hordes of disease carrying mosquitoes, endured the daily deaths of their friends and colleagues due to falling rock, snake bites, and the poisonous food rations. They did it, when the world and conventional wisdom had said it could not be done

The world may have told them that it could not be done, but despite all of the 'wisdom' of their critiques, they had done it. It was really a marvel of the engineering world but it was the dogged persistence and constant discipline of the work crews, both native and imported that made the dream a reality. Oh how their critics were dumfounded at the Gatun lakes as they filled with water.

But then, if you stop and look at it, man has always confounded the wisdom of the critiques. Look at the great walls of China, great walls, not just one of them, but over 400 of them, -all designed to do one specific thing, slow down invading armies. They took years to build, countless workmen, unflinching faith, and engineering beyond belief. And they did slow down invading armies, time and time again.

Every example started with one man saying, "I think that we can do it. It is worth a try." It is a dream made real, a hope made possible, all by the power of a disciplined life. In point of fact, nothing has every come into being without someone saying, we can and we must.

No less remarkable than the feats of engineering that we have seen done by men in this world, are the great feats of faith that have been accomplished by the small men who followed God. Men like Gideon, a man who was so afraid of his world, that he was in a hidden place threshing the wheat so that he would not be caught by his Midianite overlords. Who would have thought that He would have become a great general?

Who would have selected David to be a great king. He did not look like a king, but he had the heart of a king, and God saw his heart. Who would have thought of Jeremiah, a man who was so sensitive that he wept like a broken child, but Jeremiah stood firm and wrote one of the most challenging of all of the prophecies. Who would have selected the feeble mouthed, clumsy, perpetrator of manslaughter, Moses, to lead the greatest exodus of all time? **Who would have chosen, such losers. GOD !!**

Who would have chosen this group to be a missionary team to this place? God did and God still does !! So we ask ourselves the question, "What do we need to do, to build the church that God has asked to do here in this place?" Do we think big, or do we thing small? With God and with the necessary discipline, we can !!

Hebrews 12:1 - 2

We have our
answer here ...

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.

Before we go one any farther, we must understand this point of summary. It is the preparation for all conflicts with Satan...

"... Fixing Your Eyes On Jesus ..."

1. Christianity is based around the centrality of Jesus to all thinking and all actions.
2. We are commanded to do more than just casually honour Him when we meet together and then to get on with the more important things of Christianity, like what we are to do. This is a common practice where the majority of our preaching is on the practical day to day living of our Christianity. It leaves behind the perceived message which says that he practical supersedes the Divine. All tired and exhausted forms of denominationalism reach this point at one time or another. We must avoid it !!!
3. The very first thing that we are to do is to fix our eyes on Jesus !!!
4. That means that He becomes central to everything. He is not a Catholic aside, or a Protestant after-thought. He is Christianity!!
5. The Christology of Hebrews is built on our doing this one thing before we do anything else.
6. We are not to make Jesus a casual picture!
7. We are not to make Jesus an impotent picture!
8. We are not to make Jesus a capricious and callous "mere god" !
9. And **we are not to sacrifice Jesus on the altar of legal bound living.**
10. **Running the race that is set before us, means to live wholeheartedly for Jesus and with Jesus, keeping Jesus in all our thoughts. There is no Christianity until we restore Jesus to centre.**

Hebrews 12: 3 - 8

3 For **consider Him** who has endured such hostility by sinners against Himself, so that you may 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.

"...So that you may not grow weary and loose heart..."

1. The discipline of the Lord, is first and foremost, here, concerned with our rigidly keeping our eye on Jesus. It is not a general discussion on the why's and wherefore's of discipline.
2. In point of fact, if all we every get people to do is to watch Jesus intently and to pattern their lives around Him, we will be achieving the greatest amount of discipline possible.
3. **We have not had to resist to the point where our lives are in danger, but He did, and He did it for us.**
4. Discipline here is not just the corrective moments, but it is also the training moments where we go through the tough regimes by which we gather strength and focus constantly, it is study and it is hard sermons that make you think and work to understand. Discipline is not just the pabulum that we feed to babies, but it is the essentials that make the faith real and not just a blind leap off into the ether.
5. The voice of this discipline comes first from the word of God. It can be brought to our attention by a person or by a sermon, but in the end, there is always a voice of authority by which we are commanded to learn, listen and live. There is no way that a disciplined Christianity can exist without the voice of this discipline guiding us every closer to the person that God wants us to be, and to the picture of Jesus that God wants us to venerate in every part of our lives and days. If we struggle with this, then it is something that we need to take up with God, for it is His will that we all be a disciplined people.

Hebrews 12:9 - 13

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? 10 For they disciplined us for a short time as seemed best to them, but **He disciplines us for our good, 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, you are to 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.**

1. The simple truth is that we already understand the need and the value of discipline. It is part of the way mankind grows up. The demise of discipline is a cruel fact of our modern age, however.
2. Three quotes of significance:

→ **"What lies in our power to do, lies in our power to not do." Aristotle**

All are 'self-discipline' based

→ **"The first and the best victory is to conquer self." Plato**

Point: The world has long recognized these truths to be so. A more modern voice has said, and rightly so...

→ **"Unless you change how you are, you will always have what you've got and be what you are now." Jim Rohn**

...this is nothing more than simple self-discipline, restrictive and educational, but discipline and surrender to Jesus, never-the-less. Otherwise, if one can not control self, then it is self who is at fault and it is self who is held responsible, for self has then superseded Jesus and all subsequent actions are self authorized and internally rebellious towards Jesus from a fundamental level.

3. The reason behind discipline is, on the norm, one to assist and not one to merely abuse. It helps us be Jesus focused as we should.
4. Discipline is not fun, but it has a very good side.
5. We are to be a people that 'discipline' one another. To assist the weak, to marshal the strong and to find the path for everyone that is righteous oriented.
6. It is for a good purpose.
7. Remember, the book of Proverbs says that iron is to sharpen iron. This is just a rephrasing of that truth.

Hebrews 12:14 - 28

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

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

16 **See to it** 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 may 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 should be spoken to them. 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 first-born who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of righteous men 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 shall 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 And this expression, "Yet once more," denotes the removing of those things which can be shaken, as of created things, in order 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**; 29 for our God is a consuming fire.

----- "Church is not just a Sunday event." -----

Remember: "Our God is an awesome God, He reigns with wisdom and power, our God is an Awesome God..."

So we ask again, "Do we think big, or do we thing small?"
With God and with the necessary discipline, we can !!

"Discipline" In The Old Testament

'Discipline' in the Old Testament was a tool God used to teach mankind that a "go it alone", was absolutely wrong and a denial of all things spiritual. This is the life style of a "free lance artistic mindset", where there are "no rules" and "no laws to govern me", a "monergistic approach to all of the elements of life, one where a person just literally sits down on his tents rug and then just waits on God to do everything for him, letting God serve his highly entitled life style, taking no responsibility and remaining totally egocentric and being absolutely slothful in all things except in those little games he / she likes to play, all the while never seeing this part of himself in the light of day". This 'hippie' life style is one with out daily works for God. God tells the first family, " this indolence can not be a part of my honest-faithful family. !!!! So, get up and follow Me!" [Notice how active the word "follow" is where-ever it is found in the Bible, from Genesis all the way through to Revelation.]

Old Testament discipline is first experienced in the sweat of the brow, doing that which is usually loathed and possible even hated, but which is the pathway of all "followship" !!!!! A true disciple, a follower of the Lord God, a true child of Israel, is one who is under His direction in all things. Every person must start with this mindset, to even contemplate being a Christian !!!! A "Christian", like a 'child of Israel', is a follower. This why the collection is connected to the Lord-supper / Communion / Eucharist. The collection is a reminder that we owe all we have and are to the Lord God. This is one of the reasons that discipline is stressed in the Old Testament.

Now, violations of the 'code' had very harsh sentences to be imposed, all so that this 'discipleship' will become the very nature of all Israelites as they live the lessons we all are to follow in becoming real children of God. Some of those 'punishments' such as directed towards disobedient children, such as those focused on adultery, and those who built around idol worship, was quick and immediate stoning to death. [NOTE: Stoning was not just throwing rocks, but was an act where each person picked up a large rock and went to the very face of the 'criminal' and then swung that rock so as to cause as much damage as possible, with a very gory death to soon follow. It would leave a great impression on the executioners and the watchers, which may very well include his / her whole family and all of the neighbors. This is capital punishment with corporal punishment just not going so far. Who would even think of walking alone, outside of the community with such a God-loving band of followers / of rock chukar-disciples on hand ????



So, This "Discipline Problem" In The Old Testament

1. Growing up in my faith, one of the difficulties that I faced was why God chose to set down a set of rules governing what to do to a person if they violated His way, and then to watch that 'law' slowly change and get 'disarmed' over time. ***Why would God be so strict in the beginning, and so lenient latter in the history?*** People have long struggled with this question.
2. An example of what I mean is this change that I saw. In Deuteronomy 21:18-21, parents are required to bring their non-compliant, rebellious children to the elders and then the elders of the community were to see that those children were stoned to death. Now that is very extreme, to say the least.
3. Latter in history, we do not see this law being applied, even though we do not have a repeal of the law that is found in the text itself. Why is this so? What happened to change things so much, from stoning disobedient children to letting them get away with their disobedience?
4. One of the first problems that we face is the moral reprehensibility of the law itself. We pass judgement on God and God's law very easily, doing so from our perspective of 'child'. How could God be so callous and so cruel? Was He callous and cruel, actually? Could / Did He foresee the setting aside of this law in the passing of time?
5. Another problem that we face is that of purpose. What purpose did it achieve in the family unit, in the community at large, and in the nation as a whole to see a child who was 'disobedient' be stoned for his / her acts of parental disregard?
6. In the 10 Commandments, it says to 'honour your father and your mother'. To disregard this command is to disregard the supremacy of God as God and as ultimate law giver. It demeans the very thought of God in the community if one is allowed to 'get away with it'. For God to be God and to set up such a law, it must be understood that He is God and works in a whole different sphere of reference in His spiritual world than we do in our mortal world.
7. The disparity between God and Man is beyond the imagination of all men, really. God is supernal and eternal. We are mortal and rather temporary, -prone to monumental mess ups from time to time. God, on the other hand does not make mistakes. If something is not understood, then do not give a moral judgement where one can not be given due to this disparity of position, knowledge, righteousness and power.
8. It is all a fundamental problem with who is God and who is man, as well as who is Lord, and who is creature?



God made
this rose.

Can
mankind do
a better job?

"Discipline" In The New Testament: Point Two

Punitive discipline is one thing, while practical discipline is very much another thing. Punitive discipline can be very confronting, like the case of Ananias and Saphira where these two literally lied and then died, in front of all of the visitors and fledgling Christians. It was just right there, ... In the open .... Without even a bit of audience concern what so ever.

Discipline was also very open and very public in the case of the two fighting sister. There was no "nicely phrased love involved at all". It was just stop. Now! No waiting for a discussion to take place in some secluded place tomorrow.

We want to treat all people with 'kids gloves' and "nicety-niceties" all around, but not always was this so in the first century. Ask the full apostle, Peter, how Paul handled his rebuke mentioned in the Hebrews letter. Paul did not stop to think about the crowd so much, in any of these recorded situations, but he did think about the long term health of the church in the subsequent generations. To what results? We still talk about it today, don't we!

The Hebrews Letter does not give us a course in the 'manners of discipline', nor is it intending to do so. But it sure as all is Godly, tells us not to belittle Jesus, in any way !!! Those that do so, wanting deep down to be the new voice of spirituality and power, will face the same rebuke and punishment as Ananias and Saphira and burn in hell for an eternity !!! This may even be manifested by calling on Jesus in various improper ways. Therefore, take care, ---take great care as it can affect your souls eternity.

"Discipline" In The New Testament: B

From the Missouri Synod of the Lutheran Church, we see a very similar approach to discipline. It says, "In the Scriptures the Lord calls on the Christian congregation to exercise church discipline, including the ultimate step of excommunication. But He makes it clear that the congregation is to carry out such discipline evangelically and with its Gospel purpose ever in mind, namely, the repentance and salvation of the sinner. The passage of Holy Scripture most closely associated with church discipline is Matt. 18:15-18, where the Lord Jesus tells us what to do "if your brother sins against you." The text reads: "If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every word may be confirmed by the evidence of two or three witnesses. If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. Truly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." **The point is, is that most religious bodies who call themselves 'Christian', have a like view on this subject. It is not the view that differs, but the extent to which application is thus applied that differs.**

Question for Sunday Morning Discussion

"No horse gets anywhere until he is harnessed. No stream or gas drives anything until it is confined. No Niagara is ever turned into light and power until it is tunnelled and channelled. No life ever grows great until it is focused, dedicated, disciplined."

Harry Emerson Fosdick

1. How does the subject of 'discipline' in Hebrews 12 reflect back on the message of the centrality of Jesus in Christianity? Why would the author of Hebrews put this material into the letter that he wrote? (*aka. -What is the primary purpose of this discipline section?*)
2. How can a local congregation go about helping develop a truly disciplined mindset without becoming dogmatic and legalistic? Can it even be done in the first place, or is this just a 'pipe-dream' of a highly idealistic person?
3. Why is discipline seen primarily as a punitive act? Why is the idea of 'discipline' not seen as a training and development act without any reference to punitive measures today?
4. What is the role of the eldership in the whole matter of discipline today?
5. Where does Matthew 18: 12-20 fit into this whole picture actually? How does Acts 5: 1-11 fit into this whole picture? How does Acts 10: 9ff fit into this whole picture? What is different between the pictures found in Matthew 18, in Acts 5, and in Acts 10?
6. Why did no one go to Annais and Sapphira and talk to them one on one before they went to the whole assembled "church"? What act of 'discipline' here was that which was most instilled in the minds of the congregation?
7. What is your definition of discipline now?

NOTE: A life, or a ministry, where Jesus is minimized in favour of mere obedience and preached as if this obedience is the primary concern of our Christianity, is not focused on the Lord, but on me and what I am doing to save myself: it is not dedicated to the primary things, and it is not disciplined by the reality of the centrality of Jesus Christ. It just is not Christian, it is a legalistic quasi-Christianity.

....Thus This Shortened, Practical Letter To The Hebrews Came Into Practical Practice ...

On the norm, the church tends to see in the purist forms of black and white. We seek out these statements of obvious command, before we ever seek out the message, so, what about the message that is left between those commands? Is it just filler, connective tissue, to get us to those commands, or does it have a larger purpose that few are patient and resolute enough to seek out and understand? It is rather strange, really, that the most resilient forms of spiritual behaviour are those things that are “heroes” have taught us, but which we have never personally investigated or challenged.

How many people ever even notice that the Letter to the Hebrews has no one claiming personal authorship, and there is no addressee for the letter. That is odd, conservatively expected, but odd. Don't we really care??? We trust the old lines and fear the new lines, even though they both can pull together and stimulate us all to a greater depth of real knowledge.

Look at the following text of the Letter to the Hebrews, All of the practical passages are highlighted in yellow and the rest of the text is in simple black lettering. Which part do we preach from the majority of time? Why does the rest of this book get so over looked?

THE TEXT WE PREACH FROM MOST OFTEN,
VERSUS
THE TEXT WE HAVE
ACTUALLY RECEIVED, BUT RARELY PREACH FROM ... "Why?"

"The Problem of Pragmatic Philosophy
And Its Denigration of all Things Christological."

God's Final Word in His Son

1:1 God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, ² [a] in these last days has spoken to us [b] in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the [c] world. ³ [d] And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and [e] upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, ⁴ having become as much better than the angels, as He has inherited a more excellent name than they.

⁵ 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"?

⁶ And [f] when He again brings the firstborn into [g] the world, He says,
"And let all the angels of God worship Him."

⁷ And of the angels He says,
"Who makes His angels winds,
And His ministers a flame of fire."

⁸ But of the Son *He says*,
"Your throne, O God, is forever and ever,
And the righteous sceptre is the sceptre of [h] His kingdom. ⁹ "You
have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness;
Therefore God, Your God, has anointed You
With the oil of gladness above Your companions."

¹⁰ And,
"You, Lord, in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth,
And the heavens are the works of Your hands;

¹¹ They will perish, but You remain;
And they all will become old like a garment,

¹² And like a mantle You will roll them up;
Like a garment they will also be changed.
But You are the same,
And Your years will not come to an end."

¹³ But to which of the angels has He ever said,
"Sit at My right hand,
Until I make Your enemies
A footstool for Your feet"?

¹⁴ Are they not all ministering spirits, sent out to render service for
the sake of those who will inherit salvation?

Give Heed

2 For this reason we must pay much closer attention to ^[a]what we have heard, so that we do not drift away *from it*. ² For if the word spoken through angels proved ^[b]unalterable, and every transgression and disobedience received a just ^[c]penalty,³ how will we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? ^[d]After it was at the first spoken through the Lord, it was confirmed to us by those who heard, ⁴ God also testifying with them, both by signs and wonders and by various ^[e]miracles and by ^[f]gifts of the Holy Spirit according to His own will.

Earth Subject to Man

⁵ For He did not subject to angels ^[g]the world to come, concerning which we are speaking. ⁶ But one has testified somewhere, saying, “What is man, that You remember him? Or the son of man, that You are concerned about him?

⁷ “You have made him ^[h]for a little while lower than the angels; You have crowned him with glory and honor, ^[i]And have appointed him over the works of Your hands; ⁸ 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.

Jesus Briefly Humbled

⁹ But we do see Him who was made ^[j]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.

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 ^[k]author of their salvation through

sufferings. ¹¹ For both He who sanctifies and those who are [l]sanctified are all from one *Father*; for which reason He is not ashamed to call them brethren,¹² saying,

“I will proclaim Your name to My brethren, In the midst of the congregation I will sing Your praise.”

¹³ And again,

“I will put My trust in Him.”

And again,

“Behold, I and the children whom God has given Me.”

¹⁴ Therefore, since the children share in [m]flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, ¹⁵ and might free those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives. ¹⁶ For assuredly He does not [n]give help to angels, but He gives help to the [o]descendant of Abraham. ¹⁷ Therefore, He [p]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. ¹⁸ 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.

Jesus Our High Priest

3 Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of a heavenly calling, consider Jesus, the Apostle and High Priest of our confession; ² [a]He was faithful to Him who appointed Him, as Moses also was in all His house. ³ 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. ⁴ For every house is built by someone, but the builder of all things is

God. ⁵ Now Moses was faithful in all His house as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken later; ⁶ 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.

⁷ Therefore, just as the Holy Spirit says,
“Today if you hear His voice,

⁸ Do not harden your hearts as [\[b\]](#) when they provoked Me,

As in the day of trial in the wilderness,

⁹ Where your fathers tried *Me* by testing *Me*,
And saw My works for forty years.

¹⁰ “Therefore I was angry with this generation,
And said, ‘They always go astray in their heart,
And they did not know My ways’;

¹¹ As I swore in My wrath,
‘They shall not enter My rest.’”

The Peril of Unbelief

¹² Take care, brethren, that there not be in any one of you an evil, unbelieving heart [\[c\]](#) that falls away from the living God. ¹³ 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. ¹⁴ For we have become partakers of Christ, if we hold fast the beginning of our assurance firm until the end, ¹⁵ while it is said,
“Today if you hear His voice,

Do not harden your hearts, as [\[d\]](#) when they provoked Me.”

¹⁶ For who provoked *Him* when they had heard?

Indeed, did not all those who came out of Egypt *led* by Moses? ¹⁷ And with whom was He angry for forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose bodies fell in the wilderness? ¹⁸ And to whom did He swear that they would not enter His rest, but to those who were disobedient? ¹⁹ So we see that they were not able to enter because of unbelief.

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¹⁴ 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. ¹⁵ 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. ¹⁶ 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.

The Perfect High Priest

5 For every high priest taken from among men is appointed on behalf of men in things pertaining to God, in order to offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins; ² ^[a] he can deal gently with the ignorant and misguided, since he himself also is ^[b] beset with weakness; ³ and because of it he is obligated to offer *sacrifices* for sins, as for the people, so also for himself. ⁴ And no one takes the honor to himself, but *receives it* when he is called by God, even as Aaron was.

⁵ So also Christ did not glorify Himself so as to become a high priest, but He who said to Him, "You are My Son, Today I have begotten You";

⁶ just as He says also in another *passage*, "You are a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek."

⁷ ^[c] In the days of His flesh, ^[d] He offered up both prayers and supplications with loud crying and tears to the One able to save Him ^[e] from death, and He ^[f] was heard because of His piety. ⁸ Although He was a Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered. ⁹ And having been made perfect, He became to all those who obey Him the source

of eternal salvation, ¹⁰ being designated by God as a high priest according to the order of Melchizedek.

¹¹ Concerning ^[g]him we have much to say, and *it is* hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing. ¹² For though ^[h]by this time you ought to be teachers, you have need again for someone to teach you the ^[i]elementary principles of the oracles of God, and you have come to need milk and not solid food. ¹³ For everyone who partakes *only* of milk is not accustomed to the word of righteousness, for he is an infant. ¹⁴ But solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil.

The Peril of Falling Away

6 Therefore leaving the ^[a]elementary teaching about the ^[b]Christ, let us press on to ^[c]maturity, not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, ² of instruction about washings and laying on of hands, and the resurrection of the dead and eternal judgment. ³ And this we will do, if God permits. ⁴ For in the case of those who have once been enlightened and have tasted of the heavenly gift and have been made partakers of the Holy Spirit, ⁵ and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, ⁶ and *then* have fallen away, it is impossible to renew them again to repentance, ^[d]since they again crucify to themselves the Son of God and put Him to open shame. ⁷ For ground that drinks the rain which often ^[e]falls on it and brings forth vegetation useful to those for whose sake it is also tilled, receives a blessing from God; ⁸ but if it yields thorns and thistles, it is worthless and close ^[f]to

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Better Things for You

⁹ But, beloved, we are convinced of better things concerning you, and things that ^[h]accompany salvation, though we are speaking in this way. ¹⁰ 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 ^[i]saints. ¹¹ And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence ^[i]so as to realize the full assurance of hope until the end, ¹² so that you will not be sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

¹³ For when God made the promise to Abraham, since He could swear by no one greater, He swore by Himself, ¹⁴ saying, “I will surely bless you and I will surely multiply you.” ¹⁵ And so, having patiently waited, he obtained the promise. ¹⁶ For men swear by ^[k]one greater *than themselves*, and with them an oath *given* as confirmation is an end of every dispute. ¹⁷ ^[l]In the same way God, desiring even more to show to the heirs of the promise the unchangeableness of His purpose, ^[m]interposed with an oath, ¹⁸ so that by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have ^[n]taken refuge would have strong encouragement to take hold of the hope set before us. ¹⁹ ^[o]This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, a *hope* both sure and steadfast and one which enters ^[p]within the veil, ²⁰ where Jesus has entered as a forerunner for us, having become a high priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.

Melchizedek's Priesthood Like Christ's

7 For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God, who met Abraham as he was returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him, ² to whom also Abraham apportioned

a tenth part of all *the spoils*, was first of all, by the translation *of his name*, king of righteousness, and then also king of Salem, which is king of peace. ³ Without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor a tenth part of all *the spoils*, was first of all, by the translation *of his name*, king of righteousness, and then also king of Salem, which is king of peace. ³ Without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like the Son of God, he remains a priest perpetually.

⁴ Now observe how great this man was to whom Abraham, the patriarch, gave a tenth of the choicest spoils. ⁵ And those indeed of the sons of Levi who receive the priest's office have commandment ^[a]in the Law to collect ^[b]a tenth from the people, that is, from their brethren, although these ^[c]are descended from Abraham. ⁶ But the one whose genealogy is not traced from them collected ^[d]a tenth from Abraham and ^[e]blessed the one who had the promises. ⁷ But without any dispute the lesser is blessed by the greater. ⁸ In this case mortal men receive tithes, but in that case one *receives them*, of whom it is witnessed that he lives on. ⁹ And, so to speak, through Abraham even Levi, who received tithes, paid tithes, ¹⁰ for he was still in the loins of his father when Melchizedek met him.

¹¹ Now if perfection was through the Levitical priesthood (for on the basis of it the people received the Law), what further need *was there* for another priest to arise according to the order of Melchizedek, and not be designated according to the order of

Aaron? ¹² For when the priesthood is changed, of necessity there takes place a change of law also. ¹³ For the one concerning whom these things are spoken belongs to another tribe, from which no one has officiated at the altar. ¹⁴ For it is evident that our Lord ^[f] was descended from Judah, a tribe with reference to which Moses spoke nothing concerning priests. ¹⁵ And this is clearer still, if another priest arises according to the likeness of Melchizedek, ¹⁶ who has become *such* not on the basis of a law of ^[g] physical requirement, but according to the power of an indestructible life. ¹⁷ For it is attested *of Him*, “You are a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek.”

¹⁸ For, on the one hand, there is a setting aside of a former commandment because of its weakness and uselessness ¹⁹ (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. ²⁰ And inasmuch as *it was* not without an oath ²¹ (for they indeed became priests without an oath, but He with an oath through the One who said to Him, “The Lord has sworn And will not change His mind, ‘You are a priest forever’”);

²² so much the more also Jesus has become the guarantee of a better covenant.

²³ ^[h] The *former* priests, on the one hand, existed in greater numbers because they were prevented by death from continuing, ²⁴ but Jesus, on the other hand, because He continues forever, holds His priesthood permanently. ²⁵ Therefore He is able also to save ^[i] forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.

²⁶ For it was fitting for us to have such a high priest, holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners and exalted above the heavens; ²⁷ who does not need daily, like those high priests, to offer up

sacrifices, first for His own sins and then for the *sins* of the people, because this He did once for all when He offered up Himself. ²⁸ For the Law appoints men as high priests who are weak, but the word of the oath, which came after the Law, *appoints* a Son, made perfect forever.

A Better Ministry

8:1 Now the main point in what has been said *is this*: we have such a high priest, who has taken His seat at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, ² a minister ^[a] in the sanctuary and ^[b] in the true ^[c] tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, not man. ³ For every high priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices; so it is necessary that this *high priest* also have something to offer.⁴ Now if He were on earth, He would not be a priest at all, since there are those who offer the gifts according to the Law; ⁵ who serve a copy and shadow of the heavenly things, just as Moses ^[d] was warned *by God* when he was about to erect the ^[e] tabernacle; for, “See,” He says, “that you make all things according to the pattern which was shown you on the mountain.” ⁶ 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.

A New Covenant

⁷ For if that first *covenant* had been faultless, there would have been no occasion sought for a second. ⁸ For finding fault with them, He says, “Behold, days are coming, says the Lord, ^[f] When I will effect a new covenant With the house of Israel and with the house of Judah; ⁹ Not like the covenant which I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; for they did not continue in My covenant, and I did not care for them, says the Lord.

The Old and the New

9:1 Now even the first *covenant* had regulations of divine worship and the earthly sanctuary. ² For there was a [a]tabernacle prepared, the [b]outer one, in which *were* the lampstand and the table and the [c]sacred bread; this is called the holy place.³ Behind the second veil there was a [d]tabernacle which is called the Holy of Holies, ⁴ having a golden [e]altar of incense and the ark of the covenant covered on all sides with gold, in which was a golden jar holding the manna, and Aaron's rod which budded, and the tables of the covenant; ⁵ and above it *were* the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat; but of these things we cannot now speak in detail.

⁶ Now when these things have been so prepared, the priests are continually entering the [f]outer [g]tabernacle performing the divine worship, ⁷ but into the second, only the high priest *enters* once a year, not without *taking* blood, which he offers for himself and for the [h]sins of the people committed in ignorance. ⁸ The Holy Spirit *is* signifying this, that the way into the holy place has not yet been disclosed while the [i]outer tabernacle is still standing, ⁹ which *is* a symbol for the present time. Accordingly both gifts and sacrifices are offered which cannot make the worshiper perfect in conscience, ¹⁰ since they *relate* only to food and drink and various washings, regulations for the [j]body imposed until a time of reformation.

¹¹ But when Christ appeared *as* a high priest of the good things [k]to come, *He entered* through the greater and more perfect [l]tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this creation; ¹² and not through the blood of goats and calves, but through His own blood, He entered the holy place once for all, [m]having obtained eternal redemption. ¹³ For if the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling those who have

been defiled sanctify for the [n]cleansing of the flesh, ¹⁴ how much more will the blood of Christ, who through [o]the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse [p]your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

¹⁵ For this reason He is the mediator of a new covenant, so that, since a death has taken place for the redemption of the transgressions that were *committed* under the first covenant, those who have been called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance. ¹⁶ For where a [q]covenant is, there must of necessity [r]be the death of the one who made it. ¹⁷ For a [s]covenant is valid *only* when [t]men are dead, [u]for it is never in force while the one who made it lives. ¹⁸ Therefore even the first *covenant* was not inaugurated without blood. ¹⁹ 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, ²⁰ saying, "This is the blood of the covenant which God commanded you." ²¹ And in the same way he sprinkled both the [v]tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry with the blood. ²² And according to the [w]Law, *one may* almost say, all things are cleansed with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.

²³ Therefore it was necessary for the copies of the things in the heavens to be cleansed with these, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. 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; ²⁵ nor was it that He would offer Himself often, as the high priest enters the holy place year by year with blood that is not his own. ²⁶ Otherwise, He would have needed to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now once at the consummation of the ages He has

been manifested to put away sin [x] by the sacrifice of Himself. ²⁷ And inasmuch as it is [v] appointed for men to die once and after this *comes* judgment, ²⁸ so Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time for salvation without *reference to sin*, to those who eagerly await Him.

One Sacrifice of Christ Is Sufficient

10:1 For the Law, since it has *only* a shadow of the good things to come *and* not the very [a] form of things, [b] can never, by the same sacrifices which they offer continually year by year, make perfect those who draw near. ² Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered, because the worshipers, having once been cleansed, would no longer have had consciousness of sins? ³ But in [c] those *sacrifices* there is a reminder of sins year by year. ⁴ For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins. ⁵ Therefore, when He comes into the world, He says,
 “Sacrifice and offering You have not desired,
 But a body You have prepared for Me;
⁶ In whole burnt offerings and *sacrifices* for sin You have taken no pleasure.
⁷ “Then I said, ‘Behold, I have come
 (In the scroll of the book it is written of Me)
 To do Your will, O God.”
⁸ After saying above, “Sacrifices and offerings and whole burnt offerings and *sacrifices* for sin You have not desired, nor have You taken pleasure *in them*” (which are offered according to the Law), ⁹ then He [d] said, “Behold, I have come to do Your will.” He takes away the first in order to establish the second. ¹⁰ By [e] this will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

¹¹ Every priest stands daily ministering and offering time after time the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins; ¹² but He, having offered one sacrifice for ^[f]sins for all time, sat down at the right hand of God, ¹³ waiting from that time onward until His enemies be made a footstool for His feet. ¹⁴ For by one offering He has perfected for all time those who are ^[g]sanctified. ¹⁵ And the Holy Spirit also testifies to us; for after saying,

¹⁶ “This is the covenant that I will make with them
After those days, says the Lord:
I will put My laws upon their heart,
And on their mind I will write them,”
He then says,

¹⁷ “And their sins and their lawless deeds
I will remember no more.”

¹⁸ Now where there is forgiveness of these things,
there is no longer *any* offering for sin.

A New and Living Way

¹⁹ Therefore, brethren, since we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus, ²⁰ by a new and living way which He inaugurated for us through the veil, that is, His flesh, ²¹ and since *we have* a great priest over the house of God, ²² let us draw near with a ^[h]sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled *clean* from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. ²³ Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful; ²⁴ and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, ²⁵ 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.

Christ or Judgment

²⁶ For if we go on sinning willfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, ²⁷ but a terrifying expectation of judgment and the fury of a fire which will consume the adversaries. ²⁸ Anyone who has set aside the Law

of Moses dies without mercy on *the testimony* of two or three witnesses. ²⁹ 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? ³⁰ For we know Him who said, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay." And again, "The Lord will judge His people." ³¹ It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

³² But remember the former days, ^[i]when, after being enlightened, you endured a great conflict of sufferings, ³³ partly by being made a public spectacle through reproaches and tribulations, and partly by becoming sharers with those who were so treated. ³⁴ 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. ³⁵ Therefore, do not throw away your confidence, which has a great reward. ³⁶ For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God, you may receive ^[i]what was promised.

³⁷ For yet in a very little while, He who is coming will come, and will not delay.

³⁸ But My righteous one shall live by faith; And if he shrinks back, My soul has no pleasure in him.

³⁹ But ^[k]we are not of those who shrink back to destruction, but of those who have faith to the ^[i]preserving of the soul.

The Triumphs of Faith

11 Now faith is the ^[a]assurance of *things* ^[b]hoped for, the ^[c]conviction of things not seen. ² For by it the men of old ^[d]gained approval.

³ By faith we understand that the ^[e]worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things which are

visible. ⁴ By faith Abel offered to God a better sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained the testimony that he was righteous, God testifying ^[f]about his gifts, and through ^[g]faith, though he is dead, he still speaks. ⁵ By faith Enoch was taken up so that he would not see death; and he was not found because God took him up; for he obtained the witness that before his being taken up he was pleasing to God. ⁶ And without faith it is impossible to please *Him*, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and *that* He is a rewarder of those who seek Him. ⁷ By faith Noah, being warned *by God* about things not yet seen, ^[h]in reverence prepared an ark for the salvation of his household, by which he condemned the world, and became an heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.

⁸ By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed ^[i]by going out to a place which he was to receive for an inheritance; and he went out, not knowing where he was going. ⁹ By faith he lived as an alien in the land of promise, as in a foreign *land*, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, fellow heirs of the same promise; ¹⁰ for he was looking for the city which has foundations, whose architect and builder is God. ¹¹ By faith even Sarah herself received ^[j]ability to conceive, even beyond the proper time of life, since she considered Him faithful who had promised. ¹² Therefore there was born even of one man, and him as good as dead ^[k]at that, *as many descendants* as the stars of heaven in number, and innumerable as the sand which is by the seashore.

¹³ 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. ¹⁴ For those who say such things make it clear that they are seeking a country of their own. ¹⁵ And indeed if they had been ^[l]thinking of that *country* from which they went out, they would have had opportunity to return. ¹⁶ But as it is, they desire a better *country*, that is, a heavenly

one. Therefore God is not [\[m\]](#)ashamed to be called their God; for He has prepared a city for them.

¹⁷ By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises was offering up his only begotten *son*; ¹⁸ *it was he* to whom it was said, “In Isaac your [\[n\]](#)descendants shall be called.” ¹⁹ [\[o\]](#)He considered that God is able to raise *people* even from the dead, from which he also received him back [\[p\]](#)as a type. ²⁰ By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau, even regarding things to come. ²¹ By faith Jacob, as he was dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, and worshiped, *leaning* on the top of his staff. ²² By faith Joseph, when he was dying, made mention of the exodus of the sons of Israel, and gave orders concerning his bones.

²³ By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden for three months by his parents, because they saw he was a beautiful child; and they were not afraid of the king’s edict. ²⁴ By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter, ²⁵ choosing rather to endure ill-treatment with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin, ²⁶ considering the reproach of [\[q\]](#)Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for he was looking to the reward. ²⁷ By faith he left Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured, as seeing Him who is unseen. ²⁸ By faith he [\[r\]](#)kept the Passover and the sprinkling of the blood, so that he who destroyed the firstborn would not touch them. ²⁹ By faith they passed through the Red Sea as though *they were passing* through dry land; and the Egyptians, when they attempted it, were [\[s\]](#)drowned.

³⁰ By faith the walls of Jericho fell down after they had been encircled for seven days. ³¹ By faith Rahab the harlot did not perish along with those who were disobedient, after she had welcomed the spies [\[t\]](#)in peace.

³² And what more shall I say? For time will fail me if I

tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets, ³³ who by faith conquered kingdoms, performed *acts of righteousness*, obtained promises, shut the mouths of lions, ³⁴ quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, from weakness were made strong, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight. ³⁵ Women received *back* their dead by resurrection; and others were tortured, not accepting their [u]release, so that they might obtain a better resurrection; ³⁶ and others [v]experienced mockings and scourgings, yes, also chains and imprisonment. ³⁷ They were stoned, they were sawn in two, [w]they were tempted, they were put to death with the sword; they went about in sheepskins, in goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, ill-treated ³⁸ (*men* of whom the world was not worthy), wandering in deserts and mountains and caves and holes [x]in the ground. ³⁹ And all these, having [y]gained approval through their faith, did not receive [z]what was promised, ⁴⁰ because God had [aa]provided something better for us, so that apart from us they would not be made perfect.

Jesus, the Example

12 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 [a]fixing our eyes on Jesus, the [b]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.

A Father's Discipline

⁴ You have not yet resisted ^[d]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 ^[e]earthly fathers to discipline us, and we respected them; shall we not much rather be subject to the Father of ^[f]spirits, and live? 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, ^[g]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.

Contrast of Sinai and Zion

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. 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 [\[h\]](#)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.

The Unshaken Kingdom

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, [\[i\]](#)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 [\[i\]](#)show gratitude, by which we may offer to God an acceptable service with reverence and awe; ²⁹ for our God is a consuming fire.

The Changeless Christ

13 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 honour 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 ^[a]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 ^[b]were so occupied were not benefited. ¹⁰ We have an altar from which those who serve the ^[c]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. 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.

God-pleasing Sacrifices

¹⁵ Through Him then, let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that ^[d]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. ^[e] Let them do this with joy and not ^[f]with grief, for this would be unprofitable for you.

¹⁸ Pray for us, for we are sure that we have a good

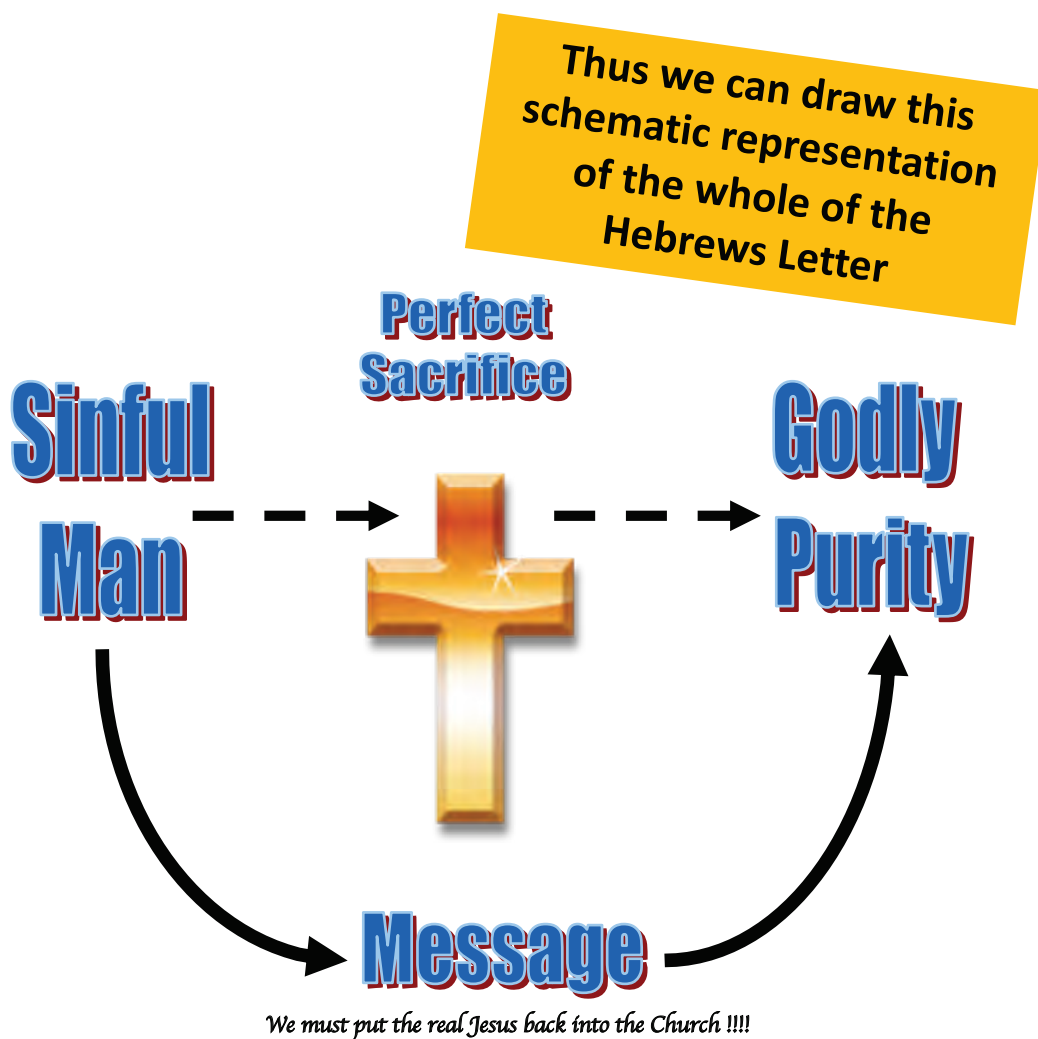
conscience, desiring to conduct ourselves honourably in all things. ¹⁹ And I urge *you* all the more to do this, so that I may be restored to you the sooner.

Benediction

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.

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.



The Superiority Of Christ and The New Covenant **OUTLINE**

Here is a simple outline of the book, with its main divisions...

1.The superiority of Christ - [Heb 1:1-8:6](#)

1. Better than the prophets, as a much better Spokesman - [Heb 1:1-3](#)
2. Better than the angels, by virtue of His Deity and humanity - [Heb 1:4-2:18](#)
3. Better than Moses, for He is the Son who provides a heavenly rest - [Heb 3:1-4:13](#)
4. Better than Aaron, as His priesthood is a superior one - [Heb 4:16-8:6](#)

2.The superiority of the New Covenant - [Heb 8:7-10:18](#)

1. For it is based upon better promises - [Heb 8:7-13](#)
2. For it is based upon a better sanctuary - [Heb 9:1-28](#)
3. For it is based upon a better sacrifice - [Heb 10:1-18](#)

3.Exhortations drawn from this superiority - [Heb 10:19-13:25](#)

1. Draw near to God and hold fast - [Heb 10:19-39](#)
2. Run the race of faith with endurance - [Heb 11:1-12:29](#)
3. Miscellaneous exhortations - [Heb 13:1-25](#)

KEY WARNINGS

A unique feature of the epistle to the Hebrews are the warnings throughout the book. As we conclude this introduction, perhaps it may be profitable to summarize them.

1.The warning against drifting - [Heb 2:1-4](#)

1. Through neglect we can easily drift away
2. The solution is to give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard

2.The warning against departing - [Heb 3:12-15](#)

1. Through sin's deceitfulness we can become hardened and develop a lack of faith by which we can depart from the living God

1. The solution is exhort one another daily and remain steadfast

1.The warning against disobedience - [Heb 4:11-13](#)

1. Like Israel in the wilderness, we can fail to enter our rest through disobedience
2. The solution is diligence and heeding the Word of God

2.The warning against dullness - [Heb 5:11-6:6](#)

1. Dullness of hearing can make it difficult for us to appreciate the extent of our blessings in Christ, and even falling away to the point of crucifying the Son of God afresh!
2. The solution is grasping the first principles of the oracles of God, and then pressing on to spiritual maturity and perfection

3.The warning against despising - [Heb 10:26-39](#)

1. It is possible to so despise God's grace as to no longer have a sacrifice for sins, but only a certain fearful expectation of judgment
2. The solution is to hold unto our confidence in Christ, and believe with endurance

4.The warning against defying - [Heb 12:25-29](#)

1. It is possible to refuse to listen to the One who now speaks from heaven!
2. The solution is to look diligently to the grace of God, receiving it in such a way so we may serve Him acceptably with reverence and godly fear

With such warnings, this book is indeed a "word of exhortation" ([Heb 13:22](#))!

Thus, “The Shortened Practical Letter to the Hebrews”

Thus, Rectifying The Sins Of Pragmatism And Conservatism Begins With...

That Fundamental, Prime Message

... at the end of the day ...

Obedience to “that form of doctrine is essential”!! There is no doubt about that. ....But, and this is very crucial, the fundamental centrality of “that form of doctrine” is the cross and Jesus upon that cross, sacrificially, for all of appellant mankind. All doctrine stems from the cross, and Jesus’ death there, on that horrid Hill of Golgotha. This is the prime message of all preaching and teaching. It is not on niceties, lovey namby-pambyism, nor “abiding within the “laws of Christ”, for while they too are very important, they, by themselves never, ever, replace Jesus in any way.

If we allow Jesus to become diminished, or to ignore Him for the sake for mere obedience, then we are guilty of a gross form of sin, one that changes God plan of salvation by His grace, to one of salvation by our own efforts, regardless of the cross’s involvement.

Jesus’ sacrifice upon the cross did, once for all time, what needed to be done, -pay the sin debt and -cleanse the relationship up -totally. It is open and available to everyone who will avail themselves to His mercy. One will not need amnesty, for one will have purity, through the death of Jesus for our sins.

Jesus, pure and holy, real and Godly, loving and tough, righteous and ready, was the first thing that got lost out there on the roads from Rome down to Catholicism and then on down again to Protestantism, and recently on down to our road of being ecO-Green. Jesus is what the conservative religious world of the first century churches’ world lost first! It was not Gnosticism. We must find it anew, just like the Hebrew brethren had to do back in the very first century. Jesus was the first great “lost” item of all of faith’s history. What a recurring tragedy. It must be our legacy to restore Jesus to the church.