



HEBREWS: UNFAILING FAITH

*Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: **but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it** (Hebrews 4:1-2).*

REV. MIKE JONES
MINISTER MINISTRY
233 EVANS ROAD
JOHNSONVILLE, SC 29555

HEBREWS: UNFAILING FAITH By Rev. Mike Jones

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GOAL: REACHING SOULS WITH THE GOSPEL MESSAGE: The Goal of this Ministry is to get as many people as possible, using every means available, TO KNOW CHRIST as their personal Savior and then TO SHOW Him in their changed life. This is done with the realization that if the Power and Direction of God are not on everything we do then it is a failure before it starts.

FINANCES: We operate entirely as a Faith Ministry. We do not sell anything, nor do we solicit funds from anyone. We simply trust God to meet our needs, and then try to use the money He provides as wisely as possible.

METHODS OF MINISTRY:

We provide Hundreds of FREE MEALS for Ministers (and sometimes their wives) each year as a way of promoting fellowship and showing appreciation for their work for the Lord.

We assist several MISSION WORKS by providing help with postage, promotion, correspondence, and travel. We rejoice that this is a way to reach Hundreds of people each year with the Gospel.

As funds are available, we assist Ministers and Widows with SPECIAL PROJECT NEEDS each year. For example, an unexpected flat tire, an unanticipated medical bill, or various other moving and ministry needs. Our resources are limited; and that limits our help. Pray for God to provide what we need to distribute to those HE wants us to help. Also pray that we would have the wisdom to use every opportunity to turn Welfare into Workfare.

We also distribute Bibles and Books as available and needed, operate numerous Websites where Sermons, Bible Studies, and Devotions are freely available, and use various forms of Media to share God's Grace and Good News. We try to "walk through" any door God opens.

WHAT WE PROCLAIM:

WHO SHOULD BE SAVED: YOU- ROM 3:23 *For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;* ROM 3:10 *As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:*

WHY YOU SHOULD BE SAVED: TO AVOID MISSING GOD'S PLAN OF GOOD FOR YOU- ROM 6:23 *For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.* ROM 5:12 *Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.*

WHEN TO BE SAVED: ROM 5:8 *God commended his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*

THE WAY TO BE SAVED: TRUST CHRIST BY FAITH- ROM 10:9-10 *That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.*

HOW TO LIVE AFTER YOU ARE SAVED: ACCORDING TO GOD'S WORD - ROM 12:1-2 *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.*

HEBREWS INTRODUCTION

Author- Unknown. It bears many Pauline similarities (Reference to Timothy 13:23, Request for Prayer 13:18-19, "The Just shall live by Faith 10:38) but it also contains many non-Pauline parts (No opening salutation, the constant reference to the Septuagint, the polished grammar, etc.) Others named as possible authors are Barnabas, Luke, and Apollos.

Purpose- Hebrews was written to Christian Jews who were in danger of turning back to Judaism because of the persecutions they were undergoing and the difficulties of walking by Faith instead of ceremony. There are 3 different interpretations of what is meant by all the warnings listed in the book-

1) The people the Author is writing to were "almost" Christians but were in danger of falling away instead of being "completely saved"(?).

2) The danger the people faced was a falling away from following Christ and therefore the loss of Reward and the chastening of God.

3) The people were in danger of denying Faith in Christ, going back to the Law, and becoming Apostates from God (The Free Will Baptist position). The first 2 make the Book of little interest or importance to us today but the last one shows that Hebrews is indeed a vitally needed book as Christianity faces increasing persecution and the pressures to compromise to be more acceptable to the world.

The "two-edged sword" to guard against Apostasy in Hebrews is 1) The Superiority of Christ over anyone or anything else and 2) The danger involved in neglect, unbelief, and immaturity in the things of God.

I. THE SUPERIORITY OF CHRIST 1:-10-18

A) Above the Prophets 1:1-3 (They spoke about HIM)

B) Above the Angels 1:4-14 2:5-18 (Better name: He is served and Angels serve but Angels could not give man Salvation nor comprehend man's sufferings as Christ did.)

FIRST WARNING: Neglect 2:1-4 (*We ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest we let them slip* (run out as leaking vessels).

C) Above Moses 3:1-6 (*He who builded the house hath more honor than the house* 3:3)

SECOND WARNING: Unbelief 3:7-19 (*So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief* 3:19)

D) Above Joshua 4:2-10 (The Perfect Rest)

THIRD WARNING: Disobedience 4:1, 11-13 (*Let us labor therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief* (disobedience) 4:11)

E) Above Aaron 4:14 - 5:10 (Sympathy through Suffering)

FOURTH WARNING: Immaturity 5:11 - 6:20 (Leave the Principles for the Promises - otherwise you'll bear thorns and briars and be rejected)

F) Above the Levitical Priesthood 7:1-28 (Christ was after the order of Melchisedec, which is a better priesthood)

G) Above the Old Covenant 8:1-13 (It will be written on the minds and hearts instead of tables of stone)

H) Above the Ordinances and Sacrifices 9:1-10:18 (Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the Holy Place 9:12. For by one offering he hath perfected for even them that are sanctified 10:14)

II. THE SUPERIORITY OF FAITH 10:19 - 13:21

A) The Way of access to God 10:19-25 (Faith in Christ's shed Blood to cover sins and His Heavenly Priesthood to intercede for us)

FIFTH WARNING: Willful Sin 10:26-31 (*Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden underfoot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of covenant, wherewith he was sanctified an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of Grace 10:29*)

B) The Way of Life in the World 10:32 - 11:40 (Now the Just shall have no pleasure in him. 10:38)

C) The Way of Training as Sons of God 12:1-13 (Chastening is a sign of Sonship and Love)

SIXTH WARNING: Apostasy 12:14-17 (Choosing temporary pleasure over eternal Promises- example of Esau)

D) The Way of Heavenly Privilege 12:18-24 (The Law drove us away in fear, Christ draws us near in Faith)

SEVENTH WARNING: Refusal 12:25-29 (*See that ye refuse not him that speaketh For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven 12:25*)

E) The Way of duty among men 13:1-21 (*Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever- so that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me 13:8,6*)

III. CONCLUSION AND GREETINGS 13:22-25

The call to all who are considering turning back to this world because of persecutions and problems is- *Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach. For here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come (13:13-14)*

Heb 01:- JESUS: GOD'S FINAL WORD

INTRO- I have entitles this series of studies on Hebrews "Backsliders Beware". This is because Hebrews was written to people who were undergoing persecutions and this was tempting them to find some way to compromise; or if that failed to abandon, Biblical Christianity. Today we face some of the same pressures and more than ever need to "give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip." (Heb 2:1 see also 3:12 and 4: 1).

The Author of Hebrew is unknown but was probably Paul. It was written to Jewish Christians who were being tempted to go back to the old sacrificial system given by God to Moses and respected by the people. (See Acts 6:7 *And the word of God increased and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the PRIEST were obedient to the faith*).

HOW?? *But there rose up certain of the sect of the PHARISEES which believed* (Acts 15:5) And remember that the first Church council was held to determine how much obligation to the Law Gentile Believers had (Acts 15). Even today this same pressure is being placed on Christians to be respectable instead of righteous and to be popular instead of pious but Christ calls us to go to Him without the camp and bear the reproach of His name.

Hebrews is divided into 3 main parts:

1. Jesus the Better Savior 1-7 (Past sins)
2. Calvary is the better Covenant 7- 10:18 (Present Sin)
3. Faith the better principle 10:19-13 (Future sinfulness)

The Writer wants us first of all to realize that Christ is better than any of the Old sources of the Law (Prophets, Angels, Moses, Joshua, Aaron).

I. GOD'S CHANGING METHODS OF REVELATION

Immediately we see 3 things:

1. God is (Gen 1:1)
2. God Speaks (The basis of Faith- *He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him* (Heb 11:6).
3. God spoke at various times and various ways:
 - a. Angels: Abraham, Gideon, Mary and Joseph
 - b. Visions and Dreams- Jacob, Daniel, Prophets
 - c. Communication- Moses, Elijah (Still small voice)
 - d. Samuel- Word of God was precious there was no open vision

God spoke as He saw the need- When I tell someone how to get from Florence to Grace I don't tell them every house along the way, just the major points. And if I'm telling them how to get to Grace I don't tell them to go on to Charleston. GOD MADE THE FINAL DESTINATION AND THE FINAL WORD- JESUS.

II. GOD Is FINAL WORD JESUS

Christ is the end of the Law to them that believe. (No more need of Sacrifices and Ceremonies which are a shadow of the things to come when Christ is the completion of them all). Therefore any Revelation or Doctrine or Gospel that places Jesus in any position other than Absolutely the Final answer is false and dangerous (See Gal 1:6-8). And remember it is just as dangerous to add to Christ as it is to deny Him (Now that you've got Christ let's go on to better things- Baptism, Super Sainthood)

WHY IS CHRIST THE FINAL ANSWER?? Heb 1:2-3

1. Heir of all things (Others took care of the property. It belongs to Him!)
 2. He made the worlds (Without him was not anything made that was made)
 3. He is the brightness of God's Glory (Not a reflection but a source [as on the Mount of Transfiguration. He does not SEEK Glory, He IS Glory!])
 4. The Express image of God's person (Jesus said, he that hath seen me hath seen the Father). God revealed himself not only through what Jesus said but what He was! No need of a further description of someone I am looking at!)
 - 5 Upholding all things by the Word of His power (By him all things consist). There is no greater force to appeal to than this!
 6. Himself purged our sins (There was no one found on, under, or above the earth who could pay the price except Christ. He has satisfied God's requirements!)
 7. He sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on High. (Because the job was completed "It is Finished!")
- God's Final Word to you is Jesus. If you are not saved after hearing of Jesus then you will not be saved- "For there is no other Name under Heaven given among men whereby you must be saved".

Heb 01:- 2:- BETTER THAN ANGELS

INTRO- In order to show that nothing or nobody should take the place of Christ in a person's life the writer of Hebrews compares Christ to those who had great honor. He begins with Angels.

I. THE NATURE OF ANGELS

A) Created Spiritual Beings 1:7 They once lived and worked on the earth led by Lucifer (Satan) until the time of Revolt when 1/3 of them left their first estate to rebel against God (Who has prepared a place of everlasting darkness for them.) (They did not have a single head like man so each chose for himself whether to Rebel or remain with God. Since we had a single Head the taint of Adam's sin was passed to all of us.)

Christ said we would be "Like the Angels" and we long for that day.

B) Ministers of God (1: 7) and Saved People (1: 14). Angels are involved in many activities in the Bible. Angels cut off the first born in Egypt, the murmurers in the desert, and the enemies of Israel (185,000 1 night). They delivered Peter from Prison, told Paul of God's protection for those on the ship, and showed John the Plan of God in Revelation. They announced John the Baptist's coming and the Birth of Christ. They comforted Christ after His temptation and in the Garden before the Cross. They rolled the stone away, told the women Christ was risen, and then told the disciples to get to work because Christ is coming again.

Truly Angels are Marvelous and much to be praised but Hebrews tells us:

II. CHRIST IS BETTER THAN ANGELS 1:4-14

A) Better Name- Son instead of Servant

B) He is worshipped and Angels worship

C) King in the Kingdom 8 They are subjects

D) Altogether sinless 9 some of them sinned

E) Creator 10 They are created

F) Eternal One 11-12 They were made in time

G) Final Authority 13-14 They minister to those to have submitted to God's authority.

III. CHRIST BECAME LESS IN ORDER TO DO MORE: *But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man* (Hebrews 2:9). Jesus (who created Angels), was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, that he, by the grace of God, should taste death for every man. Glory!

Will you worship the good or the Best???

Heb 01:9 OIL OF GLADNESS

*Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with **the oil of gladness above thy fellows**.* (Hebrews 1:9).

We are all glad when we get "Gladness". Here are some ways to make sure Gladness is in your life.

1) When we do Right and Trust God's Word God puts Gladness in our heart- *Offer the sacrifices of righteousness, and put your trust in the LORD. There be many that say, Who will shew us any good? LORD, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us. **Thou hast put gladness in my heart**, more than in the time that their corn and their wine increased. I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep: for thou, LORD, only makest me dwell in safety.* (Psalms 4:5-8).

2) When we Trust God in our trouble He will "clothe" us with Gladness- *I cried to thee, O LORD; and unto the LORD I made supplication. What profit is there in my blood, when I go down to the pit? Shall the dust praise thee? shall it declare thy truth? Hear, O LORD, and have mercy upon me: LORD, be thou my helper. Thou hast turned for me my mourning into dancing: **thou hast put off my sackcloth, and girded me with gladness**; To the end that my glory may sing praise to thee, and not be silent. O LORD my God, I will give thanks unto thee for ever* (Psalms 30:8-12).

3) When we Sing Praises to God we manifest our Gladness- *Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all ye lands. **Serve the LORD with gladness**: come before his presence with singing* (Psalms 100:1-2).

4) Gladness will replace Sadness in the future- *And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: **they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away*** (Isaiah 35:10).

5) Sin in our lives blocks Gladness but returning to God renews our Gladness- *Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. **Make me to hear joy and gladness; that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice*** (Psalms 51:7-8).

If you are not Glad serving God you will end up being Sad serving sin and Satan- ***Because thou servedst not the LORD thy God with joyfulness, and with gladness of heart**, for the abundance of all things; **Therefore** shalt thou serve thine enemies which the LORD shall send against thee, in hunger, and in thirst, and in nakedness, and in want of all things: and he shall put a yoke of iron upon thy neck, until he have destroyed thee* (Deuteronomy 28:47-48).

Heb 02:3 NEGLECTING SALVATION

Heb 2:3 *How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him*

Neglect means to: be careless of, to make light of.

How do we Neglect our Salvation?

A) Failing to Serve as we should- 1Ti 4:14 *Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery. All parts of the Body; and each part it, is important.*

B) Failing to attend as we should- Heb 10:25 *Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching. 26 For if we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, 27 But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. 28 He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: 29 Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden underfoot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace? Worse than being lost is to Know Christ and then walk away.*

C) Failing to be Thankful- Ro 1:21 *Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.* Example of the Wife who realized that her marriage was in trouble when her husband no longer wanted to be near her.- Lost that loving feeling.

What is the Result of Neglecting Salvation?

A) Lost of Fruit- Mark 4:18 *And these are they which are sown among thorns; such as hear the word, 19 And the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it **becometh** unfruitful.* Which means pruning or punishment by the Lord.

B) Lost of Heaven- Ac 24:25 *And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee.*

Heb 02:5-18 PERFECT THRU SUFFERING

For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings (Hebrews 2:10).

I. ONE REASON CHRIST BECAME A MAN WAS TO LEARN TO RULE AS A MAN: Subjection of the world to come- *For unto the angels hath he not put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak. But one in a certain place testified, saying, What is man, that thou art mindful of him? **or the son of man**, that thou visitest him? Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands: **Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet**. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him (Hebrews 2:5-8).*

II. SALVATION WAS CHRIST DYING **AS MAN FOR MAN**.

A) The Greatness of our Salvation: Spoken of by God, Confirmed by those who heard about it, Testified about by God via signs, wonders, various miracles, and gifts of the Spirit: *How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will? (Hebrews 2:3-4).*

B) Christ had to SUFFER as a man in order to DIE as a man so He could REDEEM Man.

1) He was made "Perfect" thru Suffering: *For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings (Hebrews 2:10).* Christ was the perfect man and perfect God so why did he need to be "made Perfect"? In order for God to redeem man He had to suffer the penalty for sin and satisfy the Law. Suffering AS a man allowed Him to die FOR man. [And now the "God-Man" know how to help Man!]

Suffering gives us:

a) A new awareness of God: Suffering allowed Job to declare, *I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee (Job 42:5).*

b) A means to Help Others: Paul's sufferings allowed him to see the Strength of Suffering (*He said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me 2 Cor 12:9*) so he could then proclaim a God *Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God. (2 Cor 1:4).*

c) Hope for Blessings after our Burdens: *But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man (Hebrews 2:9).*

III. RECOGNIZING CHRIST'S SUFFERING FOR OUR SALVATION SHOULD CAUSE US TO:

A) Testify about Him: Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee. (Hebrews 2:12).

B) Trust Him Completely: And again, I will put my trust in him. And again, Behold I and the children which God hath given me. (Hebrews 2:13).

C) Thank Him Continually for Suffering to defeat Death and the Devil: *Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. (Hebrews 2:14-15).*

The Suffering of Christ:

- 1) Should be part of Preaching: *Opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ (Acts 17:3).*
- 2) Shows God understands OUR Temptations: *For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted (Heb 2:18).*
- 3) Demonstrates the corrective need of suffering in our lives: *Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered (Heb 5:8).*
- 4) Serves as an Example for Christians: *For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps (1Pe 2:21)* Even if it means we are ostracized from society: *Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate (Heb 13:12).*
- 5) Helps us Remember our Suffering benefits others: *For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit (1Pet 3:18).* As well as Ourselves: *Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin (1Pet 4:1).*

ARE YOU BEING "MADE PERFECT?"

Heb 02:14-15 BONDAGE

Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage (Heb 2:14-15).

I. SIN BINDS US John 8:34 "Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin" (Alcohol, Drugs, "Things" [Eve had everything but wanted more]), but the greatest binder is death

II. CHRIST DELIVERS US

A) From Penalty of Sin No matter how bad you are (Paul said he was chiefest of sinners (Murder, thief, lying). CHRIST PAID THE FULL PENALTY- nothing we can do to "help" pay that debt- The Wages of sin are death but the GIFT of God is eternal life thru Jesus Christ.

B) From Power of Sin: Deliverance can only come from someone who has overcome the problem.

1) Submit yourself to God (Must come first)

a. Acknowledge His lordship "thine is the kingdom". "We are more than conquerors thru Him"

b. Realize your position 1John 4:4 "Ye are of God" / Jn 1:12 and I John 3:1 "Sons of God"

c. Recognize the available power "GREATER IS HE THAT IS IN US THAN HE THAT IS IN THE WORLD". Gideon's army of 300 can conquer a vast army / Little David can conquer the giant Goliath. "My grace is sufficient for thee, my strength is made perfect in weakness"

2) Resist the devil, and he will flee from you ("resist" is ACTIVE Resistance in the Greek)

a. his power is gone. (His "thumbs and big toes" have been cut off- Judges 1:6

b. There is a way to escape *There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it* (1 Corinthians 10:13).

Give a man enough rope and he will hang himself- And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will. (2 Timothy 2:26). You lead a bird into a captive cage one bread crumb at a time! Put a Frog in Hot water and he will jump out. Put him in warm water and slowly increase the temp and he will cook!

3) Draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you. Every man made effort fails (Reforms only reform you into another kind of bondage). Only "drawing nigh to GOD" will give you freedom. This means:

a. Cleanse your hands- "Draw nigh" is an active action

b. Purify your hearts- inner being (mind, motives)

C) From Presence of Sin- That *he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage*. In Heaven Death no longer can control us; instead we proclaim: O Grave where is thy victory, O Death, where is thy sting" THANKS BE UNTO GOD WHO GIVES US THE VICTORY THROUGH OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.

If the Son shall make you free you shall be free Indeed

Heb 03:13 DAILY DUTIES

But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin (Hebrews 3:13).

The New Year is the time of year that people decide to do something about their weight, their finances, and their relationships. It should also be a time they evaluate who they are, where they are going, and how they expect to get there. Here are Some Daily Duties that will provide a solid foundation for a successful and enjoyable life. It ALL must begin with the:

DAY OF SALVATION-*For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation* (2 Corinthians 6:2). Nothing you do any other day matters unless THIS DAY is a part of your life!

Once you have God's Pardon and live in God's Peace then you need to focus on:

Daily Bread- *Give us this day our daily bread* (Matthew 6:11). Eat to live; do not live to eat. Regulating your daily diet will decrease your weight and increase your health. This Daily Bread will usually come from

Daily Work- *Then said the LORD unto Moses, Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a certain rate every day, that I may prove them, whether they will walk in my law, or no* (Exodus 16:4). God expects people to do what they can, where they are, with what they have-*For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat* (2 Thessalonians 3:10). When everyone works then the work is easier for everyone. A strong work ethic is part of a successful life. But this Daily Work should not exclude time for:

Daily Worship- *So will I sing praise unto thy name for ever, that I may daily perform my vows* (Psalms 61:8). Every day should start and end in the presence of God honoring your promises to God {*When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for he hath no pleasure in fools: pay that which thou hast vowed* (Ecclesiastes 5:4)}. If you are not walking with the Lord each day then you are on the wrong road! This Daily Worship should include your:

Daily Testimony- *My tongue also shall talk of thy righteousness all the day long:* (Psalms 71:24). Make a way each day to tell people the way to God, the works of God in your life, and the wonders of God that await you some day. And Your:

Daily Prayers- *Mine eye mourneth by reason of affliction: LORD, I have called daily upon thee, I have stretched out my hands unto thee* (Psalms 88:9). Remember that Daniel (who had major responsibilities for a country) prayed 3 times a day. If you are too busy to pray then you are too busy! All of these are part of:

Daily Cross- *And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me* (Luke 9:23). This simply means you Submit to God's plan and Commit to God's ways each day {*Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors* (Proverbs 8:34)}. All of this is because you:

Daily Watch for His Return- *Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober. For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night. But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation* (1 Thessalonians 5:6-8).

Every day is a new day to do great things for God. Make each day count

Heb 03:- 4:1-11 3 WAYS TO VICTORY

INTRO- We have been talking about the fact that Christ is better than the Prophets and Angels. Today we're going to look at the fact that Christ is better than Moses (Who led the Children of Israel out of Bondage) or Joshua (Who led the Children of Israel into the Promised land) because Christ is the way to Victory; Victory in your personal, family, business, and Spiritual life.

I. CONSIDER JESUS 3:1-6 (Think about HIM)- Remember:

A) The Reason.

1. He has suffered being tempted and is able to come to the assistance of anyone who is tempted (see 2:18). We need victory over Temptations, Pressures, and Problems.

2. He has endured hostility from sinners (Pressure to go their way instead of God's way)

Heb 12:3 *For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your mind* (exhausted and losing heart in your mind.)

B) The Result- The main thing said about Jesus was that in the midst of problem He was FAITHFUL. (Example of picture of peace: One chose a quite meadow. Another chose a bird in a nest under a rock in midst of a storm.)

Jesus' family forsook Him, his friends deserted him, and he was persecuted for doing good but he was FAITHFUL to Him that called Him. As a Son OVER the house instead of a Servant IN the house. (Are you working FOR the Lord or WITH the Lord!) A BIG difference in your incentive to work and your vision to work.

The Peace of God shall keep your heart and mind through Christ Jesus If I am working with God I'm satisfied to do it God's way in God's time.

Jesus is the High Priest of our Confession (to agree together). Our confession is that we agree with God about who we are and who He is.

We FIRST get Victory by looking to, and walking with, Jesus.

II. HARDEN NOT YOUR HEARTS 3:7-19

Whatsoever is not of Faith is sin. Unbelief hardens us against others, self, and God.

A) The Example of Israel- It took them 40 years to go 11 days journey because they:

1. Provoked God- By demanding that God do something to show His Presence (Show us a Sign)

2. Tempted God- To see if God had good or evil in Him (God does not love me or He would allow me to do this thing I want to do; regardless of the harm it would eventually do to me or others!)

3. Proved God- To put to the test to see if worthy. (If you meet MY specifications of what I believe is right then I will serve you).

4. Saw God's work-God who had worked for them now worked against them. [When God would not bow to them they hardened their heart instead of repenting].

B) The Exhortation to us

1. Take heed to your heart- Keep your heart with all diligence for out of it are the issues of life (Satan continually tries to waylay the heart with excess of wants or lies about God) Get to know God's ways and walk in them (That's the way to keep fellowship).

2. Exhort one another- For unbelief closes the gate. Encourage one another.

TODAY- Before the hardening sets in. Jude 3 Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.

SECONDLY we get Victory through keeping a Soft Heart of Love toward God. Be on guard that nothing harden you.

III. FEAR LEST YOU FALL SHORT. Heb 4:-

A) Profitable preaching must be mixed with Faith to hear and not heed and Practice is worse than not hearing. *Let us labor therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief* Heb 4:11

Unbelief is brought on by a failure to work. This causes us to fail to see God's will done and we begin to believe God CAN'T because we WON'T. God's plan is not at fault- Our carrying out of that plan is at fault.

B) Enter into the Rest of God (In the OT persecution was a sign of God's displeasure. In the NT is a sign of His Love- (Heb 12) as He molds us into His image). Take my yoke upon you and learn of me for I am meek and lowly of heart and you shall find rest unto your souls.

THIRDLY we get victory by putting our Faith to work lest we displease the God we love. Confidence in His love allows us to Rest.

Conclusion: The 3 Ways to Victory in our lives therefore are:

1. Considering Jesus- look at Him in His faithfulness regardless of the circumstances and do likewise.

2. Keeping a Soft heart- Renewing first love to combat unbelief. It is easy to trust someone who loves you.

3. Fearing failure enough to not get slack and miss the rest to come.

You can't have victory in Christ unless you come to Christ. Come believing for Victory today

Heb 04:12-13 BIBLE BEHAVIOR

HEB 4:12-13 *For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.*

The Word of God is:

1. Quick- Living- It Grows and “changes” - Every time you read it you find some new truth.
2. Powerful- JER 23:29 *Is not my word like as a fire? saith the LORD; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?*
3. Searching: Sharper than any two edged sword- piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart (Soul, Body, Spirit)

It produces FAITH- Rom 10:17 *So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*

It requires STUDY- II Tim 2:15 *Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.*

And ACTION- James 1:23 *But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.*

The Bible claims dividing power as a sword- The Bible will separate men from sin (Ps 119:11 *Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee*) or sin will separate man from the Bible

Heb 04:12-16 Boldness in Prayer

One of the greatest untapped resources in the world today is the Prayers of God's People. Many do not pray at all and others pray with little or no expectation of receiving an answer. We need to see Prayer as God does and exercise ourselves in its practice

The writer of Hebrews list 3 important things about Prayer:

I. THE PERCEPTION-

A) Of the Power of the Word of God: *For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart* (Hebrews 4:12). The Word is "Alive" (Quick) so it can deal with real world problems and situations. The Word is Powerful because it carries the authority of God! The Word is Revealing because it goes past our outer "mask" and sees the thoughts and intents of the heart.

B) Of our Powerlessness without God: vs 13 Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do. "Pierced" by the Word (vs 12) we see ourselves as God see us. We can drop the pretense and see our need of Repentance. Notice in Dan. 9:3-11 how Daniel begins his great prayer by acknowledging sin. Most people today are so busy asking God for things until they disregard their unworthiness to come into the presence of a Holy God.

II. THE PRIEST- vs 15 Our unworthiness means we must have some means of access unto God. We need someone to "plead our case" for us; someone with ability and authority.

Jesus is the Heavenly High Priest we need because:

1. He was tempted like as we are, yet without sin 4:15 (4:15 Amp Bible For we do not have a High Priest who is unable to understand and sympathize and have a fellow feeling with our weaknesses and infirmities and liability to the assaults of temptation, but One Who has been tempted in every respect as we are, yet without sinning.)

2. He understands the infirmities of the flesh 5:2

3. He was chosen by God to do this 5:4-6

4. He has gone through the discipline of suffering 5:8

Jesus can stand at the right hand of the Father and Plead our case as no one else can.

III. THE PRAYER- vs 16 *Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.*

Who- let US (Elijah was a man of like passions)

How- Come BOLDLY (fearlessly and confidently)

Where- unto the THRONE OF GRACE (Unmerited Favor)

Why- that we may OBTAIN MERCY (for our failures), and FIND GRACE TO HELP (in our battles)

When- in time of NEED (Seasonal Help, Appropriate Help)

DO YOU SEE YOURSELF AS GOD SEES YOU??? Is Repentance a part of your Prayer?? DO YOU COME TO GOD IN YOUR OWN ABILITY AND WITH YOUR OWN "AUTHORITY"??? Or do you realize that every Prayer must be made in the "name of Jesus"???

DO YOU PRAY?? DO YOU PRAY BOLDLY??? DO YOU OBTAIN HELP???????

Heb 04:12-16 POWER PRAYING

God does not like cry babies or whiners. He wants us to look Him in the eye and tell Him what we want.

- 1) Exposed by the Word- Heb 4:12-13 "What do you Need"?
- 2) Excited about the Savior- Heb 4:14-15
- 3) Expectant in our Prayer Life.- Luke 19:45-48. Heb 4:16 Blind man beside Road- Luke 18:35-43. Man let down thru roof- Mark 2:1-12. Syrophenician woman- Mark 7:24-30.

What do you NEED from God? Are you DESPERATE yet? Come BOLDLY.

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Heb 05:8-12 Things God Uses to Develop Us

God is the Potter, We are the Clay. He is molding us into the image of His Son Christ. There are a number of "Tools" He uses.

1. Discipline [Chastisement]- Those He LOVES He rebukes and chastens. For the Wrong we do to make us into the person we should be (See Heb 12:11).

2. Disturbance- Deut 32:11-12 Like an eagle that stirs up it's nest, that hovers over it's young, He spreads his wings and caught them, He carried them on His pinions, the Lord alone guided them. The Eagle must disturb the nest, cease providing food, and then nudge the eaglet out of the nest in order to get him to learn to fly. (But She is always there to catch him until he learns!!!)

Is God pushing you to do something? The Disturbance in your life may be so you can learn to "Fly". (Hurricane Hazel in Myrtle Beach was the best "Bad" thing to happen to that area)

3. Darkness- Land that knows nothing but sunshine becomes desert.

Ex 20:21 God was in the thick darkness

Is 50:10 *Who is among you that fears the Lord, that obeys the voice of His servant, that walks in darkness, and has no light? Let him trust in the name of the Lord and rely on his God.*

Never doubt in the Dark what God has told you in the Light. Many times we must walk by Faith instead of Sight

4. Delay- Delayed 3 days until Lazarus died. Isaac was not born until Abraham was 100. Jesus came to this earth EXACTLY on time.

God knows what time it is in your life also. Learn to trust Him.

Heb 06:1-12 GROWTH

God expects Growth in Christians. He is displeased when we remain babies and do not grow into Sons who manifest His Glory.

I. THE PRINCIPLES OF GROWTH- *Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, Of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment. And this will we do, if God permit* (Hebrews 6:1-3).

- 1) The Doctrine of Christ: a) Virgin Birth, b) Sinless Life, c) Sacrifice for Sin, d) Resurrection.
- 2) Repentance from dead works
- 3) Faith toward God
- 4) Doctrine of Baptisms: a) Water witness, b) By Spirit into Body of Christ
- 5) Laying on of Hands: a) to Ordain, b) to Heal, c) to receive a gift (*Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery* 1 Timothy 4:14).
- 6) Resurrection of the dead: a) righteous to Life, b) wicked to condemnation
- 7) Eternal Judgment: a) Judgment seat of Christ for Christians, b) White Throne Judgment of Sinners

II. THE WARNING ABOUT LACK OF GROWTH. *For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame. For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God: But that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned* (Hebrews 6:4-8). Why it is important to grow: The fruitless branch is cut off and burned!

- 1) Once enlightened- the Light of the Gospel was shone into their darkness
- 2) Tasted of the Heavenly Gifts- John 3:16
- 3) Made partakers of the Holy Ghost- Received help and a purpose from the Holy Spirit
- 4) Tasted the Good Word of God- Bible Blessed
- 5) Tasted the world to come- Heavenly Hungry

IF THEY FALL AWAY IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO RENEW THEM TO REPENTANCE. Doctrine of Apostasy- Renounce Faith in Christ and go back to depending on your wisdom or works. *He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and **he becometh unfruitful*** (Matthew 13:22).

III. THE PLEA FOR STEADFASTNESS. *But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak. For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister. And we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end: That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises* (Hebrews 6:9-12). Add the things that accompany salvation lest you wander from God:

- 1) Work and Labor of Love
- 2) Minister to the Saints (Use your Spiritual Gift)
- 3) Be diligent in Hope
- 4) Do not be Lazy- "Keep you garden weeded"
- 5) Follow the Example of those who have gone before

Faith is not understanding all you do; it is doing what God said because God said it.

Heb 06:7 8 WILL GOD BLESS OR CURSE YOU?

(Heb 6:7 8) *For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God: {8} But that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned.*

The Bible is about God and our relationship to Him. The “nitty gritty” of this is a simple question. Do you live in such a way that God will Bless you or Curse you?

1. NIGH to being CURSED BECAUSE THEY WERE BEARING THORNS: In Rev 2:21 God said He would give people “Space to Repent”. Throughout the Bible this principle of a LIMITED TIME is shown. Noah (120) years, Sodom (One last chance), Promised Land (Gen 15:13 16) *And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years; {14} And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance. {15} And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age. {16} But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full.*

A) Thorns: Grow on the edge of the field (No Commitment)

Barrier between Field and Woods (Obstacle to others)

Disliked by everyone because of they hurt everyone who comes close

Whose end is to be burned

B) Thorns Cause us to be UNFRUITFUL: (Mark 4:18 19) *And these are they which are sown among thorns; such as hear the word, {19} And the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful.*

2. BRINGING FORTH “MEET” FRUIT BRINGS GODS BLESSING

Jesus said that faith without fruit is a faulty faith- (John 15:5) *I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.*

Several “Fruits” that are expected in the Christian life.

1) Souls Won to Christ- (Prov 11:30) *The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life; and he that winneth souls is wise.*

2) Change in behavior caused by your beliefs- (Mat 3:8) *Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance:* Of course, we know the only real change in Christian Character is produced by the Holy Spirit- (Gal 5:22 23) *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.*

3) Success and accomplishment in your work for God- (Phil 1:22) *But if I live in the flesh, this is the fruit of my labour: yet what I shall choose I wot not.*

4) Thankful Hearts and Lips that Praise God- (Heb 13:15) *By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name.*

Does your life produce FRUIT or THORNS? The difference is Blessings or Cursing!

Heb 06:13-20 THE ANCHOR OF THE SOUL

INTRO- Paul has been dealing with the necessity of Growth and in doing so he has made some pretty drastic statements. He now goes on to show that there is something we can cling to and be sure of as we grow (change) in a changing world.

1. God made a promise to Abraham (and to Abraham's seed according to the Promise (Gal 3:7, 29) and he confirmed it by swearing by Himself (the greatest power)
2. The Promise was to bless and to multiply (see Gen 22: 16-18)
3. The Promise was fulfilled after patiently waiting (What about Ishmael??) Heb 10:36 *For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise.*
4. The Oath made it a settled affair. Nothing can change it now- not man or circumstances
5. So God used man's method (an oath) to show the unchangeableness of His Promise.
6. This was so that by two unchangeable things (His promise and His Oath; in which it is impossible for God ever to prove false or deceive us), we who have fled (to Him) for refuge might have mighty indwelling strength and strong encouragement to grasp and hold fast the hope appointed for us and set before us. (vs 18 in Amplified Bible)
7. This hope is a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul that is imbedded in the fact that Jesus has gone before us within the veil. Forerunner- He does not go without us, He goes before us!!

A ship at anchor does not do its job (But you need such a place when you are buffeted in a storm or need to load or unload cargo).

Will YOUR Anchor hold? Example of T.C. and I when the anchor didn't hold and our boat was headed for disaster

Heb 07:24-28 THE BETTER THINGS

I. THE BETTER PRIEST 7:24-28

- A) Unchangeable 7:24
- B) Complete 7:25
- C) Suited to the Needs 7:26
- D) With a Better Sacrifice 7:27
- E) Perfect instead of sinful 7:28

II. THE BETTER COVENANT 8:1-13

A) Necessary because the present things are only shadows of that that is to come. 1-5

B) Better because it is founded on better promises. (The Old Covenant was broken by man's inability to meet the terms. Now God will make a New Covenant based on the Promise of:

1. Grace VS 9 not law
2. Inner change vs 10 Not on tables of Stone but on the heart (See Jer. 31:31)
3. A Personal Relationship vs 11 (Every man can come to God thru the Priestly

intercession of Christ)

4. Sins forgiven and forgotten vs 12 (Not remembered each time we offer sacrifice)

5. Eternal Blessings vs 13 The Old Covenant has been fulfilled in Christ and now we have the New. No need to go back to the slavery of Law and sacrifice- confession to a Priest, candles, forms, etc.

"Whom the Son has made free is free indeed!"

Heb 07:25 CHRIST, OUR INTERCESSOR

Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them (Hebrews 7:25).

Intercessor: A mediator, one who interposes as a mutual friend between parties.

One of the most Blessed Aspects of the "Lord's Prayer" is the beginning word: "OUR" Father. Basically, Christ is saying, "Christ and I together are coming to you".

One of the purposes of the Resurrection of Christ was so He could intercede:

1) For Sinners: *My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous (1 John 2:1).*

Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors (Isaiah 53:12).

2) For the Holy Spirit: *And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever (John 14:16).*

3) For Believers: *I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine (John 17:9).*

Once it was the Blessing, now it is the Lord

Once it was the Feeling, Now it is the Word

Once the Gifts I wanted, Now the Giver own

Once I sought for Healing, now himself alone

"Jesus Christ is not valued at all until he is Valued above all"- Augustine.

Heb 09:- THE BLOOD OF CHRIST

I. THE PRESENCE OF GOD COULD NOT BE SOUGHT WITHOUT BLOOD. 1-7

vs 1-5 the description of the first tabernacle- Candle stick, table of shewbread in the Holy Place. A Vail before the Holy of Holies. The Golden Censer (?) at the door of the Holy of Holies and said to be inside. Does this show that Prayer is the door to the Holy of Holies??

The Ark of the Covenant containing- the golden pot of manna (God supplies our earthly needs), Aaron's rod that budded (Resurrection Power- authority) and the Tables of the Covenant (The Law) ·

Over it the Cherubims that the Shikinah Glory of God was supposed to sit between (IT left before the captivity). (Where is the mercy seat today??). THIS WAS THE PLACE OF MEETING WITH GOD.

To come to the Holy of Holies pleading your own righteousness is like the Pharisee pleading his righteousness about the Publican "I am not as other men". God wants "God be merciful to me a sinner"

YOU COULD NOT GO INTO THE HOLY OF HOLIES WITHOUT BLOOD!! You'll never meet God without Blood.

II. THE WAY INTO THE HOLY OF HOLIES WAS OPENED BY CHRIST'S SHED BLOOD 8 12

A) The Law and Sacrifice were only a shadow

B) When Christ shed His blood He cried "It is finished" and the vail was torn from top to bottom. Access to God is now available to all.

III. THE BLOOD OF CHRIST SHOULD LEAD TO OUR SANCTIFICATION 13-23

A) We serve now as an act of will instead of necessity (Christ offered Himself by the Eternal Spirit)

B) We have the Holy Spirit within to guide and empower us

C) All of this is because of the New Testament (Will) that is ours by the death of Christ

IV. BECAUSE HE SHED HIS BLOOD CHRIST NOW HAS A THREE FOLD MINISTRY FOR-US vs 23-28

A. TO PUT AWAY SIN vs 25-26 HE APPEARED IN THE WORLD

1. A once for all sacrifice

2. At the consummation of the age (Fullness of Time)

3. By the sacrifice of himself

B. HE APPEARS IN HEAVEN TO INTERCEDE FOR US vs 24. I John 2:1 *My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.*

C. HE WILL APPEAR TO CLAIM THEM THAT LOOK FOR HIM vs 28

It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: WHAT YOU DO ABOUT THE BLOOD OF CHRIST WILL DETERMINE WHAT HAPPENS AT THE JUDGMENT. You either trample it under foot or you claim it to cover your sins.

Heb 09:27 JUDGMENT

A great man once said, "The most awesome thought in the world is my accountability to God". Surely we need to know **WHAT** will be judged and the **BASIS** of that Judgment if indeed we will be judged by an almighty God (And we will!!!)- Heb 9:27 *It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:*

There are 6 major Judgments listed in the Bible:

1. Judgment of Saints- Romans 14:10
2. Judgment of Sinners- Rev 20:11-15
3. Judgment of the Earth- II Pet 3:5-7
4. Judgment of Angels- Jude 6, II Pet 2:4, Isaiah 14
5. Judgment of the Gentile Nations- Matt 25:31-32
6. Judgment of Israel- Matt 24, Ez 20:34-38

THE JUDGES:

1. Jesus- John 5:22 *For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son: John 9:39 And Jesus said, For judgment I am come into this world,...*
2. Saints will Judge the "world" and Angels- I Cor 6:2-3 *Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? Know ye not that we shall judge angels?*
3. Sinners will be judged by the Bible and their works- Rev 20:12 *And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened, and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.*

I. JUDGMENT OF THE SAINTS I Peter 4:17 *Judgment must begin at the house of God.*

A) The Place of Judgment- Rom 14:10-12 *For we must all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. For it is written, as I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.*

The word for Judgment seat here is "Bema" Seat. In Paul's day this was the place that the judges gave out awards in the Olympic games. Therefore the Judgment Seat of Christ is a place of **REWARDS** for service, not judgement for sin (Christians sins have already been judged in Christ).

The Time of this Judgment will be between the Rapture of the Church and the Return of Christ.

B) The Purpose of the Judgment- Christ is coming to:

1. Redeem our bodies - Rom 8:23 *And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.*
2. Receive us into His presence - Jn 14:3 *If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.* I Thess 4:17 *Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.*
3. Review us - This review will mean 3 things:
REBUKES for failure to properly build. I Cor 3:12-15 *Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; Every man's work shall be made manifest: for it shall be revealed by fire: and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.*

REGRETS over lost opportunities (I believe this is why God will wipe away the tears from our eyes in Rev 21:4)

REWARDS to cast at Jesus' feet - Rev 4:10-11 *The four and twenty elders (Representing the Church) fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.*

There are 5 Crowns the Believer may receive:

1. The Incorruptible Crown (Having to do with the way we boss our bodies and faithfully perform our duties) I Cor 9:25 *And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things, Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible.*

2. The Crown of Righteousness (Having to do with our purity as we long for His return) II Tim 4:8 *Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them that love his appearing.* I Jn 3:3 *Every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.*

3. The Crown of Life (Having to do with our steadfastness in Temptation.) James 1:12 *Blessed is the man that endureth temptation; for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.*

4. The Crown of Glory (For Faithful Pastors) I Peter 5:4 *And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.*

5. The Crown of Rejoicing (The Soul Winner's Crown) I Thess 2:19 *For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming.*

Here are some things we may be judged about:

1. Some say this is simply a judgement of our **MOTIVES**. They say that the works we did in fleshly strength for fleshly glory will be "Burnt up" as wood, hay, or stubble. That we did to bring glory to God will stand the fire as gold, silver, or precious stones (I Cor 3)

2. Others believe this is a judgment of **SERVICE**. In the Past God dealt with us as Sinners, Presently God deals with us as Sons (Rom 8:14, Heb 12:5-11), in the future God will deal with us as Stewards ("Give an account of himself" in Rom 14:12 is the phrase used to describe a steward reporting to his master about how he has managed the resources entrusted to him). (I Cor 4:1 *It is required in stewards that a man be found faithful*).

This Judgment for Service may involve:

a. How we used our talents - Hid or invested: Matt 25:14-30

b. How we suffered for Christ - Matt 5:11-12 *Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake, Rejoice, and be exceedingly glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.* (See also I Peter 4:12-13, II Cor 4:17, and Phil 1:29)

c. How we spent our time and money - Ep 5:16 *Redeeming the Time for the days are evil.* I Tim 6:17-18 *Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.* (See also Matt 5:19-21)

d. Whether we followed God's plan or our own - The very essence of sin is choosing your way over God's way.

e. How we reacted to temptation - James 1:2-3 *My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptation; knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience.*

f. How faithful we are to Church, Prayer, and the Word of God. Heb 10:25, Luke 18:1, II Tim 2:15
II Cor 5:10 *For we must ALL appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that EVERY ONE may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.*

II. JUDGMENT OF SINNERS - The Great White Throne Judgment found in Rev 20:11-15.

A) The People of the Judgment

1. Christ as Judge - Jn 5:22 *For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the son.* Acts 10:42 *And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is (Christ) which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead.*

2. Sinners as judged - Rev 20:12-13 *And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them.*

B) **The Books of the Judgment** - Rev 20:12 *...and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.*

1. The Book of Conscience (?) Rom 2:15 *Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another:* (Not always a good guide).

2. The Book of Words - Matt 12:36 *But I say unto you that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.*

3. The Book of Secrets - Rom 2:16 *God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ.* Heb 4:13 *There is no creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.*

4. The Book of Work - Matt 16:27 *For the Son of man shall come in the Glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works.*
Rev 20:13 *...and they were judged every man according to their works.*

5. The Book of Life - Only Blood washed Saints found there.

C) **The Results of this Judgement** - Rev 20:15 *And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.*

III. JUDGMENT OF THE EARTH- II Pet 3:5-7 The main part of Revelation deals with God's Judgment on the people of the earth for rejecting His Son and using the world as if it were their own (Matt 21:33-44). He will destroy their food, their water, their religious organizations, their economic organizations, and their hope (they will cry for mountains to fall on them and beg to die).

Following this judgment on the earth "the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up" and we will see "new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." (II Pet 3:10-13)

IV. JUDGMENT OF ANGELS- Jude 6 *And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day*
II Pet 2:4 *For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell (Tartarus), and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment.*

V. JUDGMENT OF THE GENTILE NATIONS- (Mat 25:31-32) *When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: {32} And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats:* Judgement of the Gentile Nations according to the way they have treated Israel.

Heb 10:15-25 HAVING AND DOING

Because we HAVE some things to Depend on we should now be able to DO some things in our Relationship and Walk with the Lord.

I. HAVING BOLDNESS TO ENTER INTO THE HOLIEST BY THE BLOOD OF JESUS

- A) By a New and Living Way
- B) Provided by Christ in shedding HIS Blood (What a difference that makes in our approach to God!)

II. HAVING AN HIGH PRIEST OVER THE HOUSE OF GOD

- A) He is touched with the feelings of our infirmities
- B) He Pleases God and therefore is a Good Representative

BECAUSE OF THIS THERE ARE 4 THINGS WE CAN DO (All are Continuous Action Verbs)

- 1) Draw Near with a True Heart in full assurance of Faith
 - a) Hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience vs 9-14
 - b) Bodies washed in pure water (Baptism)
- 2) Hold Fast the profession of Faith without wavering (God is faithful who promised)
- 3) Consider one another to Provoke (A Strong word in the Greek) to Love and Good Works
- 4) Exhort one another (In Conversation, in Church, in Compassion).

Heb 10:22-38 DRAWING NEAR TO GOD

On a scale of 1 - 10 with 1 being just saved and 10 being as close to God as possible, where do you rate yourself?

Do you WANT to be close to God? (James 4:7-8) *Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. {8} Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded.*

Are you WILLING to pay the price to be close to God?

Will you Trust in Trouble: (Psa 34:18) *The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit.*

Will you Continue in Prayer: (Psa 145:18) *The LORD is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth.*

Will you Repent of; and Forsake, Sin and walk with God by Faith in HIS Plan: (Eph 2:13) *But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.*

Heb 10:22-39 A FEARFUL THING

All of us are a little afraid of "things that go bump in the night". We try to overcome this fear by making fun of it (That's why young people want to dress up and scare people on Halloween). This Fear has a tremendous force, however, and can (1) PARALYZE us (as we "wring our hands" in indecision); (2) PUSH us to tremendous effort (Man who tore the door off a burning truck to save a boy); or (3) DRAIN our strength, vision, and effort (As happened to the children of Israel when they faced the giants in the promised land).

Sometimes it almost seems as if we produce that that we feared by our faith in it's reality- *For the thing which I greatly feared is come upon me, and that which I was afraid of is come unto me* (Job 3:25). "I was scared I was going to get in a wreck." "I've always been afraid I'd have cancer." "I knew the whole time I would lose this job."

We must be aware, however, that everyone has a PRIVATE FEAR that is not necessarily reasonable, but none the less, real. Some are terrified of snakes (I'm not going to make a pet out of one but a snake is just an animal), some are terrified of heights (I LOVE the mountains), some are terrified of needles (AMEN Brother!).

The Bible, however, says that only one thing is a Fearful thing- *It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God* (Heb 10:31). That's why I believe I can safely say I would be AFRAID TO DIE if I consistently and deliberately missed Church Services.

The writer of Hebrews is warning the people in our text about "falling away" from faithfulness to the Lord and to His work. He warns about:

- 1- Wavering Faith- *Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised* (Heb 10:23).
- 2- Weak Worship- *And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching* (Heb 10:24-25).
- 3- Willful Sin- *For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries* (Heb 10:26-27).

All of these are VERY DANGEROUS- *Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?* (Heb 10:29).

And I think all of them key around Willfully Missing Church. One of the first signs of a wavering Faith is slackness in attending Church. Watch people, when they are strong in faith and love for God; they will be at Church every time the doors are opened. When they get depressed or down spirited they will become "too tired" to attend or, suddenly, Church will become "boring".

Watch also a person who begins to willfully go back into sin. The preaching at Church pricks their heart and convicts their souls. It soon becomes easy to find something about the Pastor or the Church that makes them angry; and gives them an excuse to stay away.

But then these people have to die and It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God (Heb 10:31) when you have despised His Church and forsaken His Son.

Those are the "Fearful Reason" to attend Church. Let me also give you some Factual Reasons:

1) Church ought to be MORE of our life rather than less as the end approaches. The world is becoming increasingly wicked and we need God's strength and guidance more and more.

What would you think of a man who starved to death because he was too lazy to walk to where all the "bread" he needed was located? What do you think of people who face life without God when the Church doors are wide open?

2) What would Jesus do? The Bible says it was Jesus' "Custom" to go to Church (Luke 4:16). If you are a follower of Christ then you should do as He did.

3) How must Jesus feel when He prepare a feast for you each week and you're too busy to come eat it? (Matt 22:1-9). I know the ladies of this church would be VERY UNHAPPY if they worked all week to prepare for guests for Sunday dinner and then those guest "took a notion" to go to a restaurant instead! I also know that the Pastor, Sunday School Teachers, and Musicians of this Church work hard each week to "lay out a feast" for people who "take the notion" not to show up.

4) What kind of Testimony are you giving? How do you explain to the people that you witness to or invite to Church about your absence (Oh, Is that why you don't witness for God? Am I wrong, or isn't failure to witness disobeying God's orders?).

I would hate to die knowing that I had shown by my testimony that I thought the world was more important than the things of God.

I would hate to die having deliberately given a bad example of Christian living to other people.

I would hate to die and see the look on God's face when I tried to explain why I thought my desires were more important than His orders.

It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God if you aren't living right; but it's great to BE IN HIS HANDS saved and sure. Is it a fearful thing for you to face God or are you longing to see Him face to face whom so long you have known heart to heart. Remember, Your actions bear witness to your attitude.

Heb 10:25 CONCERNING THE CHURCH

THE MEANING OF THE CHURCH- The word "Church" comes from the Greek word "Ecclesia" and means "Called out ones". It is composed of people who have been called out of the ways of the world and are now "Pilgrims and Strangers" on their way to Heaven. These "called out ones" are:

The Bride of Christ- Set Apart for one "man" (Christ)- Companionship

The Body of Christ- Individual Members of one Body- Service

The Temple of the Holy Spirit- The Habitation of God- Power

The Church, then, loves Christ, Serves Christ, and is empowered to Work for Christ by the indwelling Spirit. Are these Attributes in YOUR life?? Are you a member of the "Church Club" or are you a "Called Out Christian"???

THE MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH- What responsibilities do Christians have to the Church??

A) To come in the Front Door- Jesus is the Door and if you come over the wall you are a thief and robber (John 10:1). You can "Buy" your way in the world but you must be "Born" into the Church.

B) To be Participants instead of Spectators- Christianity is not a spectator Sport; it is a Transformed Life!! Here are 4 ways to help:

I. ATTEND IT

A. First there is the commandment in Hebrews 10:25 *Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is.*

B. Second there is the comfort in doing it. Which Brings:

the approval of Christ.

fellowship with other Christians.

fulfillment in helping others. Galatians 6:2 *Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ* 1) to find Christ. 2) to face their difficulties with the Word of God and Prayer

C. Third there is the cheerfulness of doing it. Psalm 122:1 *I was glad when they said unto me, let us go into the house of the Lord.* Christians enjoy going to the "Father's" House and eating at His table while fellowshiping with "Brothers and Sisters".

D. Forth there is the commitment of doing it. Jesus always asked people to make a commitment ("Take up Cross") because He knew that a Commitment would provide motivation. Today, people don't want to get involved and so their lives are shallow and hallow.

II. ACCEPT FROM IT. Most people want the Church to do something for them. Here are two things the Church will gladly give you:

A. A place in its ministry. EVERY Christian has a Gift from the Holy Spirit to use in the work of God (I Cor 12:7) and if you don't function in your place the entire body suffers.

B. A place to invest your life. When Jesus asks you to give an account of your use of your talent will you say, "I was scared and hid my talent" or "I invested and Profited"?? (Lu 19:12-27).

III. APPROPRIATE TO IT- II Cor 9:6-7 *But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.*

A. GOD'S TITHE- I Cor 16:2 *Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him,*

B. OUR OFFERINGS- Acts 20:35 *I have shewed you all things, how that so laboring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.*

Isn't it amazing how men will pay hundreds of dollars a year for tickets to ball games and then give God a Two Dollar "Tip" on Sunday Morning. It shows you what he really loves, doesn't it??!!

IV. ADVERTISE IT- Christians come to Church because of Christ; the World comes to Church out of Curiosity. You must stir their interest often if they are to make the effort to attend. Bad Advertisement majors on the Church's Problems instead of it's Pluses. Good Advertisement shows that while men (and Christians!!) aren't perfect yet they can find forgiveness and help in Christ (Christ said if HE was lifted up HE would draw all men unto himself). Talk often about what God is doing in your Church (and if He isn't doing anything the Church needs to spend some time on the Altar "unblocking the flow of water"!).

THE MESSAGE OF THE CHURCH- Many people attend a Church without really understanding its Purpose and how it's trying to accomplish that purpose. That knowledge is the key to Motivation and accomplishment in the work of the Church.

A) The Gospel- The Message of the Church is simple-

TO SINNERS: Jesus died for your sins, was buried, arose from the dead and offers forgiveness of sins and newness of life by simple Faith.

TO SAINTS: After you accept Christ as Saviour by Faith you become a Son of God and part of the Body of Christ. You have Peace with God, a Place in the work of Christ, and Power through the indwelling Holy Spirit.

The Purpose of the Church, therefore, is to Win the Lost and Equip the Saved to live the Christian Life. There are a lot of "junctions" on this Main Road but we must never take the "rabbit trails" instead of the Heavenly Highway.

B) The Goals- The difficulty many Churches encounter is in determining their place in God's overall program. Somehow we have assumed that EACH individual Church is to perform the function of EVERY individual Church. We forgot the words of Paul (II Cor 10:12 *For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves: but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise*) and as a result end up dissatisfied and disenchanted when OUR Church does not accomplish the same things as THEIR Church.

I believe that as each Christian has a different place in the Body of Christ so each Church has a different objective in the plan of God. Some Churches are "family" churches, some are "Community" Churches, and some are "Ethnic" Churches. Some are "Success" Churches, some are "Spiritual" Churches, and some (Like us!) are "Service" Churches. When a Church can determine its own Ministry, and then Perform that Ministry, then the world will marvel at what God accomplishes thru His People.

ARE **YOU** PART OF THE FAMILY OF GOD??? ARE **YOU** FUNCTIONING???

Heb 10:25 WHY YOU SHOULD ATTEND CHURCH REGULARLY

Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching (Hebrews 10:25).

Why should YOU be in Church Regularly??

More and more I seem to get the impression from some people that Church attendance is an option instead of an obligation. They seem to think that any excuse is a good excuse to miss church. I visit people who are working and doing anything they really want to do and yet every Sunday they are too sick, or busy, or “sorry” to come to Church. And what really breaks my heart is that these people still think they are going to Heaven when they die because God will say, “Well done, good and faithful servant.” GOD WILL NOT LIE FOR YOU! (Do you honestly think that if you had someone working for you that did not show up for work any more than you show up for Church that you would give them a raise and make them a partner in the firm!)

That is the negative side of the issue. Now let us look at 3 Positive Reasons why you should be regular in Church:

I. PARTNERS

A) Our RELATIONSHIP with God: When we were saved we told God we would love and serve Him. Now the lure of the world and the laziness of the flesh have caused many to forget that first love. But you need to know that God has not forgotten those vows you made- and you will answer to HIM one day for the way you have seek to have a relationship with Him- Lukewarm Living does not please God.

B) Our RESPONSIBILITY to other Christians: When you were saved you became a part of the body of Christ. The whole body suffers when one part is not functioning (Do you have any idea how much of the Lord’s work is left undone because Christians are not in their place in the Body?).

II. PROBLEMS: It is at Church that we learn how to apply Christian Principles to Life Problems. If you are failing in your Christian Life the WORSE thing you can do is to start skipping Church services. If you have problems in you family, on your job, or at school then you need to attend Church so God can give you the information and inspiration you need in order to handle those situations.

There are several reasons God sometimes allows Church problems to come about. As we learn to handle Church problems with a Christian attitude we can then handle life problems with that same wisdom and attitude. And they also help us to learn to depend on God instead of people: *For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you* (1 Corinthians 11:19).

III POWER- *And if one prevail against him, two shall withstand him; and a threefold cord is not quickly broken* (Ecclesiastes 4:12). *For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them* (Matthew 18:20). In almost every service we give people time to share needs and then share in asking a Great God to do Great things. How sad that some miss Church and live bitter defeated lives instead of learning to be victorious in life’s problems and perplexities.

LOOKING FORWARD TO SEEING YOU IN CHURCH THIS WEEK.

Heb 10:26-39 Warning and Exhortation to Backsliders

For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries (Hebrews 10:26-27).

For if after they have escaped the pollution of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning (II Pet 2:20)

INTRO- Between the warning to backsliders in Heb 6 and Heb 10 there is outlined the ministry of our great High Priest in Heaven. That should show us that the way to keep from falling is to avail ourselves of the services of our Great High Priest.

In Heb 7 He is greater than Aaron- He lives evermore (Be Confident)

In Heb 8 He makes a new covenant based on Grace instead of Law- I can now be saved because the debt has been paid! (Be Thankful)

In Heb 9 His blood opens the way to fellowship with God- I can now approach God (Be Holy).

I. THE WARNING 10:26-31

A) The Problem- *For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins.* This is wilful, habitual sin! (The Greek means "if we keep on deliberately sinning"- see I Jn 3:6). It's described further in vs 29

B) The Result- vs 26-27

1. No more sacrifice for sin (Christ is the ONLY way. If you reject Him you have no hope!).
2. A Certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries (God is no longer your Friend, He becomes your enemy).

C) The Reason- 28-29

1. He that despised Moses' Law died without mercy under 2 or 3 witnesses.
2. He should really be punished then who:
 - a. Treads under foot the Son of God- Says Christ is but a man.
 - b. Counted the blood of the covenant an unholy (Common) thing.
 - c. Did despite (insulted) the Spirit of Grace (This resembles what Jesus said about Blaspheming the Holy Ghost- saying that Satan did what the Spirit did. The Spirit can be grieved, quenched, insulted, or yielded to. Which are you doing??).

D) The Reward- 30

1. God's Vengeance (Vengeance belongs to God, He will Recompense)
2. God's Judgment- The Lord shall judge his people.

THE FINAL WARNING- It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God vs 31

II. THE EXHORTATION 32-39

A) Call to Remembrance the former days: 32-34

1. You were illuminated (The darkness of sin was dispelled by the Light of the Gospel).
2. You endured a great fight of afflictions (You were willing to suffer for the Gospel's Sake-- Dedication!!
 - a. You were made a gazing stock both by reproaches and afflictions (You were pointed out and made the target of foul talk and suffering).
 - b. You became companions of them that were so used- you were talked about because you joined (They downgraded the other Christians and then downgraded you for fellowshiping with them!).

- c. You had compassion on those in bonds (For the Gospel's sake)
- d. You took joyfully the spoiling of your goods (Your goods were seized because of your stand for Christ but you knew your reward in Heaven couldn't be plundered by men!).

B) Don't throw away this first confidence- Remember that the reward is based on Faith. 35-38

- 1. Patience is needed to receive the Promise
- 2. Christ is coming very soon.
- 3. The Just shall live by Faith- God has no pleasure in someone who draws back from faith because of fear of persecution.

THE FINAL EXHORTATION- *We are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul* vs 39

Heb 10:28-29 WORSE THAN DEATH

To Break Moses Law brought instant death (with 2 or more witnesses). To Reject Christ brings something worst than death.

A) Eternal Death- Separation from God who made you

B) Eternal Despair- No Hope forever!!!

C) Eternal Pain- Fire and thirst

D) Eternal Regret-

- 1. For Self for not Heeding God's Call
- 2. For Loved ones you led astray.

WHY IS THIS PUNISHMENT SO BAD???

A) Trodden Under Foot the Son of God. Spurned the Savior

- 1. Refused to believe Him.
- 2. Rebelled against Him by trying to use Him as a "Magic" Portion to please Self

B) Counted the Blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing. Only thing Christ left on earth- Blood. Without shedding of Blood is no remission.

- 1. Depending on Self (Cain brings what HE wants)
- 2. Depending on Works (Not by Works but by Faith).

C) Hath done despite to the Spirit of Grace. Insulted/ outraged

- 1. Hedged your Hearing (Ears to hear but hear not)
- 2. Hardened your Heart.

God loves you, died for you, called you, and yet you refuse His mercy. Your Punishment shall be worst than death!!

Heb 10:38-39 STUCK DOLLARS

Heb 10:38-39 *Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. 39 But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.*

Don Coker was showing me a problem with the dollar bill change machine at the car wash in Scranton recently. People would glue the dollar bill to the plate (with super glue or chewing gum!!) thinking that the machine would give them change for the dollar over and over. What they failed to realize is that the machine must first ACCEPT the dollar before it will give change for it.

In our scripture today we see that some people try to do the same thing to God. They profess Faith in Christ but they really want to keep their life to use as they please while expecting God to continue to pour out Blessings upon them as if they were fully committed to God.

Jesus said that when we put our hand to the plow we are not to look back. We don't fool God when we make a commitment and then fail to follow through with righteous living.

COMMIT TO GOD YOUR:

Desire to have SINS forgiven- Do not "Bury the cat" and then dig it up

Confidence in His LOVE- Rom 8:37-39 *Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. 38 For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, 39 Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

CARES- Mat 6:33-34 But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. 34 Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.

F orsaking

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Faith is like Glasses- It doesn't change the situation but it does allow us to see things correctly.

Commit to God today your:

Family

Finances

Future

Heb 11:1 YOUR FAITH FOUNDATION

What do you do in a land where toilet paper is not readily available? Waste happens; regularly! I encourage people to remember India each time they see TP and think of the great need where millions will be cast away because they have not heard of Jesus Christ.

How do you help people who sincerely believe their belief is correct? How do we stop the moral decay in America when a generation is being taught that sincerely believing you are right gives you license to live any lifestyle and raises doubt about the reality of a real God? It is important what you:

1. Put IN your Body- Drugs, Drink, Food things that control the control of your body.
2. Put ON your Body- modesty, markings, merchandise. clothes, Tattoos
3. Do WITH your Body- Saintly activities or Sinful Actions
4. Do TO your body- Abuse, misuse, no rest
5. It is also important how you End your body- (Note. God is well aware of mental sickness [mental illness is nothing to treat lightly] and circumstances [I would gladly offer my life to save the life of those I love). Your Body is God's Property. God should determine when He is through with it --When Job's Wife, in the midst of death and destruction, said "Curse God and Die". Job said she talked as a foolish woman.

I know those Periods of Prolonged sickness cause us to long for relief for ourselves or our loved ones. Over and over, however, I have seen that Sickness and Sorrow speaks louder than Sermons. (I walked a mile with pleasure. She chattered all the way; but I was none the wiser for all she had to say. I walked a mile with sorrow. Not a word said she; but, Oh, the things I learned that day when sorrow walked with me.) Regardless of your circumstances, you must have faith in the never failing Love of God.

What is the foundation of your Faith?

- Faith in your feeling will lead you to failure- Guided by your feels makes you feel bad when you feels good for fear you will feel worse when you feel better.
- Faith in your flesh will lead you to defeat
 - o Faith WITHOUT works is dead being alone. (James 2:17).
 - o Faith IN works is damning- *For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them* (Gal 3:10).
- Faith in your faith will dim in the harsh reality of life living- "Many a man will live and die for a conviction; but no man wants to be a martyr for a conclusion."

Faith begins in hope (Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. Hebrews 11:1) and is nurtured in the head (So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. (Romans 10:17).

Faith is not a "magic moment" of optimism; it is a behavior changing belief- *And the apostles said unto the Lord, Increase our faith. And the Lord said, If ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye might say unto this sycamine tree, Be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the sea; and it should obey you* (Luke 17:5-6). Jesus was telling His disciples to use the little faith they had. Once they saw what a little Faith could accomplish then they would be amazed at how their faith would increase.

Faith is the beginning of salvation (*For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:* (Ephesians 2:8) and the end of salvation- (*Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls.* 1 Peter 1:9). Because without Faith it is impossible to please God (Heb 11:6) and, I think, impossible to survive life's realities- "The Just shall live by Faith".

Faith allows us to see the invisible, accomplish the impossible, and do the unthinkable (Heb 11:3, 11, 17). Families stumble, fortunes crumble, and nations are humbled but faith in Christ is a rock in a stormy sea. Trust Christ completely today.

HEB 11:1 BE FAITHFUL TO YOUR FAITH

[Used in Rom 8:31-39 TRUSTING THE GOD YOU TRUST]

Faith is the foundation of our relationship with God. It is the REAL TRUTH about things that cannot be touched or seen yet (*Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen* Hebrews 11:1).

1) Faith COMES by PROCLAMATION: *So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.* (Romans 10:17).

2) Faith is SHOWN by ILLUSTRATION: *Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works* (James 2:18).

3) Faith LEADS to CELEBRATION: *For by it the elders obtained a good report* (Testimony). (Hebrews 11:2).

4) Faith can be LOSS by EVAPORATION: *For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him* (Hebrews 10:36, 38).

5) Faith's MOTIVATION is Love: *For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but **faith which worketh by love*** (Galatians 5:6). Faith WORKS by LOVE: The energizing force in Faith is Love. When I try to educate the mind of people who struggle with Faith I am dealing with the wrong need. It is not that they can't understand just as well as anyone else; the problem stems from a hindrance or blockage in their love relationship with God.

People struggle with Faith because they Believe but are afraid to Commit. Sometimes a person is abandoned or abused by their parents, a close friend, or a mate. Many times these people find it difficult to have the right kind of faith because they have been "burned" before by someone they trusted. Their mind will say they trust God but their heart is afraid to make that leap of trust which is the very basis of faith.

Faith comes by education (*So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God* Romans 10:17) but its motivating force is love. The hindrance to Faith is fear; fear of total commitment, fear of lack of ability, or fear of giving control to someone else. The answer to this fear is to understand fully the love of God for *There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear:* (1 John 4:18).

Heb 11:1-7 FAITH DEFINED AND DEMONSTRATED

INTRO- Faith is one of the most important things in the world. We are saved by Faith, walk by faith live by faith, and die in faith. Today we're going to look at Faith and see what it is and how it works.

I. FAITH DEFINED 1-3

A) Confidence (Substance) and Evidence vs1.

1. Confidence in things hoped for because it rest on the foundation of the Word of God (Rom 10:17) [Who cannot lie] and not just on wishful thinking.
2. Evidence of things not seen- a firm conviction based on the work of the Holy Spirit in the heart of a man. In other words he sees him who is invisible (vs 27). Simply put; Faith is believing what God Says.

Therefore Faith is based on the word and on the Spirit. (The Spirit uses the Word to convict a sinner and leads him to Faith in Christ).

B) The basis of God's Approval vs2 *By it the Elders obtained a good report.* (As we are about to see, This confidence and Evidence has always been the method of pleasing God.)

C) Faith is necessary because everything can be traced back to the place where Faith is all you have vs 3

The world was made from things which do not appear. Faith begins at Gen 1:1. If you do not believe this then you need go no further.

"This is the Victory that overcomes the World, even our faith" I Jn 5:4 THEREFORE THE JUST SHALL LIVE BY HIS CONFIDENCE IN THE WORD OF GOD BASED ON THE EVIDENCE OF THE CONVICTION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT BECAUSE EVERY PROBLEM EVENTUALLY WORKS ITSELF BACK TO THE PLACE WHERE ALL YOU HAVE IS FAITH!

II. FAITH DEMONSTRATED 4-7

A) The Witness of Faith - Abel vs 4

1. He rejected Human Reasoning and obeyed God. Cain brought the best HE had, Abel came by the way of the Blood (Having no confidence in flesh).
2. God testified that he was righteous because he came God's way. The very essence of worship is coming to God on His terms.
3. His faith cost him his life (see Gal 2:20) but people still talk about it. The world is hungering for an all-out witness for God. Even as they kill it they long for it!!

B) The Walk of Faith - Enoch vs 5-6

1. A Family man who lived in the wicked days before the flood, yet he pleased God because he walked in Faith:

a. Faith that God exists- If I believe that God exists then I regulate my walk accordingly.

b. Faith that God rewards them that diligently seek Him- If I believe God rewards the diligent seekers then I'll be a man of Prayer.

2. The result of the walk of Faith is that God takes us to be with Him.

C) The Work of Faith; Noah vs 7

1. He heard the voice of God- being warned of God
2. He obeyed despite the "unreasonableness" of what God said because he feared (reverenced) God
3. He didn't wait until the last minute to make preparations
4. He tried to make sure his own were safe
5. His works condemned the folly of the world
6. His works earned God's reward

FAITH WITHOUT WORKS IS DEAD BEING ALONE THEREFORE FAITH TO BE WITNESSED MUST HAVE WORKS AND A CONTINUED WALK. SAVING FAITH IS GETTING INTO THE BOAT WITH CHRIST NOT JUST SAYING YOU SHOULD!!

Heb 11:1-6 FAITH DEFINED AND DEMONSTRATED 2

I want to look at what Faith is and then see numerous examples of Faith in Action.

I. FAITH DEFINED vs 1

A) Confidence in things hoped for; because it is based on the Word of God (who cannot lie) [*So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God* Romans 10:17].

B) Evidence of things not seen: A firm conviction in God's Word without physical proof. This is the work of the Spirit of God (*The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit* John 3:8). [Example of pinwheel turned by wind from a fan].

Faith finds its foundation in the Word of God and the Work of the Spirit; it is not always "logical" or visible. SIMPLY PUT: FAITH BELIEVES WHAT GOD SAYS AND NOT WHAT MAN PROCLAIMS. [Example of 2 glasses; 1 with water, 1 with clear soda water. They look alike but if you add vinegar the soda water will boil].

II. FAITH REQUIRED vs 2, 6

A) For a Good Report: The Just shall live by Faith. *For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith* (1 John 5:4).

B) To Please God: Faith is what God wants. He does not need your ability but he wants your faith.

1. Believes that God is GOD

2. Believes that God will reward those who earnestly seek Him. You cannot "take or leave" God; you must crave him with all your heart.

III. FAITH DEMONSTRATED vs 3-5

A) In the Creation of the World

1. Formed by the Word of God. God said it and it happened

2. Physical made from the Spiritual- "Things which are seen were not made of things which do appear".

B) In Abel's offering of a Blood Offering because that was what God had asked them to do. It did not make "sense" to Cain so he offered the "best he had". God approved of Abel's offering based on God's Word but disapproved of Cain's offering based on "sense".

C) By Enoch walked with God until God "raptured" him from a world that rejected the truths about God that He proclaimed (See Jude).

1. Enoch had a relationship with God: *Can two walk together, except they be agreed?* (Amos 3:3).

2. Enoch lived in a wicked world (so corrupt until even a merciful, loving, longsuffering, God would not put up with it and eventually decreed its destruction) and faced the same problems and pressures we face today.

3. Enoch publically proclaimed his faith in the God He walked with: *And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him* (Jude 1:14-15).

a) Salvation is by the shed blood of a sacrifice (He was taught this by his fathers and he taught this to his family)

b) The Rapture of God's Children is coming [There is a Heaven to gain]

c) There will be a judgment on sinners. [There is a Hell to shun]

Example of Faith and Works- Use Truck for Faith and Trailer for Works. The Trailer does not pull the Truck but the Truck needs to pull the Trailer. You say you believe that Salvation is necessary but God says Faith will produce action. How is your Faith being demonstrated?

Heb 11:5 THE CHRISTIAN TESTIMONY

Heb 11:5 *Had this testimony, that he pleased God*

We live in a News hungry society-- Everything from Disasters to Divorces are topics of concern and interest. Christians are "news casters" for the GOOD NEWS of the GOSPEL of Christ; but there is one "Catch" to being a good Reporter; you must be trusted!! Your life must bear witness to what your lips are saying. Let's look at WHAT a Christian Testimony is; HOW we gain a Christian Testimony; and then determine to Bear Witness for Christ.

I. WHAT IS A CHRISTIAN TESTIMONY? A Testimony is a "Declaration of Facts". Something you have personal, factual knowledge about. We give "Testimonies" all the time: "My wife is a good cook". "This is a sorry make of car". "He has an attitude problem at work". A Christian "Shines his light" in 2 areas:

A) His Conversion- His Salvation From Sin and his accepting Christ as Saviour. This is the most dynamic moment in a person's life; a Christian never loses the "Sparkle in his eye" when he thinks about or tells about this time. It's infectious and effective because it's so important!

B) His Character- What we say is shown in what we live:

a. Conduct- High Standards (Little boy pretending to be Cowboy and going into saloon. When reprov'd by mother he said, "Don't worry, I'm not going to drink; I'll just kill someone!"). Christlikeness.

b. Work- I Tim 6:1 *Let as many servants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honour, that the name of God and his doctrine be not blasphemed.* You spend more active time with fellow workers than with family! A bad work reputation has to be proved wrong- Preachers have poor Reputation in regard to work.

c. Faith- People see your trust in God.

d. Love- You'll know they are Christians by their Love.

Testimony must be tied to Telling in order to Win Lost. Use your lips!

II. HOW TO GAIN A CHRISTIAN TESTIMONY

1. You GET a Christian Testimony by:

A) Conversion- Become a Christian!!

B) Choices- example of Daniel DO IT "RELIGIOUSLY"

C) Consistence- DO IT REGULAR "As was his custom"

D) Copyable- DO IT RIGHT Be a Pattern

2. You KEEP your Testimony by your

A) Regard for it- It has great VALUE

B) Recognize it's Frailty- One time to fail

III. HOW TO USE YOUR TESTIMONY-

A) Not as an Ornament but as a Tool. USE IT

B) Not for Pride but to Please God, Publish God, and Prove God (Seeing man healed the Pharisees could say nothing).

Heb 11:5-6 ENOCH; THE WALK OF FAITH

And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him (Genesis 5:24).

More than ever we need to get back to the Bible statement, “The Just shall live by Faith”. The world is going mad over signs and feelings but Christians must remember their foundation is based entirely on Jesus Christ.

Enoch is an example of someone who lived his faith by “walking his faith”.

I. THE COMMENCING OF THE WALK: “Enoch walked with God”.

A) Salvation- *Can two walk together, except they be agreed?* (Amos 3:3). Enoch agreed with God that he needed to let God direct his life.

B) Sanctification- *Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth* (John 17:17). Enoch learned to walk with God correctly by listening to God (*As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby* 1 Peter 2:2).

Enoch walked with God in His daily life:

1. Enoch was a Family Man: *And Enoch walked with God after he begat Methuselah three hundred years, and begat sons and daughters* (Genesis 5:22). Methusaleh became the longest living person in history. He died the year of the flood; thus he was a great help and encouragement to Noah. [Illustration of man who would sneak a drink on the way to work each day until he saw his boy watching him. He stopped drinking but realized he must be born again if he was to lead his boy to Heaven].

2. Enoch lived before the Flood: It was just as hard for Enoch to live a proper life as it is for you to live a proper life (*And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man* Luke 17:26).

3. Enoch publically proclaimed his faith in the God He walked with: *And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him* (Jude 1:14-15).

a) Salvation is by the shed blood of a sacrifice (He was taught this by his fathers and he taught this to his family)

b) The Rapture of God’s Children is coming

c) There will be a judgment on sinners.

II. THE CONSEQUENCE OF THE WALK: “He pleased God” People knew he walked in agreement with God. How did he please God? *By Faith the elders obtained a good report.* (Hebrews 11:2). *But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him* (Hebrews 11:6).

III. THE CONSUMMATION OF THE WALK: *By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God* (Hebrews 11:5).

1. “God took Him” (Gen 5:24) “Ain’t no power on earth going to keep me down”

2. God “Translated him” from a physical body into a spiritual body.

He was not “found” (Did not find Elijah’s body either). But someone looked (“WAS not found”) for he and for Elijah. When the rapture comes will you go with God or will you be one of those looking for the dead bodies – and awaiting the wrath of God?

Heb 11:6 SEEK GOD

One of the biggest misconceptions among Christians is believing that because God has us then we have God. It is not enough to simply believe IN God; you must seek FOR God-*But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him* (Heb 11:6).

On a scale of 1 - 10 with 1 being just saved and 10 being as close to God as possible, where do you rate your relationship with God?

There are two things every person should desire- To have life and to enjoy living. God tells us plainly how to accomplish both of these goals:

1) Life- *For thus saith the LORD unto the house of Israel, Seek ye me, and ye shall live:* (Amos 5:4) (or as Paul said, *For in him we live, and move, and have our being;* Acts 17:28)

2) Enjoy Living- (Mat 6:33) *But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.* There are Four Parts to this Verse:

1) A COMMAND- SEEK YE- HEART-(Psa 27:8) *When thou saidst, Seek ye my face; my heart said unto thee, Thy face, LORD, will I seek.*

Hunger- (Psa 63:1) *O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is;*

2) A PRIORITY- FIRST (Isa 55:6-7) *Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon*

3) A TWO FOLD GOAL- THE KINGDOM OF GOD (His Reign on earth and in our life)

AND HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS (His Righteousness) FALLOW GROUND- (Hosea 10:12) *Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground: for it is time to seek the LORD, till he come and rain righteousness upon you.*

4) A PROMISE- ALL THESE THINGS SHALL BE ADDED TO YOU Glory!

Wrong Reason: Jesus Said, Do not seek me for WRONG REASON- (John 6:26) *Jesus answered them and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled.*

God is looking for you to look for Him today (Psa 14:2) *The LORD looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God.*

But your seeking must be whole heartedly- (Deu 4:29) *If thou shalt seek the LORD thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul.* (Jer 29:13) *And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart.*

There is a Danger in Not seeking Him- (1 Chr 28:9) *And thou, Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind: for the LORD searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts: if thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever.*

Heb 11:7 THE WORK OF FAITH

By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith (Hebrews 11:7).

There must always be judgment and death before a new beginning. Noah lived in the last days when sin was rampant and it was hard to be a standout for God.

Faith defined: "Walking by trust in God's Word" (Use example of guiding a person blindfolded)

The Witness of Faith: Abel offered the required sacrifice

The Walk of Faith: Enoch walked with God

The Work of Faith: Noah built the ark

I. WHAT CAUSED NOAH TO WORK?

A) Faith in God's Word: Being warned of things not seen as yet (Unseen, unreasonable, unpopular but true)

B) Fear ("being wary"). Would rather be scared into Heaven than courageously walked into hell. (Example of letting house burn down around someone because they did not want to wake up people).

C) Family: He cared about his own.

II. WHAT WORK DID NOAH DO?

A) Preached Righteousness: *And spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly; (2 Peter 2:5).*

B) Prepared an ark: Put into practice what he had said. God did not call us to teach our children to swim; he told us to build an ark! (*They made me the keeper of the vineyards; but mine own vineyard have I not kept Song of Solomon 1:6*).

III. WHAT WAS THE RESULT OF HIS WORK?

A) His Family was saved: A father's main goal

B) The Ark: As a witness of Faith it condemned the world because they heard the preaching and saw the boat being built.

C) Became heir of the Righteousness which is by Faith: God accepted him because he believed and followed God's Word.

THE EFFECTS OF FAITH: Faith affects every area of a person's life:

MENTAL- By Faith we understand

MORAL- By Faith Enoch walked with and pleased God (Impossible to please Him without Faith.)

RELIGIOUS- By Faith Abel offered right sacrifice

PHYSICAL- By Faith Abraham walked up and down in the will of God (Body is temple of Holy Spirit)

FAMILY- By Faith Jacob blessed the sons of Joseph and Moses was hid by his mother

SOCIAL- By Faith Moses refused the Egyptian court, and chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God.

EVEN UNTO DEATH- These all died in Faith

Faith, or lack of it, affects every area of your life- IS YOUR FAITH STRONG ENOUGH TO MOVE YOU TO WORK FOR GOD?

Heb 11:7 FAITHFUL FATHERS

I return to a passage I have probably used more often on Father's Day than any other passage. It talks about the greatest need for the Work of God, the Cause of Christ, and the Saving of the Family- Faithful Fathers. Fathers were ordained by God to lead and their leadership is directly tied to their Relationship with God thru Faith. When each Father stands before God he will give an account of how faithful he has been to the task of leading his family in the right and proper way. To me, that makes this a very important subject.

I. THE EFFECTS OF FAITH (Ex of Blindfold Boy talked thru obstacles) Faith affects every area of a person's life:

MENTAL- By Faith we understand

MORAL- By Faith Enoch walked with and pleased God (Impossible to please Him without Faith.)

PHYSICAL- By Faith Abraham walked up and down in the will of God (Body is temple of Holy Spirit)

RELIGIOUS- By Faith Abel offered right sacrifice

FAMILY- By Faith Jacob blessed the sons of Joseph and Moses was hid by his mother

SOCIAL- By Faith Moses refused the Egyptian court, and chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God.

EVEN UNTO DEATH- These all died in Faith

Faith, or lack of it, affects every area of your life.

II. THE EXAMPLE OF FAITH- NOAH

A) What caused Noah to Work?

1. Faith in God's Word- Being warned of things not seen as yet.
2. Fear moved him- rather be scared into Heaven than courageously walk into Hell!! (Let people die because don't want to wake them and tell them house is on fire!)
3. Family's Salvation- He cared about his Family

B) What Work did Noah do?

1. Preached Righteousness II Pet 2:5 Got their blood off his hands. --Knew what and said what was right.
2. Prepared an Ark- Put into practice what he had said. (They made me keeper of the vineyard but my own vineyard have I not kept). God didn't call us to teach our children to swim!! He said, Build an ark.

C) What was the result of his work?

1. His Family was Saved:- main goal
2. The Ark condemned the world- witness of his faith
3. He became an heir of the righteousness which is by faith. This Father had God as his Father!

III. THE EXPRESSION OF FAITH (Example of Box with dollar in bottom)

He that cometh to God Must believe that He is And that he is a Rewarder Of those that diligently seek Him

ARE YOU A FAITHFUL FATHER? OR A FOOLISH FATHER?

Heb 11:7 SAVING YOUR HOUSE

Being a Father in these last days is a difficult task. A Father must be a Provider for his family, a Partner to his wife, a Priest to his household, and a Pattern for his children. When you are told to take Pride in Perversion but never proclaim your Christianity. When all the Hard work you have done; and the success you have achieved, is attributed to the color of your skin instead of the content of your character. When the government is putting your children and grandchildren into so much debt until they will never be able to repay that debt- It is time for you to think about ways to save your Family.

Heb 11:7 *By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.*

Noah had

FAITH- Believed God's Warning

FEAR- That motivated him to follow God's direction instead of man's opinions

FACILITY- Built a place where his family could be saved

FAMILY SAVED- When the rest of the world had no hope his family had a haven

FUTURE- He was not condemned with the world but was saved for now and for eternity!

Noah could not see what the future held but he knew he needed to prepare his family to face it. When you cannot see God's Will you trust God's Word. This motivated Noah to:

1) **A Consistent Effort:** Worked and preached Godly Principles for 120 years. *"And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up"* (Deu 6:6-7). The Husband is the Priest of the Household and should take the leadership in training children in the ways of the Lord. Just like you take time to teach them to hit a ball or learn to fish so you should take time to teach them the Word of God and make spiritual applications to real life situations.

2) **A Combined Effort:** All Noah's family worked together.

3) **A Committed Effort:** Noah was the ONLY MAN ON EARTH GOD COULD FIND TO DO THE JOB Noah could do this because He:

I. HAD A RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD- Noah walked with God on a daily basis. He did not simply know ABOUT God he knew God!

II. LISTENED TO THE WORD OF GOD- God told Noah what was going to happen and what he should do to make preparations and Noah followed God's instructions. What do you do in your life that is caused by God's directions to you??

III. ACTED UPON WHAT GOD SAID- Prepared an ark to the saving of his household.

A Long term Project.

A well planned Project.

A family involving Project (Many men today are so busy being successful until they lose sight of the family they're to be successful for!).

IV. WAS WILLING TO FACE OPPOSITION TO STAND FOR GOD. Condemned all who did not heed god's advice- Other children were more popular but Noah's didn't drown!!

V. LOOKED BEYOND "NOW" TO THE FUTURE. He had respect unto the recompense of Reward. Willing to build a Boat now for a Mansion in the future.

Noah was saved, His family was saved, and He allowed God's Plan to continue in the world. What more can God ask of anyone??

Heb 11:7-29 GODLY EXAMPLES

On this day when we honor Mothers, I thought it would be good to give some Godly Examples for Children to emulate. Mothers have a tough time today finding "Heros" for their children to follow; Dad is so busy working or trying to be a "90's man" (afraid to be a leader for fear of being chauvinist) until he doesn't have time to be the example children need so they make heros out of "Ninja Turtles" and half-clothed, drug crazed rock stars.

Let me show you 3 genuine "HEROS" that you can model your life after:

I. NOAH, THE LABORER- Heb 11:7

A) Continued his Commission for 120 years of duty and derision

B) Prepared an ark to the Saving of his household- His work and his "religion" blended into the same thing. His Children knew what he stood for and what he was trying to accomplish

II. ABRAHAM, THE VISIONARY Heb 11: 8-13

A) Affected Where He Lived

B) Affected his family- had a child at 100 that was gift of God

C) Affected History- 3 of the main religions in the world today count Abraham an important part of their belief.

III. MOSES, THE LEADER Heb 11:23-29 (Article in Today's Paper- Leaders are better at leading than at doing. Of course, that's what makes them leaders!!) Everyone needs to know his place in life.

A) His Mother secured his childhood- refused abortion and society's answers, she committed her child to God

B) His Faith refused his flesh- Choosing rather to suffer affliction than enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season.

C) His dependence on God's word saved his life- put the passover blood on the door.

God had an example for every type of Child- laborer, visionary, leader. Let's share these with our Children regularly.

Heb 11:1-13 FRUITS OF FAITH

Faith without works is dead, being alone. What are some of the Fruits of Faith?

1. ABEL- Offered a more excellent sacrifice (Sacrifice over "sense")

RESULT: Obtained Witness that he was Righteous

2. ENOCH- He Pleased God (Separated from the World to Walk with God)

RESULT: Translated that he should not see Death

3. NOAH- Prepared an ark to the Saving of His House (Found Salvation for Self and Others)

RESULT: Condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is by Faith

4. ABRAHAM- When Called to go out he went out, not knowing whither he went (Severed from Home)

RESULT: Came to a place which he should afterward receive for an inheritance

5 SARAH- Received Strength to conceive seed (Strengthened by God)

RESULT: Was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised.

Heb 11:8-10 RESULTS OF FAITH

The Faith chapter in the Bible- Hebrews 11- is one of the greatest lesson books in the Bible. It gives us a description of Faith and then shows us example after example of this Faith in action. Vs 1 tells the **Wording** of Faith, vs 2 gives the **Wealth** of Faith (a good report), vs 3 tells about the **Worlds** of Faith, vs 4 gives the **Worship** of Faith (Abel), vs 5-6 talks about the **Walk** of Faith (Enoch), and vs 7 tells about the **Work** of Faith (Noah).

Then Abraham takes center stage and tells us we should obey God when we don't know Where (8-10); when we don't know How (11-12), when we don't know When (13-16), and when we don't know Why (17-19). This is the kind of Faith that makes us a "Friend of God and is best explained by the actions in vs 8-10.

I. FAITH MEANS WE **LEAVE** SOMETHING vs 8. God's call-has always been to leave those things that tie you down and become a. Cross-bearing Fisher of Men. Most people, who refuse to come to Christ do so because they. are unwilling to leave something (The rich young ruler's wealth, the man's dying father, the house to lay your head in, or the cries of the crowd); Like the drowning man who refused to shed his. money belt or the captured monkey who refused to turn loose the apple holding him captive men aren't willing to leave what they have to take the straight and narrow way With Christ

What has God asked you to give up in order to gain a fuller life? Once you turn loose your "idol", you will find the abundant life of Faith you seek.

II. FAITH MEANS WE **LIVE** DIFFERENTLY vs 9. Since this world is not our home and we are just passing thru then we don't live like the world and its people. We TALK about different topic (generally in a different "language"!); we DRESS differently (Modestly and appropriately), we ACT different·(Holy), and we have a different value system (Serving to lead, losing to gain,,,,). Does the World 'think you are one of them or do they realize you are a "Foreigner" in their midst???

III. FAITH MEANS WE **LOOK** FOR A CITY vs 10 We have Hope in God and we realize that this world will pass away so we look for a new world wherein dwell righteousness. This world has foundations (The sure promises of God) that are steadfast in any storm which comes and the builder and maker is God so everything will be just right.

Are you looking for a city or settling in this world? *If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable* (1 Corinthians 15:19).

NOW FAITH IS THE SUBSTANCE OF THINGS HOPED FOR, THE EVIDENCE OF THINGS NOT SEEN, BUT WITHOUT FAITH IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO PLEASE GOD

Heb 11:8 GOING NOT KNOWING

A Great God wants to do Great Things IN, THRU, and WITH you. Will you let Him?

By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went (Hebrews 11:8).

How do you know when it's time to change jobs? or go in a new direction in your life??

How do you change the Christian life from the ordinary hum drum into an Abundant Life of adventures and opportunities?

Far too many Christians have a "Saving Faith" that never turns into a Sanctifying Faith or a Satisfying Faith. They never "leave the Nest" and spread their wings to fly; instead, they congregate but never anticipate!

The reason for this is because one of the most fearful things about Faith is that it requires us many times to take Action without knowing the results of that action (**That is why it is called Faith!!**).

Abraham found that real Faith led him to Trust God's Word, Walk in God's Way, and Marvel at God's Wonders. Yet this same "fearful Faith" brings an excitement and energy into our lives that can be found nowhere else. Is that the kind of Faith you have?.

Abraham is a man who made this step of Faith- Heb 11:8 *By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went.* At the "tender age of 75" Abraham was told to leave his home and friends. When people asked him where he was going he would simply shrug and say, "I don't know. I just know God said Go". He must have taken a lot of ridicule from friends who couldn't understand that kind of faith; but today Abraham is a world known example of Faith! Let's Follow his Example.

I want us to look first at what it means to walk like this (Going without knowing) and then I want to share several principles that will enable us to distinguish Faith from Folly as we apply this kind of Faith to daily living.

I. THE WALK OF FAITH- Abraham determined to join his life with God and follow God's Plan for his life. Such **A JOINT WALK REQUIRES**

Agreement- Amos 3:3 *Can two walk together, except they be agreed?* You must agree that God is the leader and you are the follower. Have YOU agreed with God about your life or are you constantly "fighting your fate"? Stop Fighting and start following.

Confidence- Ps 23:4 *Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil.* You must accept the fact that the walk will be filled with "unknown" obstacles as well as Opportunities. You must learn to trust God THRU the Obstacles and FOR the Opportunities.

Faith- II Cor 5:7 *We walk by faith, not by sight.* I Cor 13:12 *For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.* You must follow even when you don't know how, when, where or what. Look at the example of Paul- Acts 20:22 *And now, behold, I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there.* Paul did not know what God had in store for him as he traveled the road God had "staked" out (and what he did know was not very reassuring- vs 23 the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me). But Paul was Committed to the Task God had given him and nothing would stand in his way- vs 24 *But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.* Are you Committed to God's Purpose for your life??

Common Sense- Eph 5:15 *See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil.* A walk of faith is not the way of foolishness or feeling; It accepts the natural and Expects the Supernatural!!

Are you willing to follow God's Directions EVEN IF YOU DON'T KNOW WHERE THEY'RE LEADING YOU?? Faith does not know where the Future will lead but it does know who will go with it as it travels and will be there when it arrive!

II. SOME GUIDELINES FOR THE WALK:

1. Trust God's Protection on the Path of Faith- Ps 121:8 The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even for evermore. Greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world!!
2. Trust God to take care of the Results- II Tim 1:12 For the which cause I also suffer these things; nevertheless I am not ashamed; for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day. God does not always "pay up on Friday" but He keeps accurate books!
3. Don't wait until you can see the end of the path before you begin the walk- Prov 20:24 Man's goings are of the Lord; how can a man then understand his ways? Your responsibility is the next step!
4. Make sure it's God's Direction you're following or you'll end up on a "dead end street". Don't let Parental Pressure, Peer Pressure, or Prideful Pressure cause you to get on the wrong road.
5. Make sure it's Faith and not just "Feelings" because the Feelings will change or ebb. We tend to begin with great Enthusiasm and Anticipation; Until the trouble comes! If it's the right road troubles may "bump" you but they won't Break you.
6. Make a Definite, Determined Commitment to the way God wants you to go- When you know the road God wants you to take; Don't let anything or anyone cause you to turn back or turn off. If you can't make this kind of commitment then don't start--- Better not to start than to put you hand to the plow and look back! (Luke 9:57-62) Have a Dream, Tell a Dream, and then Do a Dream.
7. Prepare for an Exciting Life!! No longer will you bog in the mud of mediocrity; you will travel the path of life- Ps 40:2 He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings.

God has a road with YOUR NAME on it! It starts at the foot of the cross and leads to an abundant life. Get on it today-- Who knows if you will be the one to change a "Billy the Kid" into a Billy Graham?

Whatsoever He bids you, do it:
Though You man not understand,
Yield to Him complete Obedience,
Then you'll see His mighty hand.
Fill the waterpots with water;
Fill them to the very brim.
He will honor all your trusting,
Leave the miracles to Him.

Heb 11:8-10 The Pilgrim

HEB 11:8-10 *By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God*

Abraham is one of the most revered men in the world. He is held in respect by Moslems, Jews, and Christians; and the Bible calls him "the Friend of God" (James 2:23). There are several reasons Abraham is so well thought of but the most important is our message today- Abraham has the FAITH OF A PILGRIM. This Faith Caused Him to Get Out of the "world", Get On with living for God, and then Get Home with the Lord. That's some of the best advice a pastor can give anyone.

A Pilgrim is someone who:

1. **GETS OUT** (Separation)- This is a Separation FROM Sin and the World- Abraham left his Town and his Job to commit to the Lord's Plan for his life. That is also what Jesus asked of His Disciples, "Leave Family and Fishing and Follow me"; and it's what He asks of you today! Many people try to begin the Christian Life with a lot of excess "baggage" but Jesus says you don't have the energy or room to carry it.

ARE YOU WILLING TO BEGIN A NEW LIFE WITH CHRIST?? OR DO YOU SIMPLY WANT A NEW BEGINNING ON THE OLD LIFE YOU'VE BEEN LIVING??? A Pilgrim realizes that committing to Christ means your Friends will change (The Friend of the World is the enemy of Christ); Family Relationships will change (Submission and Love will replace Selfishness and Lust); Sometimes even your job will change (There are some jobs a Christian can't do. The Pilgrim also seeks a job that's in God's Plan for their life). You must trust God with a future you can't see.

2. **GETS ON** (Dedication)- Obedience does not stop with just getting out; it means going on. Christianity is not a Place you stop but a Walk you begin.

A) By Faith: It's not so much in knowing the way as it is in knowing who leads the way! (Several men were deep in the jungle without a path to follow. One of them became worried until the Guide said to him, "We haven't lost the way, I am the Way"). Abraham believed God when he did not know WHERE (8-10), HOW (11-12), WHEN (13-16), or WHY (17-19). One of the most important and oft repeated statements in the Bible is "The Just shall live by Faith".

B) In Fellowship: Can two walk together except they be agreed. (Little boy asked Granddad where he was going and the Granddad just walked off. Later the boy asked the Granddad why? The Granddad said, "If you want to be with me it doesn't matter where I'm going!"). We must agree with God about the manner of our life, about the methods we use, and about the manifestation of our works that the world sees (You must decide whether you want man's praise now or God's praise later).

By walking with God in Faith and Fellowship Abraham gained the Special: Promise of God Gen 12:2 To Bless and use

Presence of God Gen 12:7 To Worship together

Protection of God Gen 15:1 "Shield and exceeding reward"

Power of God Gen 14:13-20 Defeated army with 318

Provision of God Gen 17:1 (El Shaddai "All sufficient One")

3. **GETS HOME** (Continuation)- For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. Christianity is not a Vacation but a Vocation. He completed the Journey: Don't die on Third

base- Some "strike out" and never get on Base (Unsaved). Some "get a hit" and get on base (saved) but they stop on base and never make it home (to Heaven).

He eventually became a Citizen of Heaven instead of a Pilgrim on Earth: A Pilgrim doesn't settle down in the "motels" of the world, they look for a Mansion in Heaven. One day our mansion will be completed and we can sing "Home at last. Praise God, Home at last".

Are you a Pilgrim?? Or a Sinner set to face the Wrath of God?? Come join us by being saved and begin serving the Lord.

Heb 11:8-10 LOOK FOR A CITY

Abraham was a man of Faith who believed God when he did not know WHERE (8-10), when he did not know HOW (11-12), when he did not know WHEN (13-16), and when he did not know WHY (17-19). What does this kind of Faith mean?

I. FAITH MEANS WE LEAVE SOMETHING vs 8 (Dedication)

A) We give up to gain later

B) We obey even when we do not know where we are going. [We leave sins for a relationship with Christ. We leave self to be victorious in our Christian life].

II. FAITH MEANS WE LIVE DIFFERENTLY vs 9 (Sanctification)

A) We become fools for Christ's sake

B) We have a different standard from the world

III. FAITH MEANS WE LOOK FOR A CITY vs 10 (Hope). *For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ* (Philippians 3:20).

A) It has foundations: the promises of God [*For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God* Hebrews 11:10).

B) The builder and maker is GOD: It will be built right and it will be eternal.

Used these songs during message:

Johnny Cook "Looking for a City"

Squire Parsons "Beulah Land"

Rusty Goodman "Leaving on my Mind"

Heb 11:8-16 A PILGRIM'S FAITH

I. THE PILGRIM'S PROMISES:

- A) Seen afar off by faith- We are not what we will be
- B) He is persuaded of them- enough to make us leave where we are
- C) He embraces them- They are his comfort during the journey
- D) He confesses that he is a Pilgrim- He tells others of his stand (*For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation* Romans 10:10).

II. THE PILGRIM'S PRACTICES

- A) A Pilgrim travels from one place to another.
 - 1. Not Home yet; A "tent dweller" realizing that Christ pitched His tent among us (John 1:14)
 - 2. The guiding cloud of God is directing the way
- B) A Pilgrim frees himself of all unnecessary weights and burdens
 - 1. "Stuff"- *Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him* (1 John 2:15).
 - 2. "Weights and sins"- Lay aside the weights and sins that so easily beset us (Do not become "fat" with the sweets of the world)
- C) A Pilgrim goes on a journey that is up hill and down hill
 - 1) Abundant Life is lived carrying a daily cross
 - 2) Christ helps us carry our load. He is the Lily in our valley. Even in the valley of the shadow of death He walks with us.
- D) A Pilgrim is a stranger in the land he is passing through.
 - 1) Dresses differently, talks differently, and realizes he is "Pilgrim" at Vanity Fair
 - 2) Jesus called disciples to leave Family, friends, and fortune to follow Him. We now have a different set of "friends" *Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God* (James 4:4).
- E) A Pilgrim is glad when he comes to his desired end. When the end of your life is the end of your life will you be happy with the beginning of your life in eternity after the end of your life here?

Heb 11:17-19 THE TRYING OF FAITH

By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called: Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure. (Hebrews 11:17-19).

We have seen the importance of Faith: We are SAVED by Faith, we WORSHIP by Faith, we WALK by Faith, and we WORK by Faith. Anything that important needs to be put to the "Test" (Trial to reveal its good. Remember that Temptation is used to out the bad!).

I. THE REASON FOR TRIALS

A) To show our Dependence on God- And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure (2 Corinthians 12:7). And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me (2 Corinthians 12:9). Abraham may have been looking to Isaac to fulfil the Promise instead of looking to God's Promise being fulfilled in Isaac!

B) To shape us into the vessel we are supposed to be. The Sculptor hammers at the stone; not to harm it, but to make it into a thing of beauty. It is the file; not the feather, that sharpens the axe. It is the Fire that turns iron into steel!

C) To Produce Patience: *My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience* (James 1:2-3). We believe stronger when we believe longer! *For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise* (Hebrews 10:36). *In your patience possess ye your souls* (Luke 21:19).

SOME IMPORTANT LESSONS ABOUT THE TRYING OF FAITH: *My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing* (James 1:2-4).

1. Trials often come suddenly "Fall into"
2. Trials and testing are varied "Divers temptations"
3. Trials test our FAITH "trying of your faith" (Not our Abilities!)
4. Trials may be long and hard "Let patience have her perfect (Complete) work"

II. THE RESULTS OF TRIALS. We are BLESSED- *Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him* (James 1:12).

Remember the result of Abraham's trial: *And said, By myself have I sworn, saith the LORD, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice* (Genesis 22:16-18).

What Trial is God using to try YOUR Faith?

A) Family- Is there an "Isaac" that needs to be laid on the altar so you will see God's Promise instead of a person. Any "Arks" that need to be built in order to save your family from the flood (Remember it can take years to build an ark)

B) Fortune- Any "Lots" who believe the well watered valley of Sodom is better than the deserts and mountains with God? *Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting* (Psalms 139:23-24).

Heb 11:17-22 DYING FAITH

In these scriptures we have 4 pictures of 4 great men which are commended by God for their Great Faith as they dealt with death.

I. ABRAHAM SHOWS US OBEDIENCE UNTO DEATH- *By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called: Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure* (Hebrews 11:17-19). [Fanatical Faith]

As far as Abraham was concerned Isaac was dead and burned on the altar of Faith and only Resurrection could bring him back. God expects our Faith to obediently follow His Directions; even when we cannot explain or understand it.

You either Serve God or Satan- Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? (Romans 6:16). Who do you want to die serving? Is your faith good enough to die with? Remember, your final decision maker is your “god”.

II. ISAAC SHOWS US BELIEVING WITHOUT SEEING-*By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come* (Hebrews 11:20). [Far Sighted Faith]

Isaac lived and was dying without seeing the promises fulfilled but he still believed and passed it on to his family. Is your Faith good enough to pass on to your family?

To the world seeing is believing. To the Christian believing is seeing.

Isaac's Faith was submissive rather than creative. He submitted to Abraham, he submitted to Abraham and waited on the servant to bring the bride.

Isaac's Faith was in the overruling hand of God and not in the failures of his sons.

III. JACOB SHOWS US WORSHIP UNTIL THE END-*By faith Jacob, when he was a dying, blessed both the sons of Joseph; and worshipped, leaning upon the top of his staff* (Hebrews 11:21). [Final Fervent Faith]

Worship is the highest function of the Human Soul- It is our love and adoration of God. It is what we will do in Heaven.

In all of Jacob's life God chose this last moment when he was worshipping

He was leaning on his staff for support as a reminder that he had wrestles with God and carried a permanent reminder.

Does your Faith affect your life Here? The one who has guided me down the Path of Life will hold my hand even in the valley of the Shadow of Death.

IV. JOSEPH SHOWS US CONFIDENCE ABOUT DEATH PUT INTO PRACTICE- *By faith Joseph, when he died, made mention of the departing of the children of Israel; and gave commandment concerning his bones* (Hebrews 11:22). [Fulfilled Faith]

He made his death a testimony for his faith in God. For 400 years in Egypt and for 40 years in the wilderness; men knew he believed in God's promises and expected to be part of their fulfillment.

What will you leave behind that can be passed on to future generations?

Is your faith good enough to die with?

Is your faith good enough to pass on to your family?

Is it good enough to affect your life here?

Heb 11:23-28 THE DECISIONS OF FAITH

We have been looking at the "Faith Hall of Fame" in Heb. 11 and have seen some of the importance of Faith. It is impossible to please God without it. You Worship by Faith, You Walk by Faith, You Work by Faith, You travel as a Pilgrim by Faith, and Faith even effects the way you die! Anything this important calls us to some decisions (Faith in anything will cause you to react to that - name brands many times inspire confidence). Today we want to look at the decisions Moses made that changed his life.

I. THE PARENT'S DECISION vs 23 To obey God rather than man Daniel, 3 Hebrew Children, Apostles

A. Abortion - Government says yes - God says no. (Ex. of man born blind)

B. To train up in the way of God even though that will make the child be "Out of step" with the world. (Discipline, manners, SS, CTS, VBS)

II. THE PLEASURE DECISION vs 24-25

A. He refused something - to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter. Pharaoh's grandson and possibly the next Pharaoh. He could have had any Pleasure he wanted but he denied himself now to look to the future. (Ex. - Diet - give up the pleasure of eating; Passing grades - give up TV to study)

B. He chose something - to suffer affliction with the people of God rather than enjoy the Pleasures of sin for a season. Don't just give up something - put something in their place, otherwise you become like a Pharisee.

III. THE PROFIT DECISION vs 26 Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: though he had respect unto the recompense of the reward. He decided to lay up treasures in Heaven. Rich young Ruler - Money more important than soul

Rich fool - this night shall thy soul be required of thee Easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than rich men to enter Heaven.

WILL YOUR DECISION BE GOODS OR GOD?? I Timothy 6:9-10 *But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.*

IV. THE PAIN DECISION vs 27 He forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured, as seeing his who is invisible. A decision for Christ is a declaration of War - Father against son, mother against daughter.

It is given to us in the behalf of Christ not only to believe on Him but also to suffer for His sake. Faith looks beyond Pain to the future.

V. THE PASSOVER DECISION vs 28 He kept the passover, and the sprinkling of blood, lest he that destroyed the first born should touch him. He trusted God's way about Salvation - Saved by the applied Blood.

Who will rule your life - Society or God? Will God come above Pleasure, Profit, or Pain? Have you made Preparation for the Death Angel's visit??

Heb 11:27 SEEING HIM WHO IS INVISIBLE

Heb 11:27 *By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible.*

One of the most difficult things in being a Christian is WALKING BY FAITH. Paul told the Corinthians We walk by Faith, not by sight: (II Cor 5:17) but he didn't tell us it would be easy!! The Reason is that we live in a world where "seeing is believing" and it seems foolish to pin our hopes on some "vague something out there". Moses gained the ability to Forsake the riches and ruling of Egypt, as well as endure the problems and persecutions that came his way because he "Saw Him that is Invisible". Today I want us to roll back the curtains and glimpse Him also so that we will be able to walk by Faith down the path God has chosen for us.

WHY WE NEED TO SEE THE INVISIBLE GOD

1. Seeing God can change a man's "Meaning"- Moses forsook the kingdom of Egypt for the Kingdom of God. Once you really see God you are never the same! It has been said that man can live 40 days without food, 3 days without water, 3 minutes without air; but only 1 second without HOPE; and this Hope can only come from God.

2. A Glimpse of God can change a man's Ministry- Isaiah 6

3. A Glimpse of God can change a man's Message- Rev 1 John was the "Disciple of Love" but he described more graphically the Wrath of God than any other man.

HOW WE CAN SEE THE INVISIBLE GOD

Thru the course of Time God has used many methods to reveal Himself to His people:

1. God revealed Himself to Moses thru the Burning Bush
2. He guided the Children of Israel with a cloud by day and fire by night via His "Shekina" Glory which dwelt over the Ark of the Covenant.
3. His "Theophany" appearances before the incarnation to the post prophet patriarchs.
4. His Post Resurrection appearances to the Disciples

God also uses various methods today to reveal Himself:

1. We see His POWER Demonstrated in Nature, In Government, in Order, In lives transformed.
2. We feel His PRESENCE in the services, and feel empty and unfulfilled when He is not Here- That other one is coming also!
3. We see His PERSON demonstrated in Jesus- If you have seen me you have seen the Father. 4 Gospels reveal 4 sides of Him.

But the only way we can really see Him is by being Born Again. Jesus told Nicodemus (John 3:3) *Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.* You can't see the supernatural with the natural eye.

Heb 11:32-40 Good Report Through Faith

Heb 11:39-40 *And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.*

As we study through the book of Hebrews we find that Faith is the all important ingredient in our relationship with God. Hebrews was written to a people who were in danger of turning back from Faith in Christ because of troubles and trials. The Author proclaims to these people that Christ is the ONLY source of Salvation. He shows that Christ is greater than Angels, Prophets, Priests, or mighty men and the Mediator of a New Covenant who is in Heaven today pleading our cause. He then shows them the danger of failing from Faith and exhorts them to remain steadfast.

Then he brings us to the great "Faith hall of Fame" in Chapter 11 and shows us Faith defined in Word and Action. He lets us know that Faith affects every area of our life:

MENTALLY- "By Faith We understand" 11:3

MORALLY- "By Faith Enoch walked with and pleased God" and then says it is "impossible to please God without Faith" 11:5-6

PHYSICALLY- "By Faith Sara received strength to conceive" 11:11

RELIGIOUSLY- "By Faith Abel offered the correct sacrifice" 11:4

FAMILY- "By Faith Jacob blessed the sons of Joseph" (11:21) and "Moses was his by his mother" 11:23

SOCIALLY- "By Faith Moses refused the Egyptian courts and chose rather to suffer affliction with God's People" 11:24-26

EVEN UNTO DEATH- "These all died in Faith" 11:13 (From Birth- Moses unto Death- Joseph regarding his body: Faith is our Guide)

That is when the author brings us to the last portion of Hebrews 11 and shows us how we too can have a good report through Faith. Let us learn from, and heed the example of these "men of Faith".

I. THEY BELIEVED GOD COULD USE THEM REGARDLESS OF THEIR DIFFERENT BACKGROUNDS AND ABILITIES vs 32

Some were Cowards (Gedeon) and some were Heroes (David). Some were Strong Men (Samson) and some were Young Boys (Samuel). Some were Men who had to be pushed by a woman (Barak pushed by Deborah) and some were Mighty men of Valor (Jephthae- who was also the son of a harlot!!).

Even today God's "Tool chest" confounds men- I Cor 1:26-29 *For ye see your calling, brethern, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty: and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: that no flesh should glory in his presence.*

Faith Realizes God's Ability to use my Inability!! (Remember that God is able to make something out of nothing! Heb 11:3).

ARE YOU LOOKING FOR AN EXCUSE?? OR AN OPPORTUNITY TO DO SOMETHING GREAT FOR GOD TODAY??

II. THEY BELIEVED GOD HAD DIFFERENT PURPOSES FOR DIFFERENT PEOPLE

A) Some were chosen to Triumph vs 33-35a *Who through Faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens, women received their dead raised to life again.* What a Glory it is to be chosen to be

a CONQUEROR. People Praise you, Problems fall before you, and Persecution is more talked of than dealt with. Be aware of your special Temptations of PRIDE and ATTITUDE (I must be better than them because I don't suffer like them).

B) Some were Tortured vs 35b *Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection.* What an Agony it is to be chosen to wear a CROWN of THORNS. Some were delivered from the Fiery Furnace and lion's den but MOST WEREN'T. Never allow Suffering to make you doubt the Saviour's Love. I Pet 4:16 *Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed: but let him glorify God on this behalf.*

C) Some were chosen for Trials vs 36-38 *Others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins: being destitute, afflicted, tormented: (Of whom the world was not worthy;) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.* Daily we must take up our CROSS and follow Christ. This may involve:

Mental abuse- "Cruel Mockings"

Physical abuse- "Scourgings, bonds, imprisonment, stoned, sawned asunder (like Isaiah)"

Spiritual Battles- "Tempted" (Right in the middle of all these others as if it's as difficult!!)

Death- "Slain with the Sword"

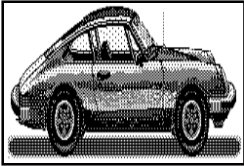
Destitution- "Wandered (no Home) in sheepskins and goatskins (No clothes) of whom the world was not worthy (lose of Friends)"

These all received a good report by BEING and DOING what God wanted. Whatever their lot, their Faith was in the Power and Purpose of God.

When God hands out the "Report Card of Faith" will you receive a good report- "Well done, thou good and FAITHFUL Servant"????

Heb 12:1-2 The Racer

Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God (Hebrews 12:1-2).



We're going to have a special "Grace Spring 20" during Prayer Meeting tonight. Our young people will be the "cars" and the rest of us will be their "crew". Each car will run one lap around the "race track" and make a pit stop; there their crew [chosen in a random drawing before the race] will find the answer to a question in the quiz on the back of this page. Once the answer is found the car can compete another lap.

The first car to complete all 20 laps will win. Before we begin the "Race" however, let's look at what the Bible says about how to be a good "Racer".

1. The Encirclement- compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses. You need to have some Spectators to cheer you on. The writer here is referring to the Heavenly Host that observes Christians as they live for the Lord and we need to be constantly aware that they're witnessing our work (Elijah and Moses talked with Jesus about his coming crucifixion on the Mount of Transfiguration- Luke 9:30-31). When you get weary in the way may their "cheers" provide incentive to continue.

2. The Encumbrances- lay aside every weight, and the sin which doeth so easily beset us. A Racer soon learns that things that may not be "wrong" may be "weight" and cause him great difficulty in the race. He must chose between winning and keeping the weight; and as he grows in the Lord more and more of the weight will be shed.

3. The Endurance- let us run with patience the race that is set before us. A good racer learns that his Stops as well as his Speed are important in the race (See Is 40:31). Not only must the Racer learn that the race is more than one "lap" but he must also learn to trust and depend on his "pit crew". In the same way a Christian must learn to work WITH other Christians as well as work OUT his salvation {that's why in our race the racer will carry the Bible that the Pit Crew needs to find the answer to the questions. The Racer presents it to the Pit Crew chief upon arrival in the "pit area" and then this chief will find the answer so the racer can continue on his journey}. This develops Patience and cooperation; two things that are greatly needed in many churches!

4. The Example- looking unto jesus the author and finisher of our faith: who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, In today's race the Pastor will show you how everything is to be done so everyone will understand; in the race of life the Lord has given us His example in the Word of God and if we are to bring Glory to God (as HE did) then we must follow in the footpath he has left.

Not only is He our Example, He is also our Encourager, and our Enabler. He knows the "race course" we're running and continually gives us encouragement to keep on and the power to do so.

What is a Race without a Reward? In the case of Jesus he- is set down at the right hand of the throne of god. In our Case it will be to glorify God on earth and live with God in Glory! (In our physical race tonight it will be "cookies and coke" for everyone. Not exactly Heaven!! but it will let you know that at the end of this life's race there is a marriage feast for the Bride of Christ that every Christian will attend).

Heb 12:1-2 LIFE PURPOSE

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF YOUR LIFE? What is keeping you from accomplishing that Purpose? This passage of scripture gives us tremendous information about How to be Successful in Life and in your Service for the Lord: *Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God* (Hebrews 12:1-2).

I. **WHO ARE THE PEOPLE YOU EXPECT TO APPROVE YOUR LIFE PURPOSE?** *Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses* [The Saints listed in Hebrews 11].

II. **WHAT IS PREVENTING YOU FROM ACCOMPLISHING YOUR LIFE PURPOSE?** *let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us.* What “Weights” are keeping you from being an effective “runner” [Can I list a few? Pride, Gossip, Lukewarm Living, Lustful Looking, Cheating on tests, taxes, or tithes, Thinking your “wants” are more important than God’s Will...].

III. **WHO IS THE PATTERN FOR YOUR LIFE PURPOSE?** *Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith.* (His Pattern)– Anticipated Joy (*who for the joy that was set before him*), Sacrificial Service (*endured the cross*), Uncontrolled by Society’s Approval (*despising the shame*), and Expected Approval (*and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God*).

WHEN YOUR LIFE ENDS WILL YOU LIKE THE WAY YOUR LIFE ENDS?

Heb 12:1-4 HOW TO KEEP RUNNING

The Bible presents the Christian Life under a wide range of figures, all are suggestive and descriptive of the believer's experience. The Believer is compared to a Child, a Sheep, A house, a Temple, a Farm, a Pilgrim, a Soldier, a Bride, Members of a Body, and many more.

One of the most colorful is that of an Athlete, running in a race to obtain the prize or trophy. We want to look at this person today and see how important it is that we not only start the race but that we KEEEP ON RUNNING.

I. THE REQUIREMENTS NEEDED TO RUN

A) Runners: "Let us run". These are people that are already saved by Faith in the shed blood of Christ; therefore they are not running to be saved.

B) Goals: Why Run "Wherefore seeing we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witness who without us have not been made perfect" (the Faithful of Heb 11). We realize that the ultimate good and goal of mankind is found in his relationship with God. If that is out of focus then life will be out of focus and men will seek every means possible to find the satisfaction that can only be found in a right relationship with God (Illustration of Prodigal Son). "I am come that they might have life and have it more abundantly". [Use filmstrip out of focus- nothing will make it right until the lens and picture are matched].

THE GOAL MUST BE CHRISTLIKENESS: I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus (Philippians 3:14).

C) The Unneeded Things: "Lay Aside"

1. Weights: "excess fat", the things that appear harmless and in face may be unless over indulged in. They are a sign of failing to deny ourselves (*Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me* Matthew 16:24).

a. Lack of exercise: Ever learning and never willing to practice prayer, fasting, Bible study, witnessing, family responsibility, etc. [Use a chair to rest in instead of running the race]

b. Over indulgence in sweets: vacation every weekend, video games to excess. TV addict, Business bondage. *Every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway* (1 Corinthians 9:25-27).

Example of Samson: An unusual child with wonderful parents (Judges 13:23). He was brought up as a Nazarite (Judges 13:7). He prayed and saw God answer his prayers (Judges 15:18). He failed because he did not keep his body under subjection and "laid down with the world".

Jesus said there were 2 obstacles that would keep our light from shining (Mark 4:21). The Bed of Idleness or the Basket of Busyness. Like the thorns that come up and choke the word so that it becomes unfruitful these things dim our light and darkness our witness.

2. Sin: "That so easily besets us" Unbelief is not called a "bad" sin. Unbelief is the most crippling of sins because it leads to all others: Unbelief in self makes a man to drink until he gets to the place he does not believe even God can help him. Unbelief in the future leads young people to escape in drugs, adults to escape in sexual immorality, and many to "play church" instead of practice Christianity.

D) The Patience Needed: Steady and active persistence. There are no "short cuts". Beware of those who promise you "easy paths". You must stay on the "strait and narrow" or you will be disqualified. HOLINESS DOES NOT COME IN A MOMENT. It takes day to day living to develop Spiritual Health.

II. HOW TO KEEP RUNNING

A) Look to Jesus: He is the one we are trying to immolate. What do we see in Jesus?

1. The Author and Finisher of our Faith: Do not put your eyes on anyone else. Looking at others may cause you to stumble and fall. We are Complete in Christ!

2. Endured the Cross for the Joy set before Him: Athletes learn that future glory is worth present suffering.

3. Despised the Shame: You have to learn to ignore the taunts of the crowd

4. Is set down at the right hand of the Throne of God: Jesus has already run the race so He can guide and help us on our Race Journey.

B) Learn from Jesus

1. He endured the bitter opposition of the world- We are racing one way and they are racing the other way; and they are mad because we are not going their way.

2. If we won't realize this we may become tired and faint in our minds (Lose heart). Just a few more days and the race will be over and we will receive a crown. Keep running, God will give you the strength you need.

Heb 12:5-8 THE DISCIPLINES OF LOVE

And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons (Hebrews 12:5-8).

God is the Potter; we are the Clay. Sometimes He must use the harshness of the oven; as well as the softness of His hands to shape us into the vessel He desires.

I. THE DISCIPLINE OF DISTURBANCE- *As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings: So the LORD alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him (Deuteronomy 32:11-12).* The eagle must disturb the nest and cease providing food before Nudging the eaglet out of the nest. Often the eagle must catch the eaglet as it falls and start the process again until the eaglet learns it can fly.

II. THE DISCIPLINE OF DARKNESS- Land that knows nothing but sunshine becomes a desert. Remember that God was in the thick darkness (*And the people stood afar off, and Moses drew near unto the thick darkness where God was (Exodus 20:21)*) when He wanted to communicate with His people.

It is in the darkness that we learn we can trust what we learned in the Light! *Who is among you that feareth the LORD, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? let him trust in the name of the LORD, and stay upon his God (Isaiah 50:10).*

III. THE DISCIPLINE OF DISAPPOINTMENT- Do you see others receive praise but you do not? Remember, it is God's Will we seek; not our own. Situations that we believe should go a certain way may, in fact, be opposite to God's plan or purpose: *For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts (Isaiah 55:8-9).*

IV. THE DISCIPLINE OF INEQUALITY- Job was sick BECAUSE his righteousness attracted Satan's attention! It was his goodness that led to his groaning but it was his steadfastness in sickness that led to his continued testimony and his great glimpse of God (*I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee Job 42:5*).

V. THE DISCIPLINE OF DELAY- Jesus waited 4 days before going to Lazarus (Which meant Lazarus was dead and in the grave so Christ could raise him from the dead!). Abraham waited many years before the "son of promise" was finally born. There is a Divine reason for the Divine Delay. Remain steadfast: *Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away. But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father. Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is (Mark 13:31-33).*

Heb 12:1-13 CHASTISEMENT

Why does a Good God sometimes allow bad situations or circumstances to occur in the life of His Children? Sometimes it is His way of correcting our actions or attitudes so we can be Blessed or be a Blessing. We call this action Chastisement.

Chastisement: A means of correction or Discipline (Remember, we are Disciples!). Chastisement is a hard subject to talk about and an ever harder subject to experience! Chastisement is used by someone who loves a person enough to correct them. Punishment is given by a "Judge" based on the law. You are also able to chastise yourself- *Then said he unto me, Fear not, Daniel: for from the first day that thou didst set thine heart to understand, and to chasten thyself before thy God, thy words were heard, and I am come for thy words* (Daniel 10:12).

I. THE REASON FOR CHASTISEMENT IS LOVE- *As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent* (Revelation 3:19). For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. (Hebrews 12:6). *Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit* (John 15:2).

II. THE PURPOSE OF CHASTISEMENT IS:

A) Salvation- But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world. (1 Corinthians 11:32). If we got what we deserved we would all go to Hell. How many people, like the Prodigal Son, must "lose it all" before they realize that only returning to the Father can bring them pardon, provision, and peace?

B) Purification- *For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness* (Hebrews 12:10). The "Fear of the Lord" is the beginning of wisdom. *Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered* (Hebrews 5:8).

C) Dedication- *The LORD hath chastened me sore: but he hath not given me over unto death. Open to me the gates of righteousness: I will go into them, and I will praise the LORD* (Psalms 118:18-19). Correction is intended to make us act and do better.

III. THE PROPER REACTION TO CHASTISEMENT- *I have surely heard Ephraim bemoaning himself thus; Thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised, as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke: turn thou me, and I shall be turned; for thou art the LORD my God. Surely after that I was turned, I repented; and after that I was instructed, I smote upon my thigh: I was ashamed, yea, even confounded, because I did bear the reproach of my youth* (Jeremiah 31:18-19).

A) Repent of the Wrong you have been doing. *I know, O LORD, that thy judgments are right, and that thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me* (Psalms 119:75).

B) Realize you must change Who you are and What you are doing.

C) Remember that God is Willing to Forgive and Wants to Change you (New Birth, New Creature).

D) Rejoice that Christ "took your punishment" so you would not have to! *But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed* (Isaiah 53:5).

REMEMBER ABOUT CHASTISEMENT:

1. Do not allow it to Damage your Faith: Do not become "wearied and faint in your minds" (Heb 12:3).

2. Do not "Despise" (Think it is wrong for God to do) Chastisement- *Ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him* (Hebrews 12:5).

3. Remember that ALL God's Children receive Chastisement- *For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth* (Hebrews 12:6).

Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, O LORD, and teachest him out of thy law (Psalms 94:12).

Heb 12:- THOSE HE LOVES

INTRO- This is a subject for Christians because it deals with a Father's care for his children and only Christians are Children of God (Born Again). Chastening is for the benefit of the Child- REMEMBER THAT!

I. THE AFFLICTION- What is Chastisement?

A) Chastening (vs 5) To make Chaste (Purify) Remove something I Cor 11:32 But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world (Removal of a wrong attitude toward the work of God).

B) Rebuked (vs 5) Reproved (Plays on our feelings- Conviction and unrest Loss of fellowship- David's Sin see Ps 53

C) Scourgeth (vs 6) Punish (Physical discomfort) Overcome by the enemy as Israel was- Taxes, loss of family, home, etc.

D) Corrected (vs 9) Disciplined (Guidelines set) Paul's thorn to prevent Pride II Cor 12

II. THE EFFECTS

A) What not to do (vs 5)

1. Don't despise it- My son despise not thou the chastening of the Lord (Despise- to scorn or become bitter against God because we can't see the reason). It is proper to ask WHAT would you have me do? WHERE would you have me go? WHEN would you have me do it? And even WHY are you allowing this to happen to me (in order to know God's Plan so you can make the necessary corrections) but you should NEVER QUESTION GOD'S RIGHT TO DO THIS.

2. Do not faint. Do Not faint when thou are rebuked of Him. (Lose your courage and give up.) What to do when you feel Faint- Stop and put your head down and rest until it passes. "Be still and Know that I m God'. Remember that God will only go so far- Ps 118:18 The Lord hath chastened me sore: but he hatb not given me over unto death.

B) Things to realize from Chastening

1. God's Love Whom He loves He chastens Rev 3: 19 As many as I love I rebuke and chasten. Like diamonds, sometimes you need to be cut to get their full value. What kind of loving Father would allow a child to die with a burst appendix because he "loved" her too much to see her go thru the pain of an operation? Blessed is the man whom thou chasteneth Ps 94:12

2. God's Fatherhood- without chastisement ye are bastards and not sons. God is concerned about how you develop. A true father wants his child to become all he can be and this means pointing him in the right direction (away from something and toward something).

YOU AREN'T EXPECTED TO ENJOY CHASTISEMENT- "No chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous" (vs 11) but you will see the benefit later.

III. THE AFTERWARDS

A) Obedience (Vs 9) be in subjection to the Father Heb 5:8 Though he were a son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered.

B) Holiness (vs 10) that we might be partakers of his holiness. Sin bring defilement and must be dealt with. God is a Holy God and wants us Holy.

C) Fruit- (vs 11) afterwards it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby. The storms of life provide the rain for fruit. COD PRUNES THE FRUIT BEARING BRANCH (Jn 15:2 EVERY branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it that it may bring forth more fruit).

Heb 12:15 BITTERNESS

Difficult or distasteful to accept, admit, or bear: *the bitter truth; bitter sorrow*. **4.** Proceeding from or exhibiting strong animosity: *a bitter struggle; bitter foes*. **5.** Resulting from or expressive of severe grief, anguish, or disappointment: *cried bitter tears*. **6.** Marked by resentment or cynicism: *"He was already a bitter elderly man with a gray face"*

Dr. William Gaylin, in his book *Feelings: Our Vital Signs*, pointed out that "resentment often arises when we believe we aren't getting what is due us from another person. We feel unfairly cheated or betrayed. And brooding leads to all kinds of trouble."

Examine what the Bible says about Bitterness:

(Heb 12:15) *Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled;*

(Exo 15:23-25) *And when they came to Marah, they could not drink of the waters of Marah, for they were bitter: therefore the name of it was called Marah. {24} And the people murmured against Moses, saying, What shall we drink? {25} And he cried unto the LORD; and the LORD showed him a tree, which when he had cast into the waters, the waters were made sweet: there he made for them a statute and an ordinance, and there he proved them,*

(1 Sam 1:10) *And she was in bitterness of soul, and prayed unto the LORD, and wept sore.*

(1 Sam 15:32) *Then said Samuel, Bring ye hither to me Agag the king of the Amalekites. And Agag came unto him delicately. And Agag said, Surely the bitterness of death is past.*

(2 Sam 2:26) *Then Abner called to Joab, and said, Shall the sword devour for ever? knowest thou not that it will be bitterness in the latter end? how long shall it be then, ere thou bid the people return from following their brethren?*

(Job 7:11) *Therefore I will not refrain my mouth; I will speak in the anguish of my spirit; I will complain in the bitterness of my soul.*

(Job 9:18) *He will not suffer me to take my breath, but filleth me with bitterness.*

(Job 10:1) *My soul is weary of my life; I will leave my complaint upon myself; I will speak in the bitterness of my soul.*

(Job 21:25) *And another dieth in the bitterness of his soul, and never eateth with pleasure.*

(Prov 14:10) *The heart knoweth his own bitterness; and a stranger doth not intermeddle with his joy.*

(Prov 17:25) *A foolish son is a grief to his father, and bitterness to her that bare him.*

(Isa 38:15) *What shall I say? he hath both spoken unto me, and himself hath done it: I shall go softly all my years in the bitterness of my soul.*

(Isa 38:17) *Behold, for peace I had great bitterness: but thou hast in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption: for thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back.*

(Lam 1:4) *The ways of Zion do mourn, because none come to the solemn feasts: all her gates are desolate: her priests sigh, her virgins are afflicted, and she is in bitterness.*

(Lam 3:15) *He hath filled me with bitterness, he hath made me drunken with wormwood.*

(Ezek 3:14) *So the spirit lifted me up, and took me away, and I went in bitterness, in the heat of my spirit; but the hand of the LORD was strong upon me.*

Heb 12:15 BAD BELIEVERS

Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled; (Hebrews 12:15).

1. NO POWER: They are not really Believers to begin with. They have a form of godliness but deny the power thereof.

They fail to tap into the Power of the Holy Spirit:

Filled with the Spirit- Eph 5:18

Walk in the Spirit- Gal 5:16

Demonstrate the Fruit of the Spirit- Gal 5:22-23

2) NO FRUIT: The Cares and Worries of this world have choked the word and it become unfruitful- Mk 4:19

3) NO VISION: They are so self reliant until they are blind to their condition- Rev 3:17

4) NO MOTIVATION: They have been hurt or disappointed by someone in the Church and now they are afraid to become actively involved

If you were not being paid, or if public opinion was not taken into account, would you still do your ministry??

Heb. 12:18-29 WHY BE SAVED???

INTRO- The most important thing in the world is to be saved. More important than money, health, popularity, honor, education or anything else you can name. In this portion of Hebrews God shows us some specific things about what it means to be saved.

We have been looking at the need of discipline if we are to be successful runners for God. That brought us to God's chastisement to purify us. But then we read of some who grew bitter instead of better from chastisement. Christianity is the Religion of the Cross and some ask why they should give up the pleasures of sin for the problems and persecutions of Christianity.

I. BE SAVED FOR WHAT IT BRINGS YOU TOO. 18-24

A) The Negative: You have not come to the terrible law producing Mountain where sinful man could not approach a Holy God. (All have sinned and come short of the Glory of God. There is none righteous, no not one.) God doesn't bring you to the place where you can't be saved but to the place where you can. (The place of HOPE As we go from darkness into light).

B) The Positive- You are come to:

1. Mount Zion- Love (Jn 3:16) instead of Law
2. The City of the Living God, the Heavenly Jerusalem (Heaven). I go to prepare a place for you.
3. An innumerable company of angels- who worship and serve God day and night (an are "Helpers of the Saved").
4. General assemble and church of the Firstborn. (Which are written in Heaven Part o the BODY with your name in the Lamb's Book of Life.
5. God the Judge of All- A righteous Judge (Not Man)
6. The spirits of just men made perfect- the Happy Heavenly Host will be our eternal companions
7. Jesus the mediator of the new covenant whose blood speaketh better things than that of Abel Abel cried for vengeance, Christ cried for mercy (Father, Forgive them. They know now what they do).

Seven Good reasons you need to come to Christ as your Savior and Lord.

II. WHAT SHOULD WE DO? Vs 25-28

A) See that you refuse not him that speaketh. How shall you escape if you neglect so great a salvation? (Example of Bill Rice's friend who refused to heed God's call by saying, "Where is Hell?" and found Hell a hundred yards down the road when a snake caused his horse to throw him onto a rock).

B) Do receive God's Kingdom- which cannot be moved. The gates of Hell cannot prevail against it. God is Able II

C) Do reverently and fearfully serve God- Come to Christ and mean business, don't play around.

III. THE MOTIVATION FOR THIS- God is a consuming Fire

A) He will consume sinners- II Thess 1:8. Cast into the Lake of Fire

B) He will consume Sin- I Cor 3:12-15 The test of Fire.

[Lighted candle to represent God. Garbage can- The trash pit of Hell (Hell originally a "trash dump") Different colored paper: Black- Bad. Gray- Kind of Bad. Light Blue- respectable sins. All will burn].

Heb 13:1-9 PRACTICAL FAITH

INTRO- We have been studying about Faith in regards to our relationship with God. Now we want to look at it in our relationship with others. IT MANIFESTS ITSELF IN:

I. PRACTICAL LOVE 1-3 (See Matt 25:31-46)

A) Entertain Strangers (Some have entertained angels unaware) Care for those you do not know. *If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit?* (James 2:15-16).

B) Help Those in Problems (Do as you would want done to you). Care for those you do know.

1. Bound- (Those in Jail)

2. ·suffering Adversity- If one part of the body hurts all of it hurts.

II. PURITY OF LIFE 4-6

A) Regarding Sexual Matters:

1. Marriage is honorable in ALL (It is God's Plan for Pleasure and Children). [That is why you begin to have certain feelings when you become a teen. God is leading you to find a mate]

2. Sexual sins will be judged. Whoremongers and Adulterers God will Judge (Mainly dealing with after marriage).

B) Be Content with such things as you have. Thou shall not covet thy neighbor's property, or his pleasure, or his personality.

The Reason for Purity of Life is so that we may boldly say the Lord is my helper. (Purity of Life means Power with God. The Holy Spirit must work at convicting us instead of producing Fruit in us when we sin.

III. PROPER LEADERSHIP 7-9

A) The Men who Guide you (Have the rule over you)

1. Pray for them

2. Follow their faith (Considering where it will lead)

B) The Measuring Stick- Jesus Christ the same at all times

C) .The Message

1. Stick with God's message even if other messages seem more exciting.

2. Be established in Grace- others are vain

A Practical Faith is one where you Love Right, Live Right, and Walk Right. Christianity is not a religion you follow but a Life you live; and it must be lived every day.

Heb 13:6-9 THE CHANGELESS GOD

We live in a changing world; changes are taking place so rapidly until it's almost impossible to keep up with them.

1. Physical changes- 100 years ago flight was a dream, today space travel is almost commonplace. 30 years ago Radio was the main method of communication; today most homes have 2 to 4 TVs, telephones in every room, a microwave, etc.

2. Morals are changing- Sexual impurity, Homosexual in the open, talk in your living room over TV that you wouldn't hear behind the barn 20 years ago. Live in lovers are common, College students openly fight for overnight visitation rights (and their parents say, "What's the harm!"), and spring is the time when the trees put on leaves and the women take off clothes!

3. "Religion" is changing-

a. A "Coldness" has crept into many churches (Matt 24:12 because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.)

b. Many have lost "Confidence" in the Church because of the failures of some leaders (Dan 11:35 and some of them of understanding shall fall, to try them, and to purge, and to make them white, even to the time of the end:).

c. Sins aren't "Constant"- When I was growing up it was a sin to have Insurance (lack of faith), wear colored shirts (like the world), and own a TV (Devil's horns on the top of your house!). Today those preachers talk about their insurance and pension in their multicolored shirts before they rush home to relax for a few hours before the TV. Multitudes of things that were "wrong" years ago are now embraced by the Church and it's people. {Jesus found the same problems. He was constantly telling the People, "You have heard it said but I say unto you". People had taken their preferences and turned them into sin. The thing to realize is that a real sin is a sin now and forever while preferences change with each generation}.

The one thing to hold on to in this changing world is a **CHANGELESS GOD**-

A) Changeless in His Being- He described Himself as "I Am that I Am". People Change but God doesn't. School friends move away, job's change, but God is a "friend that sticketh closer than a brother" "Lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the world". God never left you. If you and God are not in the same relationship as you were it's because YOU have moved!

B) Changeless in His Mercy- Mal 3:6 for i am the lord, i change not; therefore ye sons of jacob are not consumed. Before the worlds were formed God determined to save fallen men, He has sent Prophets and Preacher to warn fallen man, and yet man spurn Him and slide into a devil's hell.

C) Changeless in His Care- Heb 13:5 let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have; for he hath said, i will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. HE knows when the sparrow falls, He knows the hairs on your head. He knows what you have and what you need and HE CARES FOR YOU { But He cares more about your Soul than your Satisfaction; your Holiness than your happiness}.

D) In His attitude toward Sin- He Hates it for He is a Holy God!

1. It breaks fellowship- Powerless Prayers and Wonderless Word

2. It breaks His Law- Wages of Sin is death and it must be paid

3. It breaks His Heart- "Adam, Adam, Where art Thou?"

E) In His attitude toward the Sinner- He Loves Him! He wants him saved- It is not God's will that any perish.

Circumstances can change; The Heart can change- Thank God!; God has a changeless foundation for you to build on. Will you??

Heb 13:8 THE UNCHANGEABLE CHRIST

Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever (Hebrews 13:8).

We live in the day of change. A product hardly gets on the market before they “improve” it or change it. New foods, fashions, and fads come and go so rapidly until you hardly know if they are coming or going. Even the People you know change: Parents grow older, children grow up, and friends grow closer or friendships diminish.

Almost daily you are astonished to hear that the couple you thought would never have a problem are now divorcing. Churches that had standards and convictions; where sinners used to be saved regularly, now are little more than social clubs trying to be like the world in order to attract the world. And almost every week someone comes out with another translation of the Bible because the previous translations were not “clear” enough.

What is a person to do? Must we all sail on the restless sea of change becoming more and more seasick and longing for something solid under our feet? Is there no Rock we can stand on that will not crumble and disappear under our feet? YES! THANK GOD, there is one who does not change.

Even back in the days of the Apostles some of these same type questions were raised so God had an entire Book written with the fact that Christ is unchangeable as the Key; the book of Hebrews. And the Key verse in Hebrews is our text today:

I. THE PERSON: JESUS CHRIST

A) Not a dead doctrine but a Living PERSON who understands our struggles.

1) Tempted as we are tempted: *For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted* (Hebrews 2:18).

2) Suffered as we suffer: *Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered* (Hebrews 5:8).

B) Not just laws and regulations; subject to man’s interpretation, but someone *Who is made, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but **after the power of an endless life*** (Hebrews 7:16).

1) The Perfect Example: *For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, YET WITHOUT SIN* (Hebrews 4:15).

2) The Continuing Help: *Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them* (Hebrews 7:25).

a> By Sending us the Indwelling Spirit to guide us: *But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you* (John 14:26).

b> By giving us God’s Permanent [Not Man’s constantly changing] Guidelines: *Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth* (John 17:17).

II. THE PERMANENCE: THE SAME YESTERDAY, TODAY, AND FOREVER

A) Yesterday- Not just 1900 years ago- *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God* (John 1:1). He is the Great I AM who gives us:

1) Changeless Love- He loved Adam, Noah, Abraham but He also loved Peter, Paul, and John

2) Changeless Salvation based on blood payment for sins- Without shedding of blood is no remission (Adam’s clothes, Israel’s sacrifices, and Christ’s Cross)

3) Changeless Access- *For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast* (Ephesians 2:8-9).

B) Today

1) He still works the same- The blind see the truths of the Gospel, the sin crippled walk by His Grace, and the spiritual Dead are raised to new life. But, like John the Baptist, many become discouraged because God is not doing things the way WE want them. Sometimes we almost rail at God because He is “not smart enough to see that we know everything and He needs to do things the way we think they should be done”. Thank God that His knowledge, and patience, is far greater than ours- *For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise* (Hebrews 10:36).

2) He is an Anchoring Companion when everything else fails- *So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me* (Hebrews 13:6).

But you may ask, “How can I trust Him when I lose my health, or bills pile up, or friends forsake me, or loved ones are taken in Death?” In Mark 35-41 we find one of the greatest lessons on trust in the Bible. After a long day of work Jesus lay down in the back of the boat and went to sleep while the disciples sailed the boat. Suddenly a storm came up and beat upon the boat until IT WAS FULL. [Remember, many of the disciples were fishermen who did everything THEY KNEW TO DO and still the boat was full]. Frantically one of them woke Jesus and cried, “DON’T YOU CARE! We are about to perish!” Jesus simply got up, speaks to the storm, “Peace, Be Still” and then [and this is the point], turns to them and says, “Why were you afraid?” If anyone ever had reason to fear, it seems that the Disciples did at that moment but Jesus wanted them to know they had nothing to fear as long as He was with them!

C) Forever- *Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear* (Hebrews 12:28). Jesus Christ is King of kings and Lord of lords. He does not reign on Earth; but He Will! He has already conquered Death, Hell, and the Grave and now calls us to Trust Him and Follow Him- *Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach. For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come* (Hebrews 13:13-14).

In the midst of change and decay we have an anchor for the soul; a solid Rock where we can stand anything life throws at us. And we also have Promises from our Eternal God that are steadfast and sure. And they are all found in a relationship with Jesus Christ.

Heb 13:7, 17, 24 SOUL WATCHERS

The phrase “rule over you” is only found 3 times in the New Testament; all in the 13th chapter of Hebrews. It is a phrase that refers to those who guide the church. The context of each verse in which “rule over you” is used gives a good description of the church's relationship to their Pastor.

1) His Guidance- *Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation* (Hebrews 13:7). Follow his faith- in his teaching and in his life.

2) His Government- *Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you* (Hebrews 13:17). Reason to submit- He is a soul watcher!

3) His Greeting- *Salute all them that have the rule over you, and all the saints. They of Italy salute you* (Hebrews 13:24). Respect the Position. Some like his preaching but not his pastoral abilities. Some like him as a Pastor but don't care for his preaching. Some don't like a lot about him!

I. Why a Soul Watcher is needed:

The Soul is Personal- Each has one (Body, Soul, Spirit).

The Soul is Permanent- Eternal, non ending. Can lose or replace body parts but soul is forever

The Soul unredeemed by Christ will be Punished-

II. A Soul Watcher's Duty: Watch (Like my wife told me to watch her purse while she goes to do something)

A) Watch- Satan will try to STEAL souls. Satan is out to defeat and cripple Christians. A soul watcher tries to keep Christians from stumbling and falling.

W-ords (The most dangerous weapon- sticks and stones...)

A-ctions ***

T-houghts- Pornography, music, TV

C-ompanions- Psalm 1- Blessed walk not is counsel of ungodly

H-abits- A rut becomes a shallow grave.

B) Watch- Satan will come in by STEALTH and a Pastor must be on Guard- Sentry in Viet Nam who was asleep on duty (death penalty crime in war zone).

A good Pastor is a good “Soul Watcher” because he knows the Importance of the Soul and the Dangers to the Soul. The greatest “Soul Watcher” in history ask you this question- *For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?* (Matthew 16:26)

*** Three actions lead to Sin-

1) Dismissing Personal Belief- *And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin* (Romans 14:23).

2) Dishonoring God's Character- *For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;* (Romans 3:23)

3) Disregarding Society's Needs- *Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin* (James 4:17).

Albert Barnes in his NT Commentary describes this far better than I can:

“It is universally true that if a man knows what is right, and does not do it, he is guilty of sin. If he understands what his duty is; if he has the means of doing good to others; if by his name, his influence, his wealth, he can promote a good cause; if he can, consistently with other duties, relieve the distressed, the poor, the prisoner, the oppressed; if he can send the gospel to other lands, or can wipe away the tear of the mourner; if he has talents by which he can lift a voice that shall be heard in favour of temperance, chastity, liberty, and religion, he is under obligations to do it: and if, by indolence, or avarice, or selfishness, or the dread of the loss of popularity, he does not do it, he is guilty of sin before God. No man can be released from the obligation to do good in this world to the extent of his ability; no one should desire to be. The highest privilege conferred on a mortal, besides that of securing the salvation of his own soul, is that of doing good to others of alleviating sorrow, instructing ignorance, raising up the bowed down, comforting those that mourn, delivering the wronged and the oppressed, supplying the wants of the needy, guiding inquirers into the way of truth, and sending liberty, knowledge, and salvation around the world. If a man does not do this when he has the means, he sins against his own soul, against humanity, and against his Maker; if he does it cheerfully and to the extent of his means, it likens him more than anything else to God.”

Heb 13:8 JESUS THE SAME

(Hebrews 13:8) *Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.*

In a changing world most people want something; and someone, they can Trust and Depend on. Thank God for His assurance of that in the Person of His beloved Son, Jesus Christ.

I. THE SAME.

A) In a changing world Jesus does not change:

- 1) His Love for Men
- 2) His Means of Salvation
- 3) His Plans for Men

B) He is an Anchor when everything else fails (*These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world* John 16:33).

- 1) Health- Job
- 2) Obligations (Debts)
- 3) Your Own Fickleness
- 4) the Changing of Others- All men forsake me
- 5) Death

II. **YESTERDAY**- Not just 1900 years ago. He was “In the Beginning”. Before He was born in another’s stable, crucified on another’s cross, and buried in another’s tomb He was God. He did not write any books or lead any armies and He trusted His truths to a few unlearned disciples but He was Messiah who died for Men’s Sins, was resurrected from the dead, and now empowers His church to change the world.

III. **TODAY**- Like John the Baptist we become discouraged because the Lord is not doing what WE want but HE is WITH Us and we can depend on Him.

IV. **FOREVER**- He is King of Kings. Even if He does not reign now; HE WILL. He is not a “Belief”; He is the Son of God who will reign for eternity.

Heb 13:8, Mal 3:6 THE CHANGELESS GOD2

I the LORD do not change. So you, O descendants of Jacob, are not destroyed (Mal 3:6). (P1289)
Jesus Christ the same yesterday, today, and forever (Heb 13:8).

INTRO- We live in a changing world- changes are taking place so rapidly until it's almost impossible to keep up with them- Maps are sold now with guaranteed updates because of political changes. Machinery is evolving at a record pace- Phones, Computers, etc. Morals are changing so fast until by the time the Church draws up a guideline the world is already a mile past it! Money is now the "god" and ANYTHING that sells is allowed (The saddest part of this is that Christians are doing a lot of the buying).

These Changes bring about tremendous STRESS. The insecurity and lost of control we feel bring about SUICIDAL tendencies (We kill ourselves with drugs, overwork, or a loaded revolver). Never have people had so much and enjoyed it so little!

We are SCARED and many have lost all Hope. Many are Tired and are giving in to the pressures of society rather than fight a losing battle. Is there no Rock that we can rest on as we struggle through the quicksand of life??

Yes, Thank God, there is. In a world of constant Change ONE THING THAT NEVER CHANGES IS GOD (His Name is "I AM that I AM"). He is Stable, Secure, and Trustworthy. Today I want us to re-examine three areas that are CHANGELESS WITH GOD:

I. HIS ATTITUDE TOWARD SIN- He hates it- God is Holy!

A) It breaks Fellowship- Christians develop Powerless Prayers and a Wonderless word. Like David we need to Cry, Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation

B) It breaks the law- It is rebellion against God! It is putting man's desires or opinion above the law of God. And The wages of sin are death.

C) It breaks God's Heart- "Adam, Adam! where art thou??"

II. HIS ATTITUDE TOWARD THE SINNER- He loves Him- Jn 3:16 He wants Him saved! It's not God's will that any perish. God longs for the Lost, Calls him to Salvation, and offers him Grace. Men in Hell will have only themselves to blame.

III. HIS CARE FOR US: GOD IS FAITHFUL

A) In temptation- He gives aid in, makes a way of escape out of, and gives us the power of his Holy Spirit to defeat Temptation.

B) In Sickness- He feels with us. *You hear, O LORD, the desire of the afflicted; you encourage them, and you listen to their cry*, (Psa 10:17). In all their afflictions he was afflicted.

C) In trouble- He goes into the fiery furnace and makes the lions's den a place of rest! Heb 13:5 *I will never leave thee nor forsake thee!*

Are you building on the Rock or the sand??? If you are not where you once were with God, Who Moved????

Heb 13:15-16 SACRIFICES

Heb 13:15-16 *By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of Praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name. But to go good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.*

In order for man to approach a Holy God he must bring a sacrifice. That was first demonstrated in the Garden of Eden after man sinned and has been the plan and purpose of the entire Bible. In the early times men brought animal sacrifices to represent the coming Messiah- now we come claiming HIS sacrifice and desiring to bring some offering of our own.

I want us to look at some of the sacrifices God has made available to us to give back to Him- and I WANT US TO OFFER THESE SACRIFICES TO GOD. The sad fact today is that many people come to God's house to GET but never to GIVE; and leave with God displeased and their own hearts disappointed [True Love MUST give to express its self!!].

What are some of the Sacrifices we can give to God?

1. Sacrifice of **PRAISE**- Fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name

Mal 3:16 *Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name.* When is the last time YOU told someone of God's Goodness toward you.

2. Sacrifice of **SHARING**- To do Good. James 2:15-16 *If a brother or a sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit?* When have YOU sacrificed to Share?

3. Sacrifice of **COMMUNICATION**- To communicate: Taking the time to really listen and talk. Philemon 6 *That the communication of thy faith may become effectual by the acknowledging of every good thing which is in you in Christ Jesus* Do you Communicate or "Clam-up"??

But there are other Sacrifices the Lord wants us to give:

I. THE BELIEVER'S BODY- Rom 12:1-2 *I beseech you therefore, brethern, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.*

A) Its Owners-

1) Mates: I Cor 7:4 *The wife hath not power of her own body, but the husband: and likewise also the husband hath not power of his own body, but the wife*

2) The Lord: I Cor 6:20 *For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's*

B) Its Occupant- I Cor 6:19 *What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?*

C) Its Occupation- Text verse- Serving the Lord, Separate from the World.

II. OUR OFFERING- Phil 4:18 *But I have all, and abound; I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well pleasing to God.*

A) Consecrated Givers- II Cor 8:5 *they first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God.*

B) Consistent Giver- II Cor 8:7 *Therefore, as ye abound in every thing, in faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and in all diligence, and in your love to us, see that ye abound in this grace also. 8:2 How that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality.* See also 8:11-15

C) Cheerful Givers- II Cor 9:7 Every man according as he purposed in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.

III. OUR PRAYERS- Ps 141:2 *Let my prayers be set forth before thee as incense; and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice* See Rev 5:8 *And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints.*

A) The Power of Prayer- Matt 21:22 *And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.*

B) The Privacy of Prayer-MAT 6:5 *And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.* MAT 6:6 *But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.*

C) The Priority of Prayer- Luke 18:1 *Men ought always to Pray and not to faint.*

IV. A BROKEN HEART- Ps 51:17 *The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.*

A) Loses it's Will for God's Way- "Broken" in spirit and heart as you realize you have sinned against a Holy God. (Repentance)

B) Depends on God's Grace instead of Self Works- Realizes that it's only means of Righteousness in thru Christ.

V. SOULS WON TO CHRIST- Rom 15:16 *That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up (Sacrifice) of the Gentiles might be acceptable being sanctified by the Holy Ghost.* Jesus died for the Lost, He wants them to be saved. There is great Rejoicing in Heaven when men are saved.

God is looking for a Sacrifice from YOU today. Is there something you should Praise Him for, Share with others, or communicate to someone? Have you given you Body as a sacrifice to Him? Your Wallet? Your Prayers? Your Heart? Your testimony of Christ's Saving Power?

Heb 13:17-25 FAITH'S FINAL FAREWELL: KEEP GROWING

We have looked at a book whose keynote is "The Just Shall Live by Faith". We have seen that we can put our complete Faith in Christ because He is better than anything or anyone. We have also seen the example of multitudes who have lived and died in Faith and thus have shown its trustworthiness. And we have looked at the fact that Faith is Practical in Life Situations. Now, in Faith's Final Farewell, the writer urges us to keep on growing and going in Faith.

I. **THE PASTOR**- *Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you* (Hebrews 13:17). The Hearers must Heed their Leadership so they can grow as they should and so the Leaders can complete the tasks God has given them.

II. **THE PRAYER**- *Pray for us: for we trust we have a good conscience, in all things willing to live honestly* (Hebrews 13:18). A good conscience is able to give a good example so we need to pray for leaders to live right and stand for the right things.

III. **THE PETITION**- *But I beseech you the rather to do this, that I may be restored to you the sooner* (Hebrews 13:19). The Helper is seeking the Help from those they Helped! We are family and we support each other

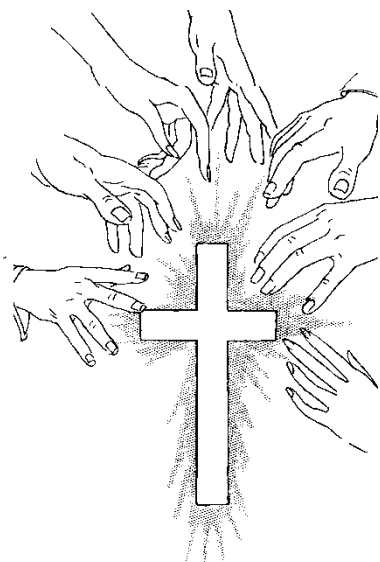
IV **THE PEACE**- *Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant* (Hebrews 13:20). Find constant Peace in remembering that our Faith is Built on a Risen Savior who shed HIS Blood in order to secure our souls.

V. **THE PERFECTION**- *Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen* (Hebrews 13:21). The Goal of all of this is to make you "Perfect" (Spiritually Mature) in order to do the good works that are in God's Will so you can follow the example of, and bring glory to, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Paul expressed it this way to the Philippians *Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling* (Philippians 2:12).

Final thoughts: *And I beseech you, brethren, suffer the word of exhortation: for I have written a letter unto you in few words. Know ye that our brother Timothy is set at liberty; with whom, if he come shortly, I will see you. Salute all them that have the rule over you, and all the saints. They of Italy salute you. Grace be with you all. Amen* (Hebrews 13:22-25).

Listen with earnest to the words of exhortation I have given you. Go on into perfection and make God's Good your Goal. Live and Walk by Faith.



The most important decision you will ever make is your decision about receiving Christ as your Savior. It's the most important decision you'll ever make because:

1> It's an **ETERNAL DECISION**- Heb 9:15 *For this cause Christ is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.*

1 John 5:13 *These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.*

The decision you make about Christ will effect you NOW and for ETERNITY. This is not something to be treated lightly or put off until a later time.

2> It's a **NECESSARY DECISION**- Heb 9:27 *it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment*:. Every person MAKES A DECISION about Christ- Either to Accept Him as Savior or reject Him and be lost. EVERY man must Die, EVERY man must face the Judgment. Only the Blood of Christ can deliver us from Condemnation.

WHO SHOULD BE SAVED: ROM 3:23 *For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;*
ROM 3:10 *As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:*

WHY YOU SHOULD BE SAVED: ROM 6:23 *For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.* ROM 5:12 *Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.*

WHEN TO BE SAVED: ROM 5:8 *God commended his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*

THE WAY TO BE SAVED: ROM 10:9-10 *That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.*

HOW TO LIVE AFTER YOU ARE SAVED: ROM 12:1-2 *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.*

Have you Accepted Christ as Savior?
If you need help or follow up booklets then contact--
Minister Ministry
233 Evans Road
Johnsonville, SC 29555
Mike@MinisterMinistry.com