

Christ is the Ultimate Revelation of God to Mankind Hebrews 1:1-3

Background

Doctrinal Points

1. Christ is superior to the prophets.

a. Because He is God.

b. Because He is Savior.

Practical Application

1. Have you experienced the beauty of a Sunrise?

Questions

1. That is the point of the first three verses of Hebrews chapter One?
2. Should we expect some further advanced revelation from God?
3. Are we in the last days? If so, when did they begin?
4. How did God speak in past history?
5. What was God's greatest revelation of Himself?
6. Does the Bible contradict itself when it says that God created all things and that Christ created all things?

Answers

1. God has been revealing Himself throughout human history, and the ultimate revelation has come in the person of His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.
2. No. Christ has come. He is the full revelation of God.
3. Yes. They began with the coming of Christ. See Hebrews 12.
4. God spoke in a number of ways – through the prophets of old, through dreams, visions, ceremonies, object lessons, miracles, and the inspired writings of the Old Testament scriptures.
5. The Lord Jesus Christ. See Colossians 1:15,19 and 2:9.
6. There is no contradiction here because Christ is God. See Colossians 1:16.

Discuss / Consider

1. Read and consider the impact of Colossians 1:15-1 In Christ all things exist, from the galaxies right down to the sub-atomic particles. The power of Christ is guiding, controlling, and upholding the universe. Think about this! Shouldn't it have a profound effect on how you view the Lord Jesus Christ? How do you give expression to what Christ as Creator and Sustainer means to you?

2. When Jesus Christ purged our sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on High, the highest place of honor in heaven. We were guilty and stained with sin, but we were cleared of our guilt and cleansed from our sins when we trusted Christ. The efficacy of Christ's sacrifice is good forever. It is a finished work. See Hebrews 10:11-1 How should this affect your life every day?

Challenge

1. Have you experienced the beauty of a sunrise? Have you experienced the beauty of a Sonrise? Consider God's appreciation of His Son. Write our your appreciation of Hebrews 1:1- How has Jesus impacted your life as Creator, Sustainer, and Savior?

Christ is Superior to Angels
Hebrews 1:4-14

Background

Doctrinal Points

- a. Because Christ is the Son and angels are servants.

- b. Because Christ is the King and angels are subject.

- c. Because Christ is the creator and angels are creatures.

- d. Because Christ is now seated and the angels are standing.

Practical Application

- 1. Don't try to contact or communicate with guardian angels.

Questions

- 1. The author of Hebrews quotes a number of Old Testament scriptures in this passage. What is his purpose in doing so?

- 2. Name the four points the author emphasizes to show Christ's superiority over the angels.

- 3. The angels were very significant in the Jewish mind. The Law had been given through the angels. Man was made lower than the angels (Hebrews 2:6-7). How then, in the Jewish mind, could the author show that Christ was greater than the angels?

Answers

1. The author is showing that Christ is superior to the holy angels. The angels were very important and significant in the Hebrew mind (the author's audience), and it was assumed that they knew the Old Testament scriptures. So that the readers would not give undue honor to the angels over Christ, the quotations show the superiority of Christ over the angels.
2. Christ is superior to angels because a. Christ is the Son and angels are servants b. Christ is the King and angels are subject c. Christ is the creator and angels are creatures d. Christ is now seated and the angels are standing.
2. Review the sub-points of doctrinal point. The author pointed out from the Old Testament scriptures that Christ as the Son of God was superior to the angels. He also pointed out that the angels worship Christ, the Son of God. See Hebrews 1:6.

Discuss / Consider

1. Christ is the eternal and immutable Creator. Re-read Hebrews 1:10-12 which quotes Psalm 102:25-2 Think about the One who is worthy of our worship and adoration. Is He the object of all your love and obedience?
2. Consider the work of angels today. They are servants to carry out the Lord's will with the speed of wind and the ferocity of fire. Note Hebrews 1:7 and Psalm 104: Angels are spirit beings sent forth to minister to believers. How do they minister to believers? Do you have a guardian angel story?

Challenge

1. Don't try to contact to communicate with guardian angels. This may be a temptation, but shun it, for any contact with the spirit world opens the door for Satan to cloud our minds. Demonic angels would love to have you enter this world. Instead of thanking the angels for their protection, thank the Lord. He is the one who sent them.

The First of Five Warnings to the Hebrews
Hebrews 2:1-4

Background

Doctrinal Points

1. It is possible to drift away from a present profession of accepting the gospel.
2. It is possible to escape the future judgment for neglecting the gospel.

Practical Application

1. How much more evidence do you want?

Questions

1. Why are the warning passages given in this epistle?
2. Read Hebrews 5:1 What is the author's concern here?
3. Are the warning passages applicable today?
4. Is this passage saying that you can lose your salvation?
5. How is the term "drift away" used?

Answers

1. The author wondered if the Hebrews of his audience were all truly Christians. They had come out of Judaism and had all at least professed Christ as Messiah. But had they all accepted Him as personal Savior? He was concerned about the reality of their faith. The warnings were given “lest there be in any a heart of unbelief in departing from the living God.” (Hebrews 3:12)
2. He was concerned that these believers were not growing as Christians, and that they were in danger of turning back to Judaism.
3. Yes, in any evangelical church, there is always a mixture of people. Many are committed Christians, but some may be only professing Christians, while others may be baby Christians who need to be challenged to grow. The last two groups need to be warned that they are in danger. They need to prove the reality of their faith in Christ by moving on and maturing in the faith.
4. No. It is saying that it is possible to be a professing Christian and not really be saved at all.
- 5 It is used in the sense of a ship drifting away from a safe harbor into the winds of a storm, ignoring the warnings given to stay in the protection of the harbor.

Discuss / Consider

1. Re-read Hebrews 2: The Hebrews were in danger of drifting away from the gospel of Jesus Christ, turning from Christianity to Judaism. The author is warning his audience to believe what they have heard. What had they heard? That Christ is superior to prophets and angels. That Christ has purged their sins. That the work of redemption is finished, and Christ is now seated at the right hand of the Majesty on High. He is warning them that it is possible to drift away if they've only heard and not believed. We, too, can be in danger of drifting away from the gospel of Jesus Christ. Read James 1:2 Give earnest heed to what you've heard and make sure that you are a believer, moving on in the faith.

2. Re-read Hebrews 2:2- What is the answer to the question? We cannot escape if we neglect so great a salvation. Refer to Hebrews 10:39. Perdition is not loss of reward, as some would argue; it is loss of the soul.

Challenge

1. Re-read Hebrews 2:3- Three things make this message, “so great a salvation”: a. it was given by the Lord Jesus Christ Himself b. it was confirmed by those who had heard Him and known Him c. it was accompanied by signs and wonders and miracles and gifts The evidence for the credibility of the Christian faith is overwhelming. Compare Romans 1:20. How much more evidence do you want to back up the gospel?

Christ Is Superior to the Angels
Hebrews 2:5-9

Background

Doctrinal Points

Christ is superior to the angels, even though He became a man

a. Because of God's original plan.

b. Because of man's original sin.

Practical Application

1. Aren't you glad that God is mindful of you?

Questions

1. In the Jewish mind, were angels significant beings?
2. Why did the author go to great lengths to show that Christ is superior to the angels?
3. Is there much interest in angels today, or was that primarily an Old Testament interest?
4. Is Christ 100 percent God and 100 percent man, or was He 50 percent of each?
5. What does it mean, "...*You have made man a little lower than the angels...*" (Hebrews 2:7)

Answers

1. Yes. They appear frequently on the pages of the Old Testament.
2. Because the audience was primarily Jewish, and they held angels in such high esteem that he feared they would be elevated even above the Lord Jesus Christ.
3. There is considerable evidence of the interest in angels today. Look at popular TV programs, books, magazines, and jewelry, for example.
4. Christ was both God and man, fully God and fully man – 100 percent. See Hebrews chapter one concerning the deity of Christ, and chapter two concerning the humanity of Christ.
- 5 Right now the angels have greater knowledge, mobility and power than mankind, but they will not in the world to come.

Discuss / Consider

1. Re-read Hebrews 2: God's original plan was never that angels were to be greater than man. The world to come, the future, when the Lord returns to this earth and brings in the Messianic Age, will be a time of worldwide peace and blessing. That great kingdom is not going to be ruled by angels, but by man, the Man, Christ Jesus. Now Christ is crowned with glory and honor (Hebrews 2:7-8), not just a little higher than the angels, but much higher, and yet He is still man. God's original plan is preserved and fulfilled in Christ. Consider the future. Does this plan have importance in your life?

2. Re-read Hebrews 2:8-9. Man was created in the image of God, but because of man's sin and disobedience, he lost his position of dominion. Notice the two "buts" in these verses. Think of it! There is an atonement unlimited for all and effective for those who believe. Make sure of your salvation and have a concern for your family, friends, and neighbors who have not yet realized the fact that Jesus Christ died for their sins.

Challenge

1. Read Hebrews 2:6-8, a quote from Psalm 8:3- Aren't you glad that God is mindful of you?

It was Fitting and Necessary for Christ to Suffer
Hebrews 2:10-18

Background

Doctrinal Points

The sufferings of Christ were necessary:

- a. In order to bring many sons to glory.**

- b. In order to take away the Devil's power.**

- c. In order for Christ to become our High Priest.**

Practical Application

- 1. Be careful about calling the Lord, "our Brother".**

Questions

1. What questions did the Jewish believers have concerning a suffering Messiah?

2. Why was it fitting and appropriate for Christ to suffer?

3. Why were the sufferings of Christ necessary?

4. What is the penalty for sin?

5. How was propitiation made for man's sin?

6. What does the term "son" mean to us?

7. What is the point of the three Old Testament quotations in Hebrews 2:12-13?

Answers

1. To the Jewish way of thinking, a suffering Messiah did not seem to be fitting or appropriate. They might have asked, "Why, if Jesus was Messiah, did he have to suffer?"
2. God does not do anything inappropriate. It was necessary for Christ to suffer because of the problem of sin.
3. In order to bring many sons to glory, in order to take away the Devil's power, and in order for Christ to become our High Priest.
4. The penalty for sin in God's moral universe is death (see Romans 6:23).
5. God sent His Son to suffer and to die as man's substitute.
6. It means that we are in a position of status and privilege. We are heirs of God and brethren of Christ.
7. They show that Christ is closely identified with the people.

Discuss / Consider

1. Read Revelation 1:18. Christ now has the keys to Hades and Death. Whoever trusts in Christ no longer faces eternal death, but has eternal life. Read 1 Corinthians 15:54-57 2 Corinthians 5:8. As Christians we do not have to fear death. Do you share your hope for life after death with others?

2. The great theme of the epistle to the Hebrews is that the Lord continues His ministry as our High Priest today. Refer to Hebrews 2:18. The Lord Jesus knows what human desires, feelings, and emotions are all about because He has been there. This should make us realize that He can empathize with us and help us in any situation. Re-read Hebrews 2:18. As our High Priest, He helps us through the temptations we face daily. Are you fully aware of His concern for you? Are you turning to Him for help? Remember Hebrews 4:14-16.

Challenge

1. "He is not ashamed to call them brethren." (Hebrews 2:11). But this does not give us the right to address Him as "Brother Jesus". We need to be careful about our theological terminology. He is still the Lord, and should be addressed as Lord. He has raised us to the position of brethren; let's not lower His position by bringing Him down to our level.

Christ is Superior to Moses
Hebrews 3:1-6

Background

Doctrinal Points

Christ is superior to Moses:

- a. **Because Christ is the Apostle and High Priest of our confessions.**

- b. **Because Christ is the builder of all things.**

- c. **Because Christ is the Son over His own house.**

Practical Application

1. **Let the “ifs” of scripture motivate you, not scare you.**

Questions

1. The author of Hebrews stresses 2 basic points in chapters one and two. What are they and why are they so important?

2. There is one more argument that the author must make to his audience before he can move on to the great theme of the epistle. What was this argument? Why did this argument have to be made?

3. How is Christ superior to Moses?

4. What is the great theme of this epistle?

5. What is an “apostle”?

Answers

1. Christ is greater than the prophets and Christ is greater than the angels. They were important because the audience was Jewish, and the Jewish mind held the Old Testament prophets and the angels in high esteem. The prophets were God's spokesmen who wrote the scriptures and the angels were lofty creatures, not bound by the frailties of man. Jesus was a man who suffered and died, so they would have questioned how He could be superior to the angels. The author wrote to show Christ's superiority.
2. That Christ was superior to Moses. To the Jewish mind, Moses was the greatest of all the prophets.
3. Because Christ is:
 - a. The Apostle and High Priest of our confessions.
 - b. The builder of all things.
 - c. Son over His own house.
4. The Priesthood of Christ.
5. Apostle means a "sent one".

Discuss / Consider

1. Refer to Hebrews 3: As Apostle, Christ represents God to us. As our High Priest, Christ represents us before God. Consider Him, the Apostle and High Priest of our confession. Note that believers are addressed as holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling. We are brethren because we have been brought into the family of God. We are holy brethren because this present world is not our home. Aren't you thankful that you are a believer? Are you looking forward to your heavenly home?
2. Moses was faithful as a servant in God's house, but Christ is faithful as a Son over God's house. The service of Moses was temporary, pointing forward as a testimony to the future in the coming of Christ. Consider especially the work of Christ as a Son over God's house, the Church or body of believers. Aren't you glad that you are a living stone in this Church?

Challenge

1. Read Hebrews 3:6, considering the "if". Let the "ifs" of scripture motivate you, not scare you. A true believer perseveres, holding fast the confidence and the rejoicing to the end. Are you persevering in the faith? Are you holding fast your confidence in Christ? Are you a rejoicing Christian?

The Second of Five Warning Passages to the Hebrews **Hebrews 3:7-19**

Background

Doctrinal Points

- 1. Professing Christians can fall away from the living God.**

- 2. It is possible to be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.**

Practical Application

- 1. Do you have a high view of the inspiration of scripture?**

Questions

1. The author gives a strong warning to his readers in Hebrews chapter two. What is that warning?

2. What is the warning given in the second half of Hebrews chapter three?

3. Are there cults today that elevate man to the status of God and lower Christ to the level of people or angels, or is that just a thing of the past?

4. What are some of the appeals to return to Judaism from Christianity?

5. Read Hebrews 3:1 What is the meaning of the Greek word for, “departing” or “falling away from”?

6. Can a true believer lose his salvation?

Answers

1. To make sure of their salvation and not drift away by neglecting so great a salvation. See Hebrews 2:1-3.
2. The author warns against unbelief and the possibility of falling short of God's rest.
3. Unfortunately, this is true today as well as in the past.
4. The Jews could escape both reproach of Christ and being persecuted for the sake of Christ. There was an appeal in the beauty of the temple and its rituals.
5. It means to turn away from a position or profession of faith once held. We get the word "apostasy" from this word.
6. No, a true believer cannot lose his salvation, but it is possible to be a professing Christian and not be a true believer. See Hebrews 3:12.

Discuss / Consider

1. Discuss the difference between professing Christians and true believers. Consider this difference in light of "once saved always saved." Remember, faith is the root of salvation; perseverance is the fruit of salvation.

2. Re-read Hebrews 3:12-1 Sin is deceitful, and over time it dulls the conscience to the point where it is tolerated and even accepted. Consider how desensitized Christians are to sin today. Can we use the excuse, "It's part of our culture"? How do you combat this desensitization to sin?

Challenge

1. Read Hebrews 3:7-11 and Psalm 95:7:1 The Holy Spirit is the Author of every verse in the Bible. Do you have a high view of the inspiration of scripture? Do you approach the word of God with reverence and with a readiness to obey? The Bible is not man's words about God, but God's word to man. The Lord Jesus had a high view of God's word. Read Matthew 4:4.

The Rest of God
Hebrews 4:1-11

Background

Doctrinal Points

- 1. Unbelief, evidenced by disobedience, closes the door to the rest of God.**

- 2. Faith, evidenced by perseverance, opens the door to the rest of God.**

Practical Application

- 1. It does get better than this.**

Questions

1. What is the author's great concern for his audience?
2. Why was the story of the failure of the children of Israel to enter Canaan included here?
3. How would this story be relevant today?
4. What are the rests of God mentioned in scripture?
5. In Hebrews chapter four, what is the rest that the author is urging his readers not to fall short of or miss out on?
6. When does this rest begin?

Answers

1. He is concerned that some of them may not be true believers, and that some of these professing Jewish believers were being tempted to return to Judaism.
2. It is parallel with the possible unbelief and disobedience of the readers of this epistle. The children of Canaan failed to enter into Canaan, and it is possible that the readers would fail to enter into God's rest.
3. Unbelief, evidenced by disobedience, closes the door to the rest of God. There may be those in churches today who are only professing believers.
4. The rest of God a. comes at the end of creation week (see Hebrews 4:4 and Genesis 2:2) b. the rest of Canaan (see Hebrews 3:18) c. the rest of salvation and surrender (see Matthew 11:28-30) d. the eternal rest of heaven
5. The future eternal rest of God in which all true believers will share
6. It begins when you become a Christian. At that point you have eternal life.

Discuss / Consider

1. Consider doctrinal point #1: Unbelief, evidenced by disobedience, closes the door to the rest of God. Have you entered the eternal rest of God? Will you participate in the rest of the world to come – both in Christ's kingdom here on this earth and in the eternal state? Have you received Jesus as your personal Savior, acknowledging that He died for you? Make sure of your salvation today. Make sure that you have your title to the eternal rest of God.

2. Faith is the key to opening the door to the rest of God. How do you know if you have saving faith? How do you know it isn't just a profession of faith? Is it enough that you raised your hand at some point or walked down an aisle to receive Jesus? Remember, true faith perseveres. Continuance in the faith is proof of the reality of faith. Are you persevering in the faith?

Challenge

1. Read Hebrews 4:10. Think of the eternal rest of peace of being with the Lord forever. The rest of soul that true believers enjoy now is only a foretaste of what is to come.

Motivating Factors that Should Cause the Christian to Persevere **Hebrews 4:12-16**

Background

Doctrinal Points

1. Believers have the word of God to convict them of their spiritual condition.

2. Believers have a High Priest to help them in their spiritual condition.

Practical Application

1. In time of need, look in the right direction.

Questions

1. When does a person begin eternal life?
2. Refer to Hebrews 4:12-1 Name the motivating factors that should cause the Christian to persevere in the faith.
3. Read Hebrews 4:1 How is the word of God like a surgeon's knife?
4. Who knows the true intent of your heart?
5. What is the importance of a steady diet of the word of God?
6. What is the function of a high priest?
7. Describe the function of the high priest of the Old Testament. How is this like the believers' High Priest?

Answers

1. When he becomes a Christian, by trusting in the finished work of Christ for salvation.
2. The word of God and the high priestly ministry of Christ.
3. The word of God, as a surgeon's knife, will cut your open to expose your true heart. It pierces even to the division of the soul and spirit and joints and marrow in full exposure.
4. God alone knows. Others can't know, and sometimes even you don't know.
5. It is not only food for the soul, but it convicts a person of his spiritual condition. You can't hide your spiritual condition from God. See Hebrews 4:13.
6. To mediate between God and man.
7. The high priest passed through the inner veil of the tabernacle into the Holy of Holies and into the very presence of God. The Lord Jesus Christ passed through the heavens into the dwelling place of God.

Discuss / Consider

1. Discuss the significance of our high priest being called "Jesus" (His human name) and "the Son of God". Our mediator is both God and man. As man He can sympathize with our struggles. As God He can do something about them.

2. Re-read Hebrews 4:14-15 Jesus, both fully God and man, can empathize with your weakness. The Lord knows what it feels like to be tired and hungry, lonely and broken-hearted, rejected and forsaken; and He knows what it's like to be tempted. Trust Him for His high priestly ministry to you.

Challenge

1. Re-read Hebrews 4:1 Are you presenting yourself to the knife of God's word? Is God speaking to your heart about your spiritual condition? Let the word of God convict you.

Christ As Our High Priest
Hebrews 5:1-14

Background

Doctrinal Points

1. Aaron was qualified to be an imperfect high priest.

2. Christ is qualified to be a perfect high priest.

Practical Application

1. Have you moved from milk to meat?

Questions

1. What is the theme of the epistle to the Hebrews?

2. Chapter 5 has to do with the qualifications of a high priest. Who did the high priest of the Old Testament represent? How often could he go into the holy of holies in the tabernacle or the temple? What did he offer?

3. List the two requirements to be fully qualified to be a high priest.

4. Why wasn't Aaron a perfect high priest?

5. Are some doctrines considered milk and others considered meat?

Answers

1. The High Priesthood of Christ.
2. a. He represented the nation of Israel before God.
b. Once a year.
c. The blood of the atoning sacrifice.
3. He had to be a man and he had to be called by God to this office.
4. Because he himself was a sinner and had to offer sacrifices for himself as well as for the people.
5. No. There's milk and meat in every area of doctrine.

Discuss / Consider

1. Christ was called to be a High Priest by divine appointment See Hebrews 5:5- See also Psalm 2:7 and Psalm 110: The Aaronic priesthood was temporary. Christ was called by God to be a High Priest forever. Does this give you a great sense of security? It should.

2. Christ was a real man who lived on this earth. As such, He has the ability to be compassionate. Read Hebrews 5:7-8. Has anyone gone through the sufferings that our Lord went through in the Garden of Gethsemane leading up to His crucifixion at Calvary? Are you looking for a compassionate High Priest, or have you found Him?

Challenge

1. There is milk and meat in every doctrine. We can still enjoy the milk, but we need to move on to the more solid food as well. Have you moved on to the meat? How do you know how much you've grown spiritually? Do you have a close Christian friend who will be honest with you as to your growth?

Moving on to Maturity and the Consequences of Falling Away **Hebrews 6:1-8**

Background

Doctrinal Points

1. True believers are expected to mature in the faith.

2. True believers may backslide but will not fall away.

Practical Application

1. If you're worried about it, you don't have to worry about it.

Questions

1. True or False. The first half of Hebrews 6 contributed to major denominational differences throughout Church History.
2. Were all the First Century readers of the epistle to the Hebrews committed Christians?
3. Read Hebrews 6:1 Is the author saying to take these basic doctrines or teachings and discard them? What is his point?
4. Read Hebrews 6:1-2 again. Are the specific items listed here New Testament ABCs or Old Testament ABCs?
5. What is the author's point in listing these items?
6. Interpret the meaning of Hebrews 6:7-8 in terms of a believer and an apostate.

Answers

1. True
2. No, some were just professing Christians who were in danger of turning back to Judaism.
3. He is not saying to discard them; he is saying that they should move on from the basics to more mature matters in the Christian faith.
4. They are elementary or basic teachings that can be found in the Old Testament.
5. The author's point is that all of these foundational teachings pointed forward to the coming of the Messiah and New Testament truths. But now the Messiah has come, and all of these basics are fulfilled in Christ, so let's move on. Let's not lay again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God.
6. A true believer brings forth a useful crop and is blessed by God. An apostate, one who has only professed faith but has abandoned it, brings forth only thorns and briars and is rejected by God.

Discuss / Consider

1. Read Hebrews 9:13-14 The foundations of repentance from dead works and faith toward God were the Old Testament Levitical sacrifices. They could not cleanse the conscience from dead works; they were only foundational. The sacrifices pointed forward toward the coming Messiah who would come as the Lamb of God, and would provide an efficacious sacrifice once and for all time. As such, we and the First Century believers are urged to go on to Christian maturity. Where are you in your growth and knowledge as a believer? Are you in the milk stage or the meat stage?

2. Read Hebrews 6:4-6 This passage is addressed to those who professed the Christian faith, but were not converted. They came to the threshold of salvation, but had not claimed Christ for their Savior. They had been enlightened and had even partaken and participated in what the Holy Spirit was doing in the church, but they had not been born of the Spirit. As such, a hardening process began to take place. By going back to Judaism, it would be like crucifying again the Son of God and putting Him to an open shame. Is there a possibility that you are not yet a true believer? How about some of your friends? Make sure of your salvation.

Challenge

1. After reading this warning passage in the Bible, some Christians get scared and wonder if they have fallen away and are eternally lost. How is it with you? If you are concerned about your salvation and status as a true believer, it's a good indication that you are a true believer. Make sure you salvation.

Encouragement and Exhortation About Our Salvation **Hebrews 6:9-20**

Background

Doctrinal Points

- 1. Christian love and service give evidence of salvation.**
- 2. Endurance and perseverance bring assurance of salvation.**
- 3. God's promise and oath are a guarantee of salvation.**

Practical Application

- 1. Imitate the right people.**

Questions

1. Why would the return to Judaism from Christianity be appealing to some of the First Century readers of this epistle?
2. Why was the author concerned that the readers would return to the Old Testament sacrifices and temple worship?
3. How were the mere professors referred to in Hebrews 6:4-6? How were the true believers referred to in Hebrews 6:9?
4. What was the good news in Hebrews 6:9?
5. Why was the author convinced that most of his audience were true believers?
6. Can good works save a person?
7. Hebrews 6:18-20. List 4 figures that are used to emphasize the security of the believer and God's promise of salvation.

Answers

1. There was more grandeur in the ritualism of Judaism than there was in the simple Christian faith. There was more safety in Judaism, for the Roman persecution of Christians was beginning in the mid 60s when this epistle was written.
2. It would mean that they did not believe that the work of Christ was sufficient and finished. They would align themselves with those who crucified Christ and put Him to an open shame. To abandon the Christian faith at this point would prove that they were never true Christians, but only professors of the Christian faith.
3. Professors of the Christian faith were referred to as “they”, whereas the true believers were referred to as “you”.
4. The author is convinced that most of his readers are true believers and would not turn back to Judaism.
5. Because of what they were doing as believers— the better things that accompany salvation. See Hebrews 6:10.
6. No. Read Ephesians 2:8-9 and Titus 3:5.
7.
 - a. The city of refuge.
 - b. An anchor.
 - c. A forerunner.
 - d. A High Priest.

Discuss / Consider

1. If people say they are Christians but there is not proof in the way they live, maybe it’s only a profession of faith. Christian love and service give evidence of salvation. Are there those within your spheres of life that say they are Christians, but do not show it by their lives? How is it in your life? Remember James 2:26.

2. God has confirmed His promise of salvation to believers by His promise and by His oath. He did this that we might be encouraged with an absolute guarantee of salvation. Consider the four figures used to emphasize the security of the believer and God’s guarantee of salvation in Hebrews 6:18-20.

Challenge

1. Our culture tends to imitate sports heroes, entertainment stars, and people who are financially successful. To whom are you looking as a model for your life? The challenge from God Himself is to imitate those who patiently endure and persevere in the faith. Make sure you choose the right role models.

The High Priesthood of Jesus Christ
Hebrews 7:1-10

Background

Doctrinal Points

1. Melchizedek's priesthood is typical of Christ's Priesthood.

2. Melchizedek's priesthood is superior to Aaron's priesthood.

Practical Application

1. Are you at least tithing?

Questions

1. What is the central theme of the epistle to the Hebrews?

2. What were the qualifications of a priest under the Mosaic Law?

3. What tribe was Jesus from?

4. Who was Melchizedek?

5. Describe the circumstances when Melchizedek met Abraham.

6. What is the present name for the City of Salem?

Answers

1. The Priesthood of Christ.
2. A Priest had to be called of God and chosen from among men. He had to be from the tribe of Levi and in the line of Aaron.
3. The tribe of Judah.
4. He was a priest of the Most High God. Melchizedek's name means "righteousness". He was the king of Salem, which means "peace". So he was a king of righteousness and peace.
5. Lot and his family had been taken captive along with the rest of the people of Sodom by an invading force from Mesopotamia. Abraham and his small army of servants went out to rescue Lot and the other captives. When Abraham returned, Melchizedek met him and encouraged him. See Genesis 14:18-20.
6. Jerusalem.

Discuss / Consider

1. Melchizedek was a type of Christ concerning the priesthood. Review the four ways that Melchizedek prefigures Christ: a. Abraham paid tithes to Melchizedek (under the Law, the people paid tithes to support the priests and Levites, but Abraham paid tithes to Melchizedek. Aaron, the priests, and the rest of the Levites all descended from Abraham) b. Melchizedek blessed Abraham (not the other way around) c. the Levites were mortal men d. the Levites paid tithes to Melchizedek (as being descendants in the loins of Abraham; see Hebrews 7:5, 10) How do these ways show that the Melchizedekian priesthood is superior?

Challenge

1. Tithing is a biblical principle, taught beyond the Mosaic Law. The New Testament Christian is not required to tithe, but is to give proportionately as the Lord provides. Are you giving at least a tenth of your income to the Lord's work?

The Priesthood of Christ is Superior to Any Other Priesthood
Hebrews 7:11-28

Background

Doctrinal Points

- 1. Christ's Priesthood is superior because it replaced an imperfect priesthood.**

- 2. Christ's Priesthood is superior because it established a perfect priesthood.**

Practical Application

- 1. Let's practice the lost art of meditation.**

Questions

1. What is required for there to be a relationship between God and man?
2. In the Old Testament there was a priesthood, but it was imperfect. Who replaced this imperfect priesthood?
3. Which Old Testament priest had a better order of priesthood than the priesthood of Aaron?
4. List the four ways in which Christ's Priesthood is superior because it replaced an imperfect priesthood.
5. List the six ways in which Christ's Priesthood is superior because it established a perfect priesthood.

Answers

1. There must be a priesthood, someone to mediate between a holy God and sinful man.
2. Jesus Christ replaced an imperfect priesthood, and has established a perfect and eternal Priesthood.
3. Melchizedek.
4.
 - a. God changed it.
 - b. It failed to give a person true access to God.
 - c. The priest died and could not continue.
 - d. The high priests were weak and sinful themselves.
5.
 - a. It has replaced the old order forever.
 - b. Christ's priesthood allows us to draw near to God.
 - c. It has been established forever with the oath of God.
 - d. Jesus lives forever.
 - e. The High Priest Jesus was and is sinless.
 - f. Jesus is God Himself.

Discuss / Consider

1. Review Hebrews 7:18-19. Under the Law only a priest could go into the tabernacle or temple, and only the high priest could go into the Holy of Holies, and that only once a year. On the other hand, Christ's Priesthood draws us near to God. The veil has been torn. The way into God's presence has been opened and all believers can go into the Holy of Holies. Remember Hebrews 4:1. Are you thankful for this access to a holy God? Are you coming daily to the throne of grace?

Challenge

1. Let's practice the lost art of meditation. Do not confuse this with the Eastern type of meditation, but practice meditating on the word of God. In our busy, frantic day and age, we don't spend enough time meditating on scripture. Before you read each day, ask the Lord to give you guidance for the day based on the reading of His word. Keep these verses and thoughts in mind throughout the day, taking time to see how they apply to opportunities and situations as they come on you through the day.

Christ's Superior Priesthood (Continued)
Hebrews 8:1-13

Background

Doctrinal Points

- 1. Christ's Priesthood is superior because He ministers in a better sanctuary.**

- 2. Christ's Priesthood is superior because He mediates a better covenant.**

Practical Application

- 1. Remember the illustration of the car keys.**

Questions

1. Read Hebrews 8: What is the point that the writer is making here?
2. Is the Priesthood of Jesus Christ valid even though it doesn't follow in the line of the Aaronic priesthood?
3. Read Hebrews 8: What is the purpose of the earthly tabernacle of the Old Testament?
4. The shadows have gone and the substance has come. To what does this refer?
5. The Aaronic priesthood of the Old Testament dealt with the first covenant. What is the first covenant?
6. Read Matthew 26:28. What is the basis for the New Covenant?

Answers

1. The Lord Jesus Christ is our great High Priest Who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven. This is the central theme of the epistle to the Hebrews.
2. Yes. The Priesthood of Christ is not only valid, but also superior to Aaron's priesthood. The Priesthood of Christ follows after the Melchizedek priesthood. It is universal in scope and eternal in time.
3. It served as a type or picture of the true sanctuary in heaven.
4. The shadow refers to the Old Testament earthly sanctuary; the substance refers to the heavenly sanctuary of the heavens. That is, the Lord Jesus Christ is now literally in the true and better heavenly sanctuary, where He is seated at the right hand of the Father and ministering as our High Priest.
5. The first covenant is the Law.
6. The blood of Jesus Christ.

Discuss / Consider

1. There is rich ministry to be found in the patterns and articles of the tabernacle. Consider this a worthy study as you view it in light of the heavenly sanctuary. Observe the substance from the shadows.

2. Hebrews 8:8-12 is a lengthy quote from Jeremiah 31:31-34, where the New Covenant was predicted. The New Covenant would be made with Israel, not the Church. In Romans 11:25-26, we read that in the future there will be a spiritual revival of the Jewish people. Israel has only temporarily been set aside from the place of spiritual blessing while the Gospel goes out to the Gentile world and the Church is completed. The Church is not the new Israel, and scripture should not be spiritualized to such a point. However, the blessings of the New Covenant have been extended to the Church.

Challenge

1. List the blessings available to Christians in relation to the New Covenant which was made to Israel.

Sufficient and Insufficient Sacrifices
Hebrews 9:1-15

Background

Doctrinal Points

1. Before the coming of Christ, there were many insufficient sacrifices in the temporary earthly tabernacle.
2. Since the coming of Christ, there is one sufficient sacrifice in the permanent heavenly tabernacle.

Practical Application

1. Why settle for less when you already have much more?

Questions

1. In Hebrews chapter 8, we saw that Christ, our High Priest, ministers in a better _____ and mediates a better _____.
2. What did the high priest do on the Day of Atonement?
3. Where was the mercy seat located?
4. The Day of Atonement is still an important day in the Jewish calendar. What is that day called?
5. As great as that day was and is in Israel's history, what can it still not do?
6. What is the point of Hebrews chapter 9?
7. Name the three items placed in the Ark of the Covenant.

Answers

1. Sanctuary, Covenant.
2. On that day and on that day alone the high priest would take the blood of the atoning sacrifice into the Holy of Holies and place it on the mercy seat. See Leviticus 16.
3. On top of the Ark of the Covenant.
4. Yom Kippur.
5. It still cannot remove sins.
6. The many former sacrifices of the earthly tabernacle were imperfect and temporary. The present heavenly tabernacle with its one perfect sacrifice is perfect and permanent.
7. a. The golden pot that had the manna.
b. Aaron's rod that budded
c. The tablets of stone with the Law.
These were all significant items in Jewish history.

Discuss / Consider

1. Read Hebrews 9:10. The Greek word for "reformation" in this verse literally means "to put things right". It was used in ancient times for setting a broken bone or repairing an old road. The point of chapter 9 is to show that things have been "put right" with the coming of Christ and the time of the new order and the New Covenant. It would be interesting to review the description of the furnishings and sacrifices of the tabernacle and see how each portion points forward to Christ. Such a study would enrich your appreciation of what has been put right in the new order.

2. Read Hebrews 9:1 Consider the wealth of truth in the words, "But Christ..."

Challenge

1. The author of Hebrews was telling his audience that they had so much more in Christ than there was in Judaism. With the finished work of Christ on the cross and a perfect High Priest in heaven, why would they ever go back to Judaism? Christians today say that they would never settle for less than what is already available in Christ, but they do settle for less if they deny the finished work of Christ. Christ is sufficient.

The Lord Jesus Had to Shed His Blood
Hebrews 9:16-28

Background

Doctrinal Points

- 1. Without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.**

- 2. With the shedding of Christ's blood there is more than forgiveness.**

Practical Application

- 1. Remember, reincarnation is not in the Bible.**

Questions

1. Why was the death of Christ a stumbling block for the First Century Jews?

2. Are there church people today who have a problem accepting that the shed blood of Christ is necessary for salvation?

3. What did Christ's death on the cross mean from God's perspective?

4. How was Christ's death on the cross a "propitiation"?

5. Was the shedding of Christ's blood necessary for salvation?

6. What is another name for a "covenant"?

7. When is a will put into effect?

Answers

1. They had difficulty accepting a Messiah who had been executed like a criminal.
2. Unfortunately, yes.
3. Christ did not die as a criminal on a Roman cross; He died on the cross as the perfect sacrifice for the sins of the world.
4. Our Lord's death as the sinless sacrifice satisfied the wrath of a holy God against sin.
5. Absolutely! Without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.
6. A testament or a will.
7. When the testator (covenant maker) dies. That is why Christ had to die in order for the New Covenant to go into effect.

Discuss / Consider

1. Under the Law, almost all things were cleansed by blood. Everything, including the people, was sprinkled by blood. Consider why there was such an emphasis on blood in the old covenant. Think of this in terms of the New Covenant as well.
2. Read Hebrews 9:23-28. Discuss in what way the heavenly sanctuary had to be cleansed.
3. "Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many. To those who eagerly wait for Him He will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation." What is the idea of the words, "...to those who eagerly wait for Him..."?

Challenge

1. Reincarnation is a satanic doctrine to lead people into thinking that they don't have to fear the judgment of God. The Bible says that there is no second chance; people will be judged. There's only one escape from eternal condemnation to hell – it is to trust Christ as personal Savior, because only His shed blood satisfies the wrath of God against sin. Therefore, remember, reincarnation is not in the Bible. See Hebrews 9:27.

Christ's Sacrifice is the Fulfillment of God's Eternal Will
Hebrews 10:1-10

Background

Doctrinal Points

1. The many sacrifices under the Law of Moses were not the fulfillment of the will of God.

2. The one sacrifice of the Lamb of God was always the intended will of God.

Practical Application

1. "Saved by Credit" may be a helpful concept to remember.

Questions

1. The resurrected Lord serves in a better sanctuary than in the _____. Christ has instituted a better covenant than the first covenant of the _____. He has a better High Priestly ministry than that of _____.

2. In this lesson, there are three special quotations from the Old Testament. What is the main thought in each of these quotations? a) Psalm 110 b) Jeremiah 31 c) Psalm 40?

3. How many sins were removed by the sacrifices in the Old Testament?

4. Why did God institute sacrifices in the Old Testament, if they did not remove sins?

5. What is the basis of salvation for New Testament believers? What is the basis of salvation for Old Testament believers?

Answers

1. Earthly tabernacle; law; Aaron.
2. a) A new and better priesthood.
b) The new and better covenant.
c) The new and better sacrifice.
3. Not a single one (see Hebrews 10:4).
4. They were a shadow of the good things to come in Christ (see Hebrews 10:1). They pointed forward to the one great sacrifice to come, the Lamb of God.
5. The basis of salvation for All believers is the finished work of Christ.

Discuss / Consider

1. Consider how Hebrews 10:5 addresses the Incarnation. As man, the Lord Jesus was born as a baby, but as the Eternal Son of God He communicated with the Father. The Eternal Son became Man in order to die as the Lamb of God for the sins of the world.

2. Salvation of Old Testament saints is often misunderstood. Remember, no one, in the Old Testament or New Testament, has been saved apart from the work of Christ. Likewise, the means of salvation has always been by grace through faith in what God has revealed. Discuss the concept “Saved by Credit” and how this can help you understand this issue.

Challenge

1. Aren't you thankful that God has always intended to provide salvation through the once-for-all sacrifice of His Son? Thank the Lord today that we no longer have to continually offer animal sacrifices, because of the work of Christ.

More Great Truth about the Superior Sacrifice of Christ
Hebrews 10:11-25

Background

Doctrinal Points

1. Because of Christ's superior sacrifice we are now sanctified.

2. Because of Christ's superior sacrifice we can enter the Holiest.

Practical Application

1. Let us digest the "let-us-es" of Hebrews chapter 10.

Questions

1. What is the great theme of the epistle to the Hebrews?

2. Which New Testament book is the only one that refers to Jesus as priest or High Priest?

3. As a High Priest, how does the Lord Jesus represent us?

4. In chapters 1-7, the emphasis is on the superiority of Christ in His _____ as our High Priest. In Chapters 8-10, the emphasis is on the superiority of Christ in His _____ as our High Priest.

5. Why were there no chairs in the tabernacle?

6. How can Hebrews 10:15 be used to demonstrate the deity of the Holy Spirit?

Answers

1. The High Priesthood of Christ.
2. The epistle to the Hebrews.
3. As a High Priest, He represents us in heaven before the throne of God. As our High Priest, He lives to make intercession for us in the presence of God.
4. In His person; in His function.
5. Because of the work of the Old Testament priests was never finished.
6. In Jeremiah 31 it says the “Lord God” spoke these words. Here we read that the Holy Spirit spoke these words. The Holy Spirit is God.

Discuss / Consider

1. Read Hebrews 10:1 Because of Christ’s superior sacrifice we have not only been saved and had our sins forgiven, but we have been perfected and sanctified. Does this mean Christians are perfect?

2. “...let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith...” Because of Christ’s superior sacrifice we can boldly enter the Holiest. Think of the contrast with the Old Testament way of approaching God! We can go into the very presence of God!

Challenge

1. Read and digest the three “let-us-es” of Hebrews 10:21-25.

The Fourth Warning Passage **Hebrews 10:26-39**

Background

Doctrinal Points

1. Apostasy is evidence of threshold profession.

2. Endurance is evidence of true possession.

Practical Application

1. If you could see your present life one hundred years from now, how would you change it?

Questions

1. Match the following warning passages with their chapters: A: Chapter 2; B: Chapters 3, 4; or C: Chapter 6

_____ “Beware lest you fall short of the rest of God”

_____ “It is impossible to renew again to repentance those who were once enlightened and have fallen away”

_____ “How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?”

2. What are the two questions that come to mind when these warning passages are read?

3. How were these warnings significant to the readers of this epistle?

4. Concerning these warnings:

a. Were they aimed at true believers?

b. Was the author warning believers that they can lose their salvation?

c. Were they written for backsliders, telling them that they would lose their reward?

d. Were they warnings for unbelievers who have come to the threshold of salvation but are only professing believers?

5. What does “apostatize” mean?

6. For apostates there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins. What, then, is the only thing that remains for them?

7. Was Judas a true believer? Did he lose his salvation?

Answers

1. B, C, A.
2. Why are they here? How do we interpret them?
3. Some of the readers were First Century Jews who had come out of Judaism and aligned themselves with Christianity, but now they were considering returning to Judaism. The author is warning them of what could happen if they returned to Judaism.
4. a. No.
b. No.
c. No.
d. Yes.
5. It means to turn away and abandon a position once held. Apostates are not true believers who backslide, but they are unbelievers who were never saved.
6. Judgment and hell. See Hebrews 10:27
7. No. Judas was not a true believer. He didn't lose his salvation because he was never saved. He only seemed like a believer. Judas was called the son of perdition by the Lord Himself.

Discuss / Consider

1. Discuss the spiritual position of the apostate as noted in the passages in this lesson. Discuss the spiritual end of the apostate. See Hebrews 10:39; 2 Peter 2:20-21; and John 17:12.
2. Endurance is evidence of true possession. Are you an enduring believer? Do you persevere in spite of difficulties and persecution?

Challenge

1. If you could see your present life one hundred years from now, how would you change it? Remember, "...the just shall live by faith." See Hebrews 10:38; Romans 1:17; and Habakkuk 2: Are you living by faith? What are you doing right now that will count for eternity? Are your priorities in line with God's purposes?

The Faith of Abel, Enoch, and Noah
Hebrews 11:1-7

Background

Doctrinal Points

1. Believers should follow the faith of Abel.

2. Believers should follow the faith of Enoch.

3. Believers should follow the faith of Noah.

Practical Application

1. Do we really want to please God?

Questions

1. Why is Hebrews chapter 11 such a well-known chapter in the Bible?
2. Define or describe the word “faith” as given in Hebrews 11:1-3.
3. Did the world create itself?
4. Is faith unreasonable?
5. When did the first three heroes that are listed here live?

Answers

1. It is known as the Faith chapter of the Bible. Many heroes of the faith from the Old Testament are listed as examples for us to follow.
2. Faith sees what is real but is unseen to the natural eye, including the promises of God. Faith believes what God has revealed about the past, present, and future, and acts on that truth.
3. No. God created it. There was no one there to observe it, but God has revealed it to us in His word.
4. No. The heroes of Hebrews 11 believed and acted and lived on the basis of what God had revealed. This is the kind of faith that pleases God. See Hebrews 11:2.
5. They all lived before the flood.

Discuss / Consider

1. Read Genesis 4:3- Discuss why Cain's offering, the best of his own works, was refused and Abel's offering was accepted. Was Abel's offering accepted because he was a shepherd? Were both Cain and Abel aware of God's revelation of the acceptable way of sacrifice? Relate your discussion to Ephesians 2:8-9. What is the acceptable way to approach God today? Have you come in the way of Cain or in the way of Abel?

2. "By faith Enoch was taken away so that he did not see death...before he was taken he had this testimony, that he pleased God." Hebrews 11:5. How is Enoch a type or picture of the church? Consider Enoch's reputation – he pleased God! When you die, will your family and friends and neighbors say that you walked with God and that you pleased God? If you live your life based on what God has revealed, you will have this kind of testimony.

3. Imagine the ridicule that Noah faced when he was building the ark. He was miles from any sizeable body of water, and rain had never fallen on the earth. In spite of the taunts, Noah preached the truth of the coming flood. See 2 Peter 2: Noah was concerned about his family and prepared an ark to save his household. He believed what God has revealed about the future and he acted on God's revelation. Have you given your testimony in the face of opposition? Are you concerned about the salvation of your family?

Challenge

1. Do you really want to please God? "Without faith it is impossible to please God." Hebrews 11:6. Do you have a biblical faith like the heroes of the Bible? Do you believe what God has promised? Are you living your life in light of these promises? Are you diligently seeking the Lord's direction in every situation?

The Faith of Abraham and Sarah
Hebrews 11:8-16

Background

Doctrinal Points

1. Believers should follow the faith of Abraham.

2. Believers should follow the faith of Sarah.

Practical Application

1. Do we have 20/20 spiritual vision?

Questions

1. How are heroes of the faith models for us?
2. What is meant by “saving faith”?
3. What is meant by “living by faith”?
4. Which must come first – saving faith or living by faith?
5. Name two things that characterized Abraham’s living faith.
6. Was Abraham taking a blind leap of faith when he went from Ur, not knowing where he was going?
7. Where will Abraham have a permanent dwelling place?

Answers

1. Their faith looked forward to the promises of God. They believed and acted on this faith. As such, they lived by faith and thus became models for us to live by faith.
2. Saving faith is looking back and believing what the word of God has said about the Person of Christ, who died for our sins on the cross.
3. Living by faith is looking forward and living our lives based on what God has revealed about the future.
4. Saving faith must come first.
5. Obedience and patience. See Hebrews 11:8-10.
6. No. It was a reasonable step-by-step faith because God was guiding and Abraham was trusting God.
7. In the coming kingdom of Christ on this earth and in the heavenly Jerusalem.

Discuss / Consider

1. Refer to Genesis 15:6 and Romans 4:2- How was Abraham justified? In Hebrews 11, note Abraham's enduring faith. Put yourself in Abraham's place when God asked him to leave his homeland. What would you do right now if God called you to leave your home?

2. Review the story of Abraham and Sarah concerning God's promise of a son. The odds were humanly impossible. Remember the doubts that Sarah had, and logically so. However, she changed and believed God, and God saw her faith and not her doubts. How encouraging! Do you have doubts about God's ability to do the humanly impossible? Remember, God looks at the overall pattern of our lives, even though we've had doubts. Like Sarah, are you growing in our faith, no matter what your age?

Challenge

1. The heroes of the faith all died not having seen the promises of God realized in their lifetime. They proved by their lifestyles that they had 20/20 spiritual vision. That is, as strangers and pilgrims in this world, they looked for something better, a city prepared for them by God Himself. Are you looking for the place that Christ has gone ahead to prepare for you? See John 14:2- Do you have 20/20 spiritual vision?

The Faith of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph
Hebrews 11:17-22

Background

Doctrinal Points

1. Believers should follow the faith of Abraham.
2. Believers should follow the faith of Isaac.
3. Believers should follow the faith of Jacob.
4. Believers should follow the faith of Joseph.

Practical Application

1. Have you passed the test of faith for children?

Questions

1. Is faith in the Bible just an end in itself? Is faith based solely on an experience?
2. The faith of the biblical heroes in this section was demonstrated by their actions. On what were those actions based?
3. Refer to Hebrews 11:17-19. What was the test of Abraham's faith here?
4. Refer again to Hebrews 11:17-19. What does this event picture concerning Christ?
5. How did Isaac attempt to counter God's will concerning the blessing of his sons?

Answers

1. No to both questions. Biblical faith is faith in the God of the Bible. It is believing and acting on what God has said and revealed.
2. On what God had revealed to them.
3. Abraham was told by God to sacrifice his son, Isaac.
4. It pictures both the sacrifice and death of Christ, and also His resurrection.
5. He tried to give the blessing to Esau, his older son, even though God had revealed to him that Esau would serve the descendants of his younger son Jacob.

Discuss / Consider

1. Abraham passed the supreme test of his faith because he believed what God has revealed and he obeyed God. Abraham's faith was so strong that he really believed God could and would raise Isaac from the dead if need be because he knew that Isaac was the promised son of the covenant through whom his descendants would come. Can you imagine such faith? He was ready to sacrifice his son. Is there something you should be sacrificing?

2. Isaac, in spite of his attempt to sway the blessing to his liking, did not revoke the blessing that God had willed. God recognized this last-minute faith and honored it. Perhaps you have attempted to sway the known will of God to your liking. Have you come to the point of acceptance of God's will instead? Regardless of a wavering faith in the past, God will honor your faith when you turn to Him in trust.

3. Jacob was not a model of faith throughout his lifetime. He had to go through many experiences in the school of God, but in the end he worshipped God. God honored that faith by placing his name in the Hebrews Hall of Faith. This should be an encouragement to Christians who have not shown a lot of faith in earlier years.

4. Think of the high position and the wealth that surrounded Joseph in Egypt. Throughout his lifetime he showed an unusual trust in God. He believed what God had revealed and he believed literally in God's promises. The tomb of Joseph is a testimony to his faith. Do you believe literally in the promises of God? Can you give examples of this belief in your life?

Challenge

1. Abraham was willing to give up Isaac. Have you released your children to the Lord?

The Faith of Moses
Hebrews 11:23-28

Background

Doctrinal Points

1. Believers should follow the faith of Moses.

a. By refusing power and prestige.

b. By choosing pain over pleasure.

c. By obeying details without doubts.

Practical Application

1. Where do you want your name written?

Questions

1. See Acts 4:1 God has revealed the only way of salvation. Explain this.

2. God not only revealed the way of salvation by faith, but He revealed how to live by faith. How does one live by faith?

3. Because of faith in God's revelation to them, Moses' parents acted and defied an edict. What did they do and whom did they dare to defy?

4. Was it wrong of Moses' parents to defy this edict?

5. Give some examples where God's laws and man's laws are in conflict. Which authority should we obey?

Answers

1. The only way to be saved is through His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, Who died on the cross for our sins.
2. God has given us examples of those who lived by faith. We see what God has revealed to be right, and also what is wrong according to His standards.
3. They hid baby Moses because they knew he was a special child, one that God would use for His purposes. They defied Pharaoh's edict to drown all the male babies.
4. Read about their courage in Exodus 2.
5. When there is a conflict between God's laws and the laws of human government, God's laws must be obeyed. See Acts 5:29.
6. If ever the laws of our country demanded that we practice abortion, infanticide, or euthanasia, we must refuse to obey human authority and act on what God has revealed.

Discuss / Consider

1. Read again Hebrews 11:24-27 and Acts 7:2 Moses was considered to be the son of Pharaoh's daughter; he was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians; he had all the wealth of Egypt at his disposal; he had great power in the greatest kingdom on earth at the time. But he refused this available power and prestige for what he considered greater riches. By faith, Moses looked beyond the temporal riches of Egypt to the eternal rewards of heaven. Review your temporal riches and count the cost in light of eternal reward. Moses' eyes were on the one true God. What are you willing to refuse for the sake of Christ?
2. Moses chose to suffer affliction over a life of ease. Hebrews 11:2 The faith that pleases God involves a choice. Moses was thought to be a fool for such a choice. What have you done with the choices set before you? Are you willing to be called a fool for Christ? Have you chosen to suffer affliction with the people of God rather than partake of passing pleasure and popularity?
3. Refer to Hebrews 11:28 and Exodus 12:12-1 God's revelation to Moses did not make sense from a human standpoint, but Moses didn't doubt God concerning what came to be known as the Passover. Moses believed and obeyed God without doubting. Do you believe what God has revealed without doubting?

Challenge

1. Moses' name is written not in stone in Egypt, but in the annals of heaven. Where do you want your name written? See Luke 10:20. Is your name written in heaven?

Further Heroes of Faith Presented as Models
Hebrews 11:29-40

Background

Doctrinal Points

1. Believers should follow the faith of the children of Israel.
2. Believers should follow the faith of Rahab.
3. Believers should follow the faith of Gideon, Barak, Samson and Jephthah.
4. Believers should follow the faith of David and Samuel and the prophets.
5. Believers should follow the faith of the unnamed heroes of Hebrews chapter 1

Practical Application

1. Would you have been selected for Hebrews chapter 11?

Questions

1. Faith does not say, "Seeing is believing". What does faith say?
2. What does the eye of faith see?
3. How do we know that there is really substance to the things hoped for?
4. On what did the heroes of Hebrews 11 base their faith?
5. Rahab concealed the spies from those seeking their lives. Was Rahab's lie condoned? For what was she commended?

Answers

1. Faith says, “Believing is seeing”. Faith sees the promises of God as realities.
2. The eye of faith sees what the heart of faith believes. It sees the realities of what God has revealed, not to the natural eye, but the spiritual eye.
3. Because God said it. Saving faith and living by faith consists of believing what God has said and revealed, then acting on it.
4. They believed not only that God exists, but also they believed what He had revealed to them through His word. They based their lives and destinies on this.
5. Rahab’s lie is not condoned anywhere in scripture. Rather, Rahab is commended for her act of hiding the Jewish spies which was evidence of her faith.

Discuss / Consider

1. Read Exodus 14 and Hebrews 11:29-30. The children of Israel were not giants of faith, and their unbelief kept them from receiving many blessings, including being kept out of the land of Canaan. But there were times when their faith was evident, and God honored this faith. Are there times when your faith fails? Remember what God remembered about the faith of the children of Israel. God will honor your faith when you trust Him.
2. Read Joshua Rahab had heard about the deeds of God, and knew that the inhabitants of the land were fainthearted because of this news. See especially Joshua 2:9-1 She believed the promises of God through the spies – that she and her family would be spared. She believed the details, like binding the red cord in the window. What details has God revealed to you about your future? Do you believe Him? Do you follow through on His great plan and on the details of that plan?
3. Read Hebrews 11:32a. Look at the lives of these judges as compared to some of the “outstanding” judges who seemed to have shown more faith than Gideon, Barak, Samson and Jephthah. Does this encourage you? Although they were weak in their faith at times, God honored their genuine faith. Our merciful, faithful, and gracious God will honor genuine faith. However, consider ways to strengthen your faith.

Challenge

1. Would you have been selected for Hebrews Chapter 11? What events in your life would stand as evidence of your faith?

Running the Race Set Before Us
Hebrews 12:1-11

Background

Doctrinal Points

1. Committed believers do not get sidetracked.

2. Committed believers do not despise discipline.

Practical Application

1. Consider Jesus for a second wind.

Questions

1. Who were the great cloud of witnesses referred to in Hebrews 12:1?
2. Recall the first century readers of the epistle to the Hebrews. What was the author's particular message to them?
3. List the factors in Hebrews 12:1-2 that are necessary to keep the believers from getting sidetracked.
4. What did God use to train the believers listed in Hebrews 11?
5. Does God use some of these same things today?

Answers

1. They were the Old Testament believers of Hebrews 11, listed as examples and models for us.
2. Some of the readers were not walking and living by faith. In fact, some were tempted to turn back from Christianity to Judaism. Thus the writer warns that this would be sin (Hebrews 12:4). He encouraged them to endure, even to the point of bloodshed or martyrdom.
3. a) Lay aside every weight.
b) Keep your limbs free.
c) Keep your eyes on Jesus.
4. God used persecution, suffering, hard times, and ridicule in their lives as a means of training them to grow and endure in their life of faith.
5. Yes, and these might include job loss, financial loss, sickness, hard times, persecution and ridicule as a means of discipline that we might grow and endure in the faith.

Discuss / Consider

1. Review the analogy that the Christian life is like a marathon (26.2 miles). Do you know how to pace yourself, endure, and keep from getting sidetracked? There must be commitment over the long haul. Are there weights that are keeping you from living the Christian life? Do you have a sin in your life that entangles you? Are you keeping your eyes on Jesus?
2. Discipline is not pleasant, but if God is taking you through hard times right now, there is a reason. He is teaching you to patiently endure and as a result, to grow stronger in your life of faith. Read Proverbs 3:11-12 and Hebrews 12:5-6. Do you despise God's discipline in your life? Or do you see the greater picture with God's promise that at the end discipline will yield the peaceable fruit of righteousness?

Challenge

1. When you become weary and discouraged in your soul, consider Jesus. Gethsemane and Calvary are reminders of what Jesus endured for us.

The Possibility of Falling Short of the Grace of God **Hebrews 12:12-17**

Background

Doctrinal Points

1. It is possible to fall short of the grace of God.

2. It is possible to harbor a root of bitterness.

3. It is possible to conceal the character of Esau.

Practical Application

1. Let's watch our hands and knees and feet.

Questions

1. Note that Hebrews 12:12 starts out with the word "therefore". What should we do when we see a word like this?
2. What is the message of Hebrews 12:1-11?
3. What is the connection between Hebrews 12:1-11 and Hebrews 12:12-13?
4. Refer to Hebrews 12:1 Is it possible to fall short of the grace of God?
5. To whom was Hebrews 12:12-17 addressed?
6. In this section, what is meant by "holiness"? See Hebrews 12:14.

Answers

1. It is a clue to look back at the first eleven verses.
2. The Christian life was like a marathon race. God does not make the race easy, but He designs it to teach us and train us along the way.
3. The analogy continues – just as a marathon runner needs strength to keep his hands up his knees from collapsing and needs concentration to watch where he is going, so is the Christian life. Christians running the race set before them need strength for the long haul, as in a marathon.
4. Yes. When the readers became weary and discouraged, and were tempted to turn back to Judaism they could fall short of the grace of God.
5. To the elders or church leaders of the Hebrews. Why? To encourage the flock to grow strong, endure, and move on in the faith.
6. Holiness or sanctification is not a positional righteousness, but a practical or progressive holiness. This is the work of the Holy Spirit in the lives of believers.

Discuss / Consider

1. Hebrews 12:12-17 is an exhortation to elders or church leaders, both then and today to encourage the flock to grow strong and endure and move on in the faith. Are you an elder? Are you encouraging believers in the faith? Are you being encouraged in the faith? It is so important for the well-being of the church to encourage one another in the faith. Are you an encourager?
2. Many things happen in our lives that could cause us to be bitter. But harboring a root of bitterness has harmful effects, causing others to be defiled or destroyed, even within the church. God warns against harboring a root of bitterness, and he helps us to look carefully lest it cause repercussions, both to us and to others.
3. Review the example of Esau, an Old Testament apostate. Because he cared little for spiritual things his lifestyle of immorality and godlessness was evident. Later he had regrets, but he had lost the blessing and there was no repentance. Beware of apostasy in your midst.

Challenge

1. Are you watching your service for the Lord? Are you in constant prayer? Are you walking with the Lord in discipleship? Are you encouraging one another in these areas? Be an encourager.

The Believer's Blessed Position under the New Covenant
Hebrews 12:18-19

Background

Doctrinal Points

1. Christians have not come to Mount Sinai.

2. Christians have come to Mount Zion.

Practical Application

1. Why invest in that which will not remain?

Questions

1. There is a specific final warning to the Hebrew readers in this section. What is this final warning?
2. Has God put these warning passages in Hebrews to scare true believers? If not, who was He warning and what was He warning them about?
3. Who are these warnings for today?
4. What is Mount Sinai noted for?
5. What does Mount Zion symbolize for believers?
6. Review the seven wonderful things that believers have in Mount Zion.

The Lifestyle that Should Characterize Every Believer **Hebrews 13:1-6**

Background

Doctrinal Points

- 1. There are social dos and don'ts for the believers in the Christian community.**
 - a. Do love fellow believers.**
 - b. Don't neglect to show hospitality.**
 - c. Do remember the prisons and the persecuted.**
 - d. Don't violate your marriage vows.**
 - e. Do be content with what you have.**

Practical Application

- 1. Let WWW mean We Won't Worry.**

Questions

1. What is the emphasis for believers in Hebrews 13:1-6?
2. Looking ahead, what is the emphasis for believers in Hebrews 13:7-11?
3. What is the word used for "brotherly love" in Hebrews 13:1? What does it mean?
4. Read Genesis 18. Who is showing hospitality? To whom is he showing hospitality?
5. What does the term "fornication" include?
6. If some of these activities are condoned by contemporary society as politically correct, it is alright to engage in them?

Answers

1. The emphasis is on the believers' social duties in the Christian community.
2. The emphasis is on the believers' spiritual duties in the Christian community.
3. Strangers here means fellow believers; not just our close Christian friends. This means opening our homes to traveling servants of Christ and to need fellow believers, for Bible studies, youth activities, and the like.
4. Abraham is showing hospitality. The Lord and two angels are the recipients of his hospitality.
5. It includes all forms of sexual activities that are outside the protective boundaries that God has set up: premarital sex, adultery, homosexuality, and other forms of sexual perversion.
6. Absolutely not. Regardless of contemporary approval, all sexual sin will be judged by the Lord.

Discuss / Consider

1. Refer to Hebrews 13:2. Hospitality is a demonstration of the brotherly love of Hebrews 13:1. See also 1 Peter 4:9. Are you willing to use your home for the Lord?

2. Even the Christian community has suffered because of violations of the marriage vows. God's boundaries are for the benefit and blessing of those who keep these vows sacred. Regardless of what is accepted and condoned in today's world concerning these vows, God has given a directive and will judge those who violate this directive.

3. Refer to Hebrews 13:5. Are you content with what you have or are you always looking and longing for more and better? The mature Christian finds his contentment in Christ, Who is sufficient for all our needs.

Challenge

1. Read Hebrews 13:5-6 and the sources of these quotations found in Deuteronomy 31:6 and Psalm 118:6. With guarantees like this we can't lose. So why worry? Remember, WWW.

Final Instructions and the Conclusion of the Letter Hebrews 13:7-25

Background

Doctrinal Points

1. There are spiritual dos and don'ts for the believers in the Christian church:

- a. Do remember the faithful fathers.**
- b. Don't fall for false teaching.**
- c. Do go outside the camp.**
- d. Do offer the sacrifice of praise.**
- e. Don't forget to do good.**
- f. Do obey your leaders.**

Practical Application

1. Remember, there are two aspects to the work of the Lord.

Questions

1. What is the great theme of the epistle to the Hebrews?
2. As responsible and mature believers we have _____ duties in the Christian community and we have _____ duties in the Christian church.
3. See Hebrews 13: Who are the people we should remember?
4. Read Hebrews 13:8-1 What are the particular false teachings in this passage of scripture?
5. What was the purpose of all the sacrifices and rituals of the Old Testament?
6. What does it mean to offer the sacrifice of praise? See Hebrews 13:15.

Answers

1. The Priesthood of Christ.
2. Social, Spiritual.
3. We should remember the faithful fathers of the past, the heroes of the faith, and faithful men and women we've known. Remember those who were models of faithfulness and endurance.
4. The rituals of Judaism, the references to clean and unclean food, and the rituals of sacrifices.
5. To look forward to and to typify Christ.
6. It means that we need to structure our lives to spend more time to praise God. Praise is not always spontaneous, and sacrifice involves time, effort, and cost.

Discuss / Consider

1. "Let us go forth to Him, outside the camp, bearing His reproach. For here we have no continuing city, but we seek the one to come." Hebrews 13:13-14. The camp for the early Hebrews was the religion of Judaism that rejected Jesus as Messiah. To be a follower of Jesus, they had to leave the establishment of Judaism. Discuss what it means for you to go outside the camp.

2. "Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you." Hebrews 13:17. Is it difficult for you to submit to authority within the church structure? Remember, it is a serious matter to disobey the elders in the local church. Do you submit without grumbling? Don't give your elders grief, and remember, they are accountable to God.

Challenge

1. Remember the two aspects to the work of the Lord: the work of the Lord that we do for Him and the work of the Lord that He does for us. His work in us is the on-going work of sanctification that we should be pleasing in God's sight. Are you letting Him do this work in your life? Are you becoming more like God's Son? See Romans 8:29.