

CLASSROOM IN A BOOK DISCIPLESHIP SERIES

BOOK 4

SANCTIFICATION *for* DISCIPLES

A NEW LOOK AT HEBREWS



JUSTIFICATION

By Faith
in Christ



SANCTIFICATION

By the Spirit
Day by Day



GLORIFICATION

The Hope
of Eternity



BY

WILLIAM E. VINSON, JR., PhD



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**CLASSROOM IN A BOOK
DISCIPLESHIP SERIES**

Book 4

**SANCTIFICATION FOR DISCIPLES:
A New Look at the Book of Hebrews**

by:

William E. Vinson, Jr.

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Preface

THE CLASSROOM IN A BOOK DISCIPLESHIP SERIES

The *Classroom in a Book Discipleship Series* is a unique approach to education. The author has over thirty-five years of experience in classroom teaching at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and Internet teaching. The teachings covered Old Testament, New Testament, Theology, Church History, Hermeneutics, Christian Ethics, Philosophy of Religion, Evangelism, and Biblical Backgrounds. In other words, the teacher was a generalist in the world of specialization.

While teaching at Southwestern Seminary, God sent two students into the classrooms that have made this series possible. One student brought in some audio recording gear and recorded everything said by teacher and students. The other person, Helen Agnew, transcribed the tapes into weekly sessions. Finally, Helen put all the weeks together for a course into a book, which became the nucleus for a formal book. Next came the editing phases in which the improper English and sentence construction was corrected. Also, the organization and thought flow was improved in order to facilitate a reader's comprehension.

Each class session became a chapter that went through several iterations of the editing process. Also, Helen provided computer drawings of the theological charts and models used by the teacher. These models were inserted into the book at the appropriate places.

INFORMAL WRITING STYLE

You should be aware that the chosen style of communication in this series of books is much more informal than the typical. I have worked to retain the folksy way of expression that I use in the classroom and pulpits. These books are going to be easy reading because

they will be what you hear in everyday conversation.

Dear saint, you are in for a treat. There will be points of time in which your mind will be so absorbed into thinking new and analytical thoughts of our Most Wonderful Lord, that you will be unable to resist sharing them with a loved one. In my editing passes of the various drafts, I found myself reliving the classrooms and all the high emotion and drama. My pulse rate would quicken and convictions and tears would return.

CLASS PROCESS

Each book is a semester-long class. The subject matter is explored very thoroughly because all the students are participating in the questioning and answering. You will have the next best thing to being in the classroom. In fact, there will be times in your reading in which you will be in the classroom through imagination.

BENEFITS

Discipleship has been declared by many to be the greatest need in Southern Baptist life today. In my many years of teaching, I have had churches to bus in many of their members to take my classes at Southwestern Seminary. The reason that was given was that it was a very good source for discipleship training. This discipleship training is a step up from Sunday school and other training because *it involves seminary training for non-seminarians*. Armed with this higher level of training, bi-vocational and lay ministers are fulfilling their calls and impacting the Kingdom of God in a very positive way. Pastors are benefiting by having some new lay ministers to help them minister. Churches and society are

benefiting by receiving positive help that is theologically sound and practical.

For you, the busy Christian of today, this series is a rare opportunity to actually participate in a seminary classroom to learn from the teacher and your peers in high impact and focused studies that are not available in any other books. The teacher's experience of teaching as a generalist will provide *interconnected insights and truths* that are not available in specialization. The *student interactions* in these books will create a *relevancy* that is unheard of outside the classroom. The quality of the *class dynamics* will lift you, the reader, up into unparalleled densely packed teachings that will greatly improve the *efficiency of your learning*. You owe it to yourself to jump into this series because you can get an education

that is the next best thing to actually going to seminary.

In addition to the student interactions recorded in each chapter, the major points that I made which would be the source of the tests given to the classroom students are stated in the text, and the *test questions* are stated at the end of each chapter (class session). The *answers* to those tests are given at the end of the book for you to check yourself. If you seriously want to know that you have accomplished the goals of each chapter and to be able to teach a course like this, answer those questions to the point that you can do so without going back into the chapter itself—i.e. memorize those points and charts.

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Introduction

Hebrews is God's book that is entirely focused on discipleship. Some would say that all the books in the Bible are about discipleship. I think that statement is too broad. All the books in the Bible are about God, yes, but some are more focused on descriptive information, theology, history, prophecy, etc. The one thing that you can say about Hebrews that cannot be said about the other books is that it is a clarion call to discipleship that was made to the Hebrew Christians of the first century. The call is especially relevant for us today because our churches have the same problems which were addressed in the book of Hebrews.

Lukewarmness is the prevailing problem of American Christianity. Institutionalism has invaded God's Church. Now, serving the institutional church is equated to serving God. Obeying the pastor is like obeying Jesus. Following church staff in the betterment of their little empires has taken the place of the true form of Christianity.

Instead of denying yourself, picking up your cross, and following Jesus as a scriptural disciple, today's Christian picks out what he wants to do and then asks the Lord to bless it. Thus Christianity has been reversed. We ask the Lord to follow us and use His power to make what we are doing to be great successes as measured in nickels and noses.

The Hebrew Christians, who were called out by God in this book, were doing much better in their Christian walks than what is typical for us today. They were truly ministering to each other inside their circle of Christianity. That is not at all to say that they were building their institutional church because institutionalism had not occurred at that time.¹ Their problem was that they were not

ministering well to the outside. They were not winning the world like each Christian has been told to do.

What about the relevance of this book for us? It is my conclusion that we are worse than those Hebrew Christians because we are not ministering well to either the inside or the outside. To the inside, we have sold our voice for informing our members about politics. We are silent on all issues of politics for the benefit of tax exemption. Thus the country is being devoured by evil congressmen, judges, and people in the executive branch because our church members do not know how to vote.

Second Chronicles 7:14 says that if the Christians were to humble themselves, repent, seek God's Face, and turn from their wicked ways, God would hear our prayers, forgive us, and heal our land. I can only conclude that since our land is not healed but getting sicker, then we have not done the prerequisites for God's healing activity.

Divorce is rampant among church members. There is no teaching about commitments, the seriousness of a vow, the various kinds of love, the reasons for marriage, etc. I have even seen a poll in which the divorce rate among Christians was one percent higher than among non-Christians.

What about premarital sex? We have experienced a turn around in this area. Our modern Christians are doing better percentage wise as compared with non-Christians. However, within the churches there is still a high rate of premarital sex and even abortion.

In my days as a doctoral student, there was a dean in a seminary who rejected the idea that abortion was murder. The dean implied that any student who openly made that statement would have to leave the seminary. He warned that in his school, there

¹ See "institutionalism as the burning mountain" in my book on the Book of Revelation.

was no way for him and a student making that claim to co-exist. Therefore one would have to go, and he was not the one who was leaving.

Hebrews is life changing if received and applied to our lives. The area of sanctification in the doctrine of salvation is where discipleship occurs. If justification and glorification are the totality of salvation, then we do not need this course on Hebrews. If God really swoons over our being able to breathe in and out without getting mixed up, then the walk of discipleship is really easy, and anyone can do it.

All Christians know that God is not a respecter of persons. However, this knowledge gets twisted when it is applied to ourselves. Somehow, we think that we do not

have to deny ourselves, take up our crosses, and follow the Lord Jesus. Why? because we are His precious children. Thus we have made God into a respecter of persons.

Many of us are under the false understanding that since we are the unspotted, perfect and wonderful bride of Christ, we think that all that we have to do is bask in God's affections. We do not have to earn our rewards because we think that we will all be equal in heaven. We have turned Christianity into a "do not" religion without purpose because Jesus has already done it all. The "do" part of Christianity has been reduced to attending church, praising the Lord, and giving our offerings in worship.

Is it too late for the Church to wake up?

Chapter 1

THE RIVER ANALOGY

AUTHOR OF HEBREWS

The earliest people thought that the Apostle Paul was the author of Hebrews. There are four facts that embrace that concept.

1. 2 Peter 3:15. In this verse, Peter says that Paul has written to the same people that he was writing to. Peter is writing to the Jews. Peter says that Paul has written to the Jews as well. If Paul has written to the Jews as well, where is the letter? If that letter is part of God's Word, then it has to exist because God is boss over His Word, and so you look through the Bible and Hebrews is the only book that is capable of being that writing that Peter mentions.
2. In Hebrews 13:23 mention is made of Timothy coming to this author. There is a close link between Timothy and Paul. If the mention of Timothy is Timothy coming to the writer of the book, then there is a great possibility that the writer is the Apostle Paul.
3. This book is not typical letterform; it is Pauline in its form. It has doctrine first, then an exhortation following. That is a form that Paul typically uses in his writings. Paul will lay out the doctrine and teach and teach and teach. Then he will say, "Now because of all this that has gone before, I want you to apply it." That is an exhortation for doing what you have learned. It usually follows a "therefore" kind of format. Teach, teach, teach, "therefore" do what you have just learned. That is Pauline.
4. This book was written prior to the destruction of the temple in AD 70. That would be well within Paul's lifetime.

We should certainly consider these four things in terms of the author, but my position

on this matter is that God is the author. He is the author of every book in the Bible for the Bible is the Word of God. It is not essential that I hold to Pauline authorship, because even if Paul were the author, it is still God who is the ultimate author. When you start playing one author over against another, you can begin to think in terms of human authorship to the exclusion of divine origin. When that happens, you begin to get above the Word, looking down on the Word, criticizing the Word instead of having the Word criticize us, and our conforming to it.

There are dangers in playing the authorship game. I would like for you to consider that the entire canon is God's Word. God is the Author and the Authority, and then Scripture comes down to us from God Himself. This results in a new submissive perspective.

When you read something in the Bible, it is incumbent upon you that you conform to what you read. You do not stand over against it and say, "Well, I do not think" When you do this, you become supercritical of the Word. You should come to the Word of God with fear and trembling in your heart. When you see something that is different from your life, you ought to be thinking that you are in trouble instead of finding excuses for your lifestyle. You are not to make Scripture fit your lifestyle.

I see many supposedly innocent people running around doing all this evil stuff. What we need, you see, is to get under God's judgment, and have His Word tell us how it is to be. Our position is to agree with God on His terms. That is the way we should look at this authorship question. So, even if Paul is the author, the ultimate author is God Himself.

CONTENTMENT IS THE SITUATION FOR THE HEBREWS

This letter is to a group of Hebrew Christians that are very religious and content with where they are in their pilgrimage. It sounds very much like us when we hear them saying, “We are Christians, and we are content, and we are getting after this good Jewish synthesis of Christianity and Judaism, and we are getting some rules, and we are getting our checklist to ensure that we are doing what we should.” They are building a legalistic system, a blending of Christianity and Judaism. *That blend is Christianity’s justification by grace through faith which is conjoined to a sanctification process that is defined by Judaism.* The better the blend, you see, the more false contentment wells up into the souls of these Hebrew Christians.

The author of Hebrews comes along and says, “That contentment which you have is a bunch of mess. All this stuff about your thinking that you are so good is wrong and you are in trouble.”

Our Situation Is Contentment

When you start thinking in present terms of us and how we are just doing our church thing, how we Christians are content, and how we are just cooling on through life, then that same author will look at us and say, “You people are a mess! The proof of your mess is in the world. Look around you. The greatest country in the world, the country founded by Christians, founded on Christian principles, and grounded upon godly values is going to hell.”

I went over to Dallas today. It never fails that I am always shocked when I go to Dallas. I saw two stickers on vehicles. One sticker said something about the power of choice. The other sticker said, “Attend the atheists’ convention.” There was a time, and it has been in my lifetime, when anybody having that kind of sticker would have been marked

as some kind of a weird and evil person to be shunned and to be in sympathy for because they just do not understand the Truth.

In my lifetime homosexuality has come up as an alternative lifestyle. There used to be only one homosexual in the whole county that I was born and raised in. That was over 50 years ago, but everybody in town knew who it was. And then, abortion! Golly.

I did not even know some of the common words until I was an adult, and now the common ordinary people speak of all manner of pornographic things. Let me tell you, if I had said some of the words used in common conversation today, my daddy would have knocked me through seventeen walls. These are things you just do not do or talk about. You do not see them, you do not say them, you just get away from them.

We Are Neglecting Our Predicament

Now, we are in a predicament. Why? Well, we have a little problem! Hebrews is going to tell us about how we are negligent! These Hebrews had some problems with being negligent too, and this book is going to address these problems. The reason the Hebrews came to have this problem is that they had a high esteem for their Judaism. They brought that baggage with them. They grabbed onto grace, joined it with Judaic Law and developed a legalistic system of Christian sanctification. Legalism and Christianity do not work together because that synthesis narrows our actions and purpose in life.

The problem with us, you see, does not have anything to do with Judaism. So what do we do? We grab hold of grace instead of Law. We have perfected our position on grace to the point that we have a pickup truck load of it.

In our situation, there is nothing an individual has to do. It has all been done for us already. *So, we have justification by grace*

through faith conjoined to a sanctification of churchianity. Instead of getting Judaism like the Hebrews, we get a whole bunch of church.

You can get really comfortable with churchianity. It seems that you really cannot improve upon churchianity which is that approved-from-the-pulpit brand of Christianity. In this kind of Christian sanctification, you just go to church all the scheduled times, grab as much grace as you can get, and that means you never have to do anything other than attend and pay.

The Jews, the Hebrews, are getting after their religion. They are still doing their works of law-keeping and sacrifice. But, you see, what they are doing is a replacement of salvation's sanctification process. The Hebrews are using legal works for meritorious favor towards sanctification.

What God wants of you and me is for us not to go grabbing all of this grace to excess and grabbing all this churchianity as your good works of sanctification for meritorious favor from God. ***What God wants from you is your discipleship.*** He wants you to grab hold of the garment of Jesus and go with Him wherever He goes. When you do that, you will be walking in places you do not want to walk, you will be having to say things that you do not want to say, you will be having to hear things you do not want to hear, you are going to have to sacrifice things you do not want to sacrifice, and you are going to sweat blood just like the Lord did in the garden when He was struggling with the final completion of His work. You are going to have to do the same things that Jesus did and is doing now. Every one of you is called to walk in the path of Jesus Christ, and only His path. That means then that you must get up, get after it--walk and follow Him.

HEBREWS CHAPTER 1

Prophets

He is speaking of the prophets in the first three verses.

Hebrews

1:1 God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,

1:2 Hath in these last days spoken unto us by [his] Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;

1:3 Who being the brightness of [his] glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;

The three offices of Christ are prophet, priest, and king. We diagram that like chart 1.1. The three offices of Christ are the same three offices that were anointed by the Spirit in the Old Testament. The Spirit anointed the priest, the Spirit anointed the prophet, and the Spirit anointed the king. *Chrism* (anointment) and Christ, you see, have the same root. Christ, then, is anointed; He is the Anointed One. Therefore, His office incorporates all three offices of the Old Testament's anointed. The difference in the Old Testament and in the New Testament is that in the Old Testament, the anointing came down "upon" the person. In the New Testament, the anointing is "in" the person. It is permanent. Guess who is anointed?

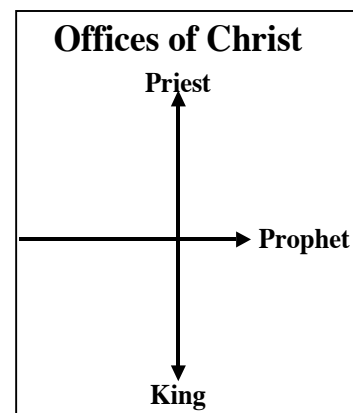


Chart 1.1

Sam: We all are.

V: That is right. All Christians are. That means, then, that you have functions to perform. Let me tell you what the three functions are: priest, prophet and king. The priest is the person who has something to do with sacrifice. The orientation of the priest is with his back to the people and his face to God. Here is what the priest does; he talks to the people who tell him that they are hurting: "We need help. We have done this evil deed, and we need some forgiveness." The priest listens to the people, then he turns to God, and he petitions God on behalf of the people. That is a priest. What does the prophet do? He goes to God, God says to him, "Here is what I want you to tell the people. Tell them to turn from their wicked ways, humble themselves, repent, and seek my face, and pray, and I will heal their land." The prophet says, "Yes, Sir; Yes, Sir." He comes to the people, and he says, "God said, 'Humble, pray, seek His face, and turn from your wickedness, and He will heal your land.'" The priest faces God; the prophet faces the people.

Now the king is in the downward orientation. That means, then, that he faces and rules over things.

You, as kings, have a function to perform. You are a steward, a ruler, you exercise dominion over things, and you do so in order to bring about glory to the Lord, or profit for His kingdom, an advancement in the positive category for His Kingdom.

In the kingly realm, you exercise managerial responsibilities over what is entrusted into your care. You have a birthright, *i.e.* you have the gifts that God has given to you. You have material goods that God has entrusted into your care. You have a network of people whom you know as friends and family. You have a voting responsibility. You have an encouraging responsibility. You are to encour-

age me and you are to encourage your neighbors, you see.

I have a responsibility along those lines, a teaching responsibility. In exercising that teaching responsibility I become a steward over my gift. I need to know what my gifts are if I am going to manage them. Many people go through life never knowing what their gifts are. In fact, not even caring what they are. That creates a desperate situation. How can you be a good steward over something you do not even know you have?

I can take my stewardship responsibilities and find implementation in prophet and priest. I can teach and preach and exhort as a prophet. Concerning my priesthood, I can pray and sacrifice and spend my life helping others rather than doing my own thing. I left a good career, boom, that was the end of that. Matthew left his tax collector bench and walked away from his career to follow the Lord; he just walked away from it. Peter left his fishing and walked after the Lord. That is a sacrifice; you lay your career down. From that point on, you see, your former career no longer has value to you because only the Lord has value to you. You are following Him.

Prophet, priest, and king are the three offices of the Lord. However, in our cases, they are our three **functions**. When you are functioning as a priest, you are exercising the Lord's role on this earth. When you are performing as a prophet, you are exercising the Lord's role on this earth. The same applies to the kingly function. You are exercising the Lord's role for you on earthly things. It is really kind of simple when you really look at it. In verse three it says that He is "the brightness of [his] glory" (Heb. 1:3); this is a word picture, and "brightness of His glory" is like a shining, like the light from a light fixture. It shines down on an object, and that object turns into a brightness. That brightness of the object is not inherent to the object, it is external to the object but internal

to the Son. It is a coming down. The Lord Jesus is a coming down of the brightness of God. He is, then, not just something down here that is material with an external brightness; His origin is heaven where the glory is. He brings that glory with Him down into our area. We look upon Him, and see the glory of God because that is where He came from. He has the same ontological being as God the Father and all the glory inherent there. Also in verse three it says, He is “the express image;” that word, image, is the Greek word *character*. He is the image (*character*) and the person (*hupostasis*) of God.

For 450 years of the church’s beginning, there was the issue of *hupostasis*: who is Jesus? There was a great deal of debate, discussion, argument, loss of life, exile from the entire empire, and all manner of things because people were beginning to think in terms of theology: trying to explain who Jesus is, and dealing with the issue of how can Jesus be God when He prayed to God. The logic of God on earth praying to God in heaven would mean that there are two Gods, one here, and one in heaven. No. How do you explain it? He is the “person” of God, one God in two persons. Well, what about the Holy Spirit? Then, there must be three Gods. No. Then there is one God in three “persons.” What is a divine person? Well, a divine person is God. Which one? They wrestled with this issue. *Hupostasis* is the word they finally came up with to identify the three

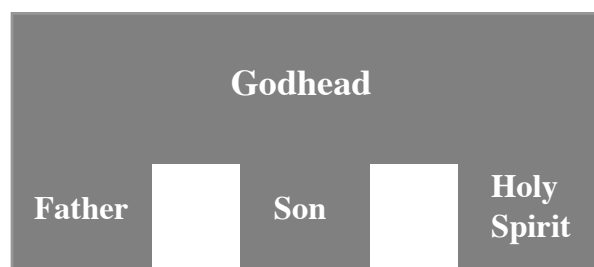


Chart 1.2

persons of God. The three *hupostases* of God. It looks like the illustration in chart 1.2.

Here is a look at the doctrine as constructed. You can see the three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The three make up the Godhead. The Holy Spirit, the Son, and the Father are of the same essence because they are all of one thing, but yet they are distinguishable. You can distinguish the Father, you can distinguish the Son, and you can distinguish the Holy Spirit. These three distinguishable persons are called *hupostases* (*hupo* is under; *stases* is standings; the two words joined together mean “person”). Each of the individuals is the *hupostasis* of God. *Hupostasis* equals person. It says that He is the express image or *character* of God. That means then that because the Son is the *hupostasis* of God, He is the express *character* of the *hupostasis* of God. You can ponder that one; think about it a little bit. When you look at Jesus, you are seeing the express *character* of God. That means, then, that when you have seen the Son, you have seen the Father; when you have seen the Son, you have seen the Holy Spirit. There is no difference in being or in *character* between any of the three persons of the one God, but they are still distinct. You can look at one, and though that is the express *character* of the one of the other, you can still say that this *hupostasis* is the Son, or that *hupostasis* is the Father because they are distinct. Theological talk and debate that raged on for half of a millennium is found right there in verse 3 of Hebrews. There was an intention of the early theologians to use the very same words that came out of this verse to describe the Trinity and to talk about who Jesus is. This is good stuff here.

Hebrews Is Canonical

Why has Hebrews generally been considered one of the epistles of the New Testament?

1. Because of its epistolary conclusion. Hebrews 13:18-25.
2. Because of its internal evidence. It is all about Jesus and salvation.
3. Because of its Pauline connection, which played a part in its admission to the canon. (Refer back to the introduction in the discussion of the author.)

Christ Is Better than the Prophets

How is Christ better than the prophets?

1. The Son is heir to all. Hebrews 1:2
2. The Son is the creator. Hebrews 1:2
3. The Son is the brightness of God's glory. Hebrews 1:3
4. The Son is the image (*character*) of God's person (*hupostasis*). Hebrews 1:3
5. He upholds all things through power. Hebrews 1:3
6. He purged our sins. Hebrews 1:3
7. He sat down on God's right hand. Hebrews 1:3

When the Hebrews look at the prophets and esteem them, they should recognize that Christ is better than the prophets. It does not matter who the prophets are, it does not matter how great the prophet is, Christ is greater, and here above are seven differences between Him and the prophets.

Christ Is Better than the Angels

The rest of the chapter has to do with the angels.

Hebrews

1:4 Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.

1:5 For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son?

1:6 And again, when he bringeth in the firstbegotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him.

1:7 And of the angels he saith, Who

maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire.

1:8 But unto the Son [he saith], Thy throne, O God, [is] for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness [is] the sceptre of thy kingdom.

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

1:10 And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands:

1:11 They shall perish; but thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment;

1:12 And as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail.

1:13 But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool?

1:14 Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?

Here is a lengthy description of the angels and a comparison, or rather a contrast, between the Son and the angels.

How is Christ better than the angels?

1. In name: He is better in name. Hebrews 1:4
2. In relation to God: Hebrews 1:5 (He is Son)
3. In worship: The angels are to worship Him. Hebrews 1:6
4. In God's description: Hebrews 1:7-8. He says angels are ministers, but Jesus is King.
5. In status: He is above all His fellow companions (saints). Hebrews 1:9
6. In work: He is the creator of the universe. Hebrews 1:10
7. Concerning creation: Hebrews 1:11-12. Creation is dependent and temporal. Jesus is independent and eternal.
8. In end position: Hebrews 1:13. He sits at God's right hand.

9. In relation to the saints: Hebrews 1:14. Jesus is the bequestor to the saints, and angels are ministers to the saints.

Appropriately, here would be a good place to do a study on angels, but I cannot take that time in this particular study. Angels do play a significant role in your life. Every Christian has angels assigned to him to help him through his pilgrimage here. Angels are ministers to the saints. They are assigned duty to help each individual Christian to accomplish his own assignments.

Your duty was bequeathed to you. The Lord Jesus bought the universe, bought you, and now He has given all control and management responsibilities for all that He owns into your hands. He says, "Go forth and make a profit for me." Then He tells the ministering spirits, "Go help them make a profit for me." They come to you who are out hammering away. You get so weak and tired, and begin to hurt, and people are persecuting you. You are at the end of your rope, and all of a sudden you realize you can do this. An angel came along, picked you up and nurtured you, put you back on your feet, and you have new energy. You are going to trudge on, keep on keeping on because God is concerned with you. He is so concerned that He has given responsibility to the angels to take care of your welfare. But He has given more responsibility to you because the angels cannot preach the gospel. All the angels are supposed to do is help you to do the great ministry of preaching the gospel, and reaching out into this world to all the people who are dying and going to hell, millions upon millions with no hope. Their hope rests in you. You will go out and reach those people, and rescue them, pull them up out of their hopelessness, get them going, give them some relief, and that kind of thing. When you are dragging with no energy left, and you say, "I cannot go on," an angel comes along and picks you up and strengthens you. You can go on. You

can get excited about this trust that God has put in you.

HEBREWS CHAPTER 2

Hebrews 2 gets even more exciting than Hebrews 1. Many of you have not had an opportunity to study Herschel Hobbs on this part of verse one. It is important for you to get this image here of the flowing river which we will pay much attention to.

This next word, however, is very much Pauline. If Jesus is better than the prophets, and if Jesus is better than the angels, then do something. Here is the Pauline "therefore." Therefore, based on all that stuff we have just talked about, we ought to give

Hebrews

2:1 Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard,

Did you hear anything a while ago? Then

Hebrews

2:1 . . . we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let [them] slip.¹

How does Hobbs explain the imagery of Hebrews 2:1?

The River Analogy

The "ought" points to a spiritual necessity beyond hearing and believing the gospel. The believer should develop in salvation and share it. Salvation is portrayed as a river flowing to God's goal. It is God's redemptive purpose that all get into the river and go with God in His mission. To be on the bank is to be flowed by. Standing on the bank is neglecting God's call, not losing one's salvation. It is to lose one's opportunity of being used by God to share salvation with others.

¹ Hobbs portrays this slippage as a river of God's Will slipping on past us as we neglect His Will for us.

This imagery here is for a wise man to catch. The imagery becomes crystal clear here if you are willing to see it. There is a sense of something very important slipping by. Imagine with me that we have this big river flowing right here in front of us (see Chart 1.3). All of us are saved Christians. By being saved, we have gotten past the entrance gate so that we may now get into this part of the river that is right here in front of us. There are many Christians who are standing way off from the river who have not gotten in. They are out there looking around and wondering why so many crazy people, like some of us, are messing around in this river. The river is flowing by, and it is shallow around in here where some Christians are. However, it gets very deep further out. You can splash around, and you get up to waist deep. You walk on out, then it is up around your shoulders, and a little further out you are having to dog paddle to keep your head above water. When you get out a little further, the current is rushing on down, running pretty fast. But up towards the bank it is moving much slower. I can splash around and have a big time up near the bank.

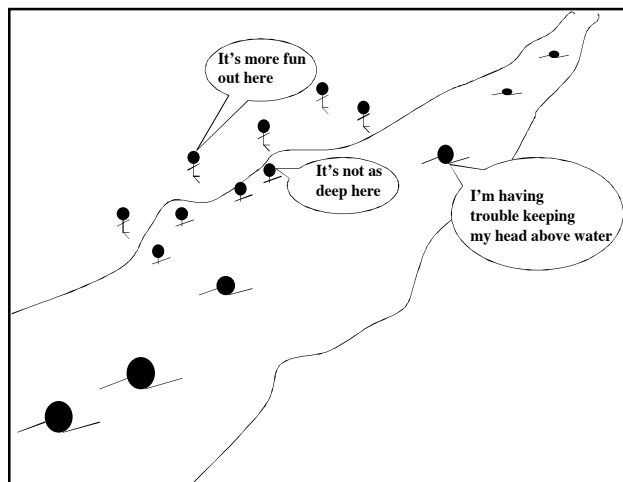


Chart 1.3

Christians Are to Get into the Deep

What we need to do when we are saved is to get out into the river current. If you are born again and will get into the deep water, you may participate in God's redemptive purpose in history. If you have ten years of life left and you spend them in the deep water, then after ten years you will be way down the river. You will have gone so far that the rest of us cannot even see you any more. There will be some of us who will be way back here dog paddling on the edge of the current. However, it is not running fast where we are, so we will be moving along but not very far and not very fast. All of these "real good Christians" (sarcasm) up on or near the bank will say, "Why are you going out there in the deep water?" They will be throwing lines out to help rescue you. Those guys that are whizzing on by because they are in the middle of the current out in the deep water will have to disregard the lines of supposed rescue because they know that they are going with God.

Traditional Christians Tend to Be on the Bank

Here we traditional Christians are up near the bank. We heave a line out there, and yell, "Grab a hold of this line and I will pull you in!" Every once in a while, a deep water Christian will get convinced that we are right because most of us are in safe water paddling around in shallow water. Yeah man! We are the sure enough real good Christians (sarcasm). We are not going through all this torment and suffering and pain that those deep water Christians are going through. We are working hard at pulling them out of the river and telling them that they should stay up here on the bank where it is safe. We just keep on pulling them in.

Growth for the Shallow Water Christians

This chart 1.4 is the picture of the shallow-water Christian. The guy who is playing around stays out of the water above his waist. He thinks that the upside down *Kenosis* is the true course of discipleship. However, this perversion, even though it tempts some of the deep-water Christians to give up on their call to *kenotic* discipleship by God to His redemptive purpose, may still result in some

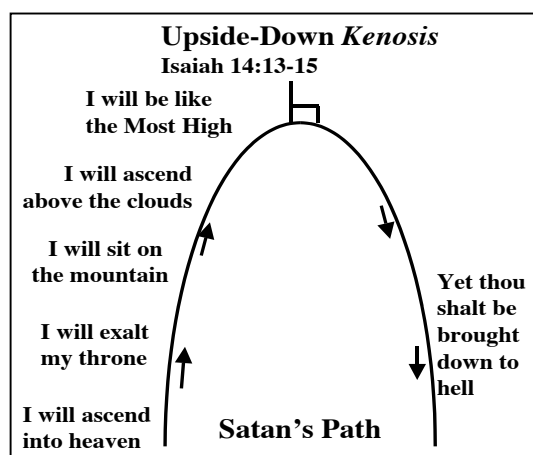


Chart 1.4

growth in the shallow-water Christian.

If you have ever been in the surf at the beach, you can play around in water about waist high. This play will cause you to drift some with the current. When you play around for about an hour and turn around, your towel, umbrella, or beach gear are a long ways up the beach because you have drifted down the beach along with the current. In the playing around in the surf, you drift along some with the current.

It is the same way in Christianity. Much of our growth is shallow-water growth. There are two dangers in this perversion. First is to neglect the opportunity of getting into the deep water and going with God to the full destination. Second is that we may impede the brethren from achieving God's Mission for them. We are all in this together. Instead

of our trying to get those people out of the deep water, we need to listen to what God is saying to us about our getting out there with them. Do not let that current slip by. Get in it before it bypasses you. Get in the deep water and go with God to the full abundant life that He has for you (chart 1.5). That abundant life is beyond imagination. If we all got together and tried to brainstorm what God has in mind for you, we are going to come up short of His plan. It is so glorious and so great that we cannot even conjure up a description of it. It

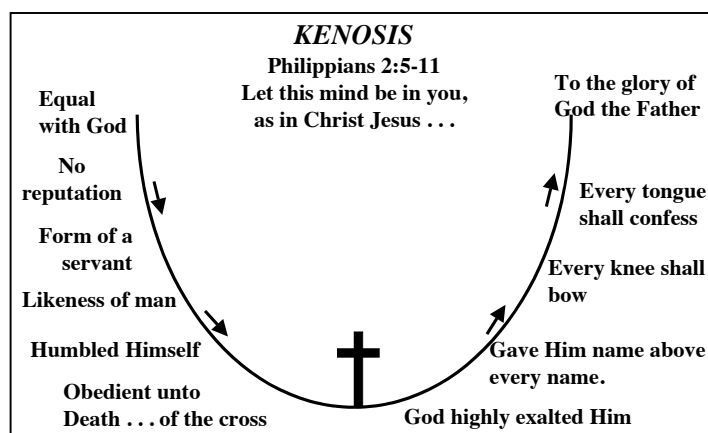


Chart 1.5

is the greatest life there is to live on this planet.

Get in the deep-water current. Go with God. Do not get on the bank, or even in the shallows. The neglect of the salvation that God has given to you is to play around in the shallows. It is bad enough to play around in the waist-high water, but some of us really strive for the perfection of not even getting wet.

I had a boss in the seminary who bragged about his wife's accomplishments as a school teacher. He said that she had avoided having to talk about Jesus or Christianity for her whole career of about 30-40 years. She celebrated Easter with Easter bunnies and Easter eggs, Christmas with Santa Claus, and Halloween with witches and goblins. She managed to dodge every issue about Christ's

purpose for saving us and her students. She was the best teacher in the school because she had never been reprimanded. She was politically correct par excellence.

Friends, this lady was up on the bank. She had not moved an inch along with God in His Mission. She was a terrific church attender, but what was her purpose for going to church? Was it to worship God? If we are not going to obey God, then our worship is in vain! If we are not going to apply our knowledge gained from sermons, then our attendance is in vain. If we are not going to apply the Truth of God's Word, then we are filled with sin because to know the Truth and not do it is sin².

Like this great church-lady, we tend to get up on the bank where it is safe. We are stable there and not moving: "No, sir, I am right here on the bank of good Christianity. Everybody else is moving in the shallows or faster in the deep water, but I have perfect Christianity, and I am calling them back. I am rescuing the perishing." (Sarcasm)

Loss of Salvation

The scenario above is a picture of what we end up doing. Remaining on the bank does not mean that you have lost your salvation. You are going to go to heaven, but you have lost the ultimate life you can live. You have lost much of the "glorification" part of salvation also by neglecting the "sanctification" part of salvation. All that God has for you is going right by with the current. Have you ever noticed that the people who experience the miracles, the people who experience all the fullness, the fears, the trembling, the quaking knees, and the excitement, the thrill and the anticipation and all of that are those who seem to be going with the Lord in the deep water? Look around and see if you do not see that. The

ones who are in the most exciting days of their lives are the people in deep water.

The humdrum people come up here with the majority on the bank. You want humdrum? Stand right here on the bank and watch all the others going on down the river with the current. You can even ridicule them because they are out there fighting all the way down through their lives in history, smacking into boulders, getting off the boulders, swimming. A tree limb catches them under the throat, but that is the essence, you see, of sanctification's *kenosis*. Staying unscathed and out of the battle is not to be the warrior that God has gifted you to be.

This Book Is a Challenge to Get into the Deep

Basically babies play on the bank, and the warriors get into the deep. Our challenge here in this book is to get into the deep. Do not neglect your salvation lest it should slip by.³ It does not mean that you lose your salvation, but you do lose all your opportunity and rewards. If you stay up here on the bank, play it safe and stay up here, then you will live your entire life and then you will die, and all that you had an opportunity to get into and do is gone.

The other saints may ask, "What was your excitement?" "My excitement was just keeping the crabs from biting my toes," you see. Then you get into heaven and you go to the Apostle Paul, you say, "Paul, did you have any trouble with the crabs?" Paul says, "As a matter of fact I did not. Where I was, there were eels and alligators and all manner of mean things." It is because he was in a different part of the river than we are in. We need to get into that deep water.

I think Hobbs has done a wonderful service. This little bit about the river is worth the course if you can get this picture in your

² James 4:17

³ Hebrews 2:1.

mind. In Hebrews 2:1 Hobbs has picked up on the problem of letting God's purpose for you slip by, by neglecting your salvation. *Pararrero* is the Greek word which is translated "slip/flow by." *Par* is by, *arrero* is to flow.

If you let your salvation flow by, then you are on the bank, and your adventure is going on by. You will see those weirdoes (sarcasm) or sinners (as they are commonly seen by many church people) out there in the deep water going on by, and you will find yourself joining the traditionalists up here on the bank saying, "Get out of the water, get up here where you are supposed to be. Don't you see how we have it made?"

What those people in deep water are needing is encouragement, not urging to come out of the deep, but rather "Go, Man! I will be praying for you. Go! As a matter of fact I am going to join you." You should run out and jump into that water and swim out there to the deep current.

Sue: Dr. Vinson, if we say we are in the river for a while, and we decide to backslide and get up here with the crabs and stuff, then later we decide to get back into the river, then what is that gap?

V: That is the lost part of sanctification. That gap is lost forever, but do not let the fact that water has flowed by stop you from getting back in. You just get back into God's Will. Every once in a while because the people in the deep water are such a minority and the great majority are on the bank, do not let that majority sway you into getting out of the deep water. Stay in the deep water. If you are not in the deep water, get in the deep water. Go for the gusto! Go all the way that God has for you.

Now I want to show you the doctrine of salvation in chart 1.6. Those of you who have had my Systematic Theology have seen this so much it is ingrained in you, and I want to

make doggone sure that it is ingrained in all of you. The rest of you are going to get a piece of it, too. But this is what it looks like: justification is the beginning of salvation, i.e. the entrance to the river, and glorification is the end of salvation, the end of the journey. We are all going to get into this river. How do you get in here with all these saints who are playing around and getting in deeper and deeper? How do you get all the way out into the middle of it?

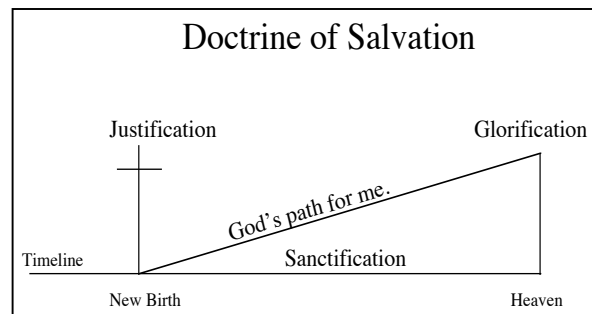


Chart 1.6

Well, you must have the new birth experience to begin with. That new birth experience is the gateway, and it is called justification. Justification is the imputing of God's righteousness to you. No matter how righteous you are, no matter how many good things that you do, you cannot earn your right to get into this river. You cannot give yourself a new birth; you have to receive that from God. That reception is called justification, and in justification you are given a righteousness that is not your own. It is from above; it is a perfect righteousness. When God gives you His righteousness, you have more righteousness than all of the scribes, all of the Pharisees, all of the Sadducees, all of Judaism, all of anybody because it is God's perfect righteousness that is given to you. When you have that, God looks at you and says, "you have perfect righteousness; you are just." That statement by God is called justification. When He looks at you and sees His Son's righteousness, He declares you to be just. That declaration of justness, of your

being just, is called justification. It is the new-birth experience. It is an event because it is punctiliar in time. That is why I draw it as a vertical line because on the left of it you are not there, but you go through this event, this point in time, and once you are through it, it is behind you, and you are forever that way. It is an event, it occurs in an instant. That is how justification works.

Once you have this event in your life, you are launched on a long, rest-of-your-life process, a pilgrimage called sanctification. This pilgrimage is this river business we have been talking about. This pilgrimage is the rest of your life in serving the Lord who gave you His Righteousness. When you serve Him, you do it on His terms, not your own. That is why the river takes you where the river goes.

A lot of us like to get out here with a bunch of shovels and dig a new trench. We start building walls and make this little tributary go where we want to go. We splash around in this little offshoot of the river. We call it the river, but there are no hazards in our river. We are comfortable. There is not enough water to cover our feet. It might splash up a little on our legs while we play around in it, but we do not have to worry about getting in too deep. Another Christian may come along and say, "Oh, I think your river is going in the wrong direction. We need to build it over in another direction," so we block off that tributary and start another moving in some other direction. We have channels all over the place. You can hardly walk up here without falling into a channel because all of us saints are trying to design our own river, and having God take us where "we want to go." We direct some of the river water through our channels.

All of the true disciples are going where God designed the river. They do not know what is around the next curve. They are just in the water passing around the boulders and floating past the monsters that are out there

trying to stop them. They must face those monsters. If you are going to go where God goes, you are going to face those monsters too as well as all those bad guys that are out there. The river will go around the next bend, and the next thing you hear is a roar in the distance. Oh, my! Now what is coming next? A waterfall is ahead. We start grabbing boulders and limbs and everything to try to stop the flow, but if you are out there with God you are going over those things. You are going to hit the boulders, you are going to hit the limbs, you are going to face the monsters, all the many creatures in the water, and nothing of what you are going to face next is known. But it is His plan, His salvation. This is your time in the river.

When you are in the river, you see, you are on the path that you are geared for. There are gifts in you that I do not have. God is going to have you out in the river, but you are going to be separated from the rest even though we are floating abreast of one another. One of us will face a monster, one will face a boulder, one will hit a tree limb, one will skin his knees on something else because God's plan for each person is different. What I am supposed to do is to get on my path out in the deep water and flow with God. I do not let any of God's plan for my life slip by me. I am not neglecting His purpose for my life. I get out there and I am going with God, not letting one drip of water slip past me because I am going to be out in the deep water. That is my intention.

I will paddle part of the time, other times I will be swimming. Some of the time I will be floating on my back. Sometimes I will be upright looking around, and dog paddling. I am looking to be on my path. It is not any good for me to get on your path because God did not gift me and provide the proper tools for me to do your stuff. He has gifted you to do your stuff. He has gifted me to do my stuff. It is not fair to you for me to demand that you do my stuff. Nor is it fair to me for

you to demand that I do your stuff. It is fair, however, to demand an exhortation and encouragement from the one to the other for us to do our own stuff. When you are doing your stuff, I am to encourage you and help you along and say, “Go for it, man. Hang in there. I know it is hard, but stay with it, do it. Do not get up on the bank. Get back out in the water.”

If you will get on your path and stay on it, you will go the distance that God has mapped out for you. You can go on your path because He has equipped you for it. He has laid out the path just for you. Everything is all set up. It is exactly fine tuned and customized by God Himself just for you. By staying on your path, you will go to the final end point that God has mapped out for you to achieve and to be perfected in glory. That is something that God provides in you and for you. All you have to do is be willing. *If you are saved, then what do you have to do to get into the deep water? **Be willing.** What do you have to do to stay in the deep water? **Be willing.*** You do not have to build the river. You do not have to come up with a water source. You do not have to provide your own obstacles. You do not have to do any of that stuff; God does all of that. All you have to do is **be willing**. That is what I am asking you to do.

God will say, “Randall, this . . . is what I want you to do.” Randall will think about that, fear will come up, he will conjure all kinds of monsters. He has been out there in the deep water, he has fought some battles with these monsters, and so he knows they are out there. He will ask, “I am supposed to go back out there?” “Yes, you are.” “But there are monsters out there!” “Get on out there.” “There are giants in the land!” You have heard that before.⁴ God said: “Either go in

and face those giants or walk in a circle until you die.” The Israelites said, “We will take the circle.” They did too; they walked in a circle until they died. He is saying to us, “Get out there.” The fear and all that kind of thing can stop your will. It will stop you from answering your call. Fear will stop you cold in your tracks.

I want you to hear something. You had better fear God. ***Fear God!*** Do not fear monsters. Do not fear people or circumstances. Do not fear the what-if. ***Get in the water, all the way to the deep, and let God take you where He wants to take you.*** This is the challenge. ***WILL*** you do it?

Hebrews

2:2 For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward;

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];

2:4 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?

2:5 For unto the angels hath he not put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak.

2:6 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?

2:7 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:

2:8 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.

⁴ Numbers 13:33. This is when the Israelites were contemplating entering the Promised Land, and because of the reports of the spies sent ahead, they

decided not to enter the Promised Land. The result was that they wandered in the wilderness for 40 years.

What you need to see concerning the gifts in verse 4 is about the specialization of your salvation. God has gifted you with certain abilities and tools to use in His service. You are going to be out here in the deep. When I am out there in the deep, and you are out there in the deep, and I am fighting a monster, and I go down under the water, I want you to reach down and get hold of me and pull me up. Get me up so I can get another breath, so I can fight my monster. I will do the same for you when you start going down. I will reach for you and pull you up, and give you a chance to get hold of yourself and get your strength back. That is what the Christian burden bearing is like. It does no one any good when I go down for you to say to everyone around, "I told you he was not a good swimmer. He cannot even fight a little old bitty monster. I saw the monster. I whipped a big giant one myself over here, and he cannot even handle one of these little rinky-dink midget monsters. I knew he could not handle it."

Do not do that because that does not help me any when I am still under the water and about to drown. Just reach in and pull me up. Get me above the surface to get a breath because I can assure you that you will soon run into one of those huge monsters, and he will whip on you like you have never been whipped on before. You are going to go under, and you will need for me to reach down and pull you up. We need to do this for each other. You help me, and I will help you. If we do that, we can stay in the deep longer, and then when you get clobbered by some bad giant, you will not come swimming to the shallows and join this on-the-bank-crowd who are really the in-crowd, all the safe guys, you know the supposed big-league Christians that sit in comfortable chairs and do not have any problems in life. They have never seen a giant much less fought one. To fight one must mean you are full of sin, you know? (sarcasm) These super on-the-bank saints are driving a big car, they live in a big house,

they have a perfect family and a perfect job, and they have a lot of money. This describes the supposed big-league Christian of today.

Please know this: those big-league Christians of today are not the guys out in the deep water where we are supposed to be. I want you to pull me up and help me get a breath so that I can keep on swimming in the deep water. I do not want to swim in to the bank to get a breather because it is dangerous to swim in. Once you get up on the bank, you could decide to stay there because the great majority of Christians are there along with the big-league saints of today. Plus, it is very comfortable. You could get brainwashed: "Yeah, I hear God calling me! I can feel it. He is telling me to stay up here on the bank. Yeah, Lord, I am answering you. This is where I am supposed to be." (Sarcasm)

See, it is dangerous to be in the shallows. So what we need to do is just stay out there and try to avoid having to swim up to the comfort zone. We help one another so we can avoid any lulls in our deep-water journeys.

Joe: How much concern does the person in deep water have on getting the people out of the shallows?

V: A lot! We must get as many as possible out of the shallows and into the deep. You should have much concern for your people. Much of your ministry is to call the saints into the deep.

Joe: When they send the life raft, you grab it, and you jerk them toward you.

V: Yes, you give the rope a firm but not over powering pull.

Joe: It is hard, though, like you say, once you get out of the deep water to go back into the deep.

V: Yes, there is a ton of temptation to remain on the bank.

There is a doctrine that I have talked at length about called the *kenosis* (see chart 1.7).

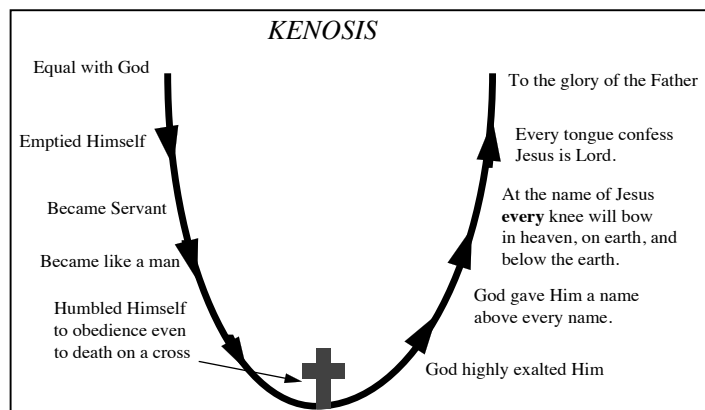


Chart 1.7

The *kenosis* is one of dying; it is that you live by dying. The *kenosis* of Philippians 2⁵ says that Jesus took this path: He humbled Himself, He became a servant, and then He became obedient unto death. After that He was exalted to where every knee bows and every tongue confesses that Jesus is Lord. This pathway is the pathway that we are to adopt. He says in Philippians 2:5, “Let this mind be in you.” That mind is the determination to live a sacrificial life. The *kenosis* is the path that Jesus traveled in His sanctification. That means if you are going to walk your path that God has made for you, it will be a *kenotic* path: a path of sacrificing, dying, and suffering, and a path in which the exaltation comes after death. Only after death is glorification (see the doctrine of salvation in chart 1.6 earlier in this chapter).

I am going to simplify the Christian walk into two types, just for illustration. On the bank and in the shallows is the person of the first type who is living his own life, not the life of sacrifice, not the life of *kenosis*. He is enjoying himself and has no monsters to confront, just a few crabs nibbling on his toes. There are no branches, no boulders, no waterfalls, no giant water moccasins, no alligators because he is up in the safe area.

That safeness costs him nothing in his life like it cost our Lord.⁶

The people of the second type are in deep water like the Apostle Paul who was beaten with rods three times, he was shipwrecked, he was snake bitten, he slept in peril of robbers, he was imprisoned, and he was executed. That is a sacrificial *kenotic* kind of life. That kind of life is what you are called to live, a sacrificial *kenotic* life.

The wasteful life is to be on the bank enjoying yourself, not worrying about monsters. This alternative looks like the illustration in chart 1.8. You get justified, and you climb up. The people start to applaud. You climb higher, and they say, “Wow, he is a good Christian.” You get way up and start preaching, and the people are astounded at how great you are. Then you are on the throne, and you sit before the people, and they swoon. They say, “Man, that is one great Christian.” But after death there is the fall. You do not lose your salvation. You lose your rewards of glorification! ***There is a lot at stake here.***

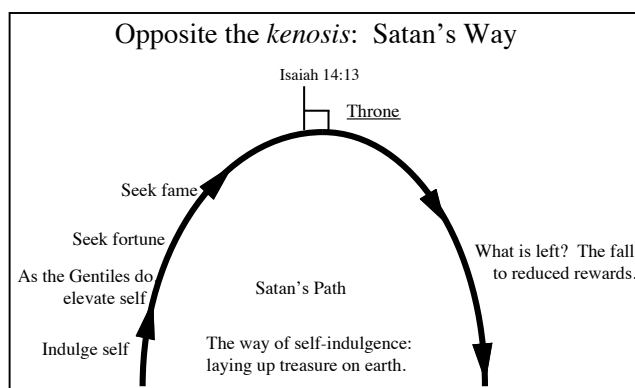


Chart 1.8

⁵ Philippians 2:5-11.

⁶ The Lord's walk of sanctification cost Him everything. He had to empty Himself of His entire heritage and take the form of a servant, becoming obedient, humble, and eventually He had to die. After the death is the exaltation.

This person in the shallows is not practicing the *kenosis*; he is indulging himself and climbing the ladder of admiration and success. Your concept of him is that he is a great man of God, a giant killer, but neither of you knows what a giant is because neither of you has ever fought one. Neither of you knows what a water moccasin looks like. Neither of you has flowed over a waterfall, not even a small one. Neither of you even knows what it means to get in the deep water. Both of you have had it made sitting on the throne enjoying life, enjoying everything. What is going to be on the other side for you? If you have your life now, you will lose it then. If you lose your life now, you will have it then.⁷

This easy life is the temptation for anyone facing the river. It is important that you get this in your mind because you need to be in that deep water. When you are in the deep water, you cannot do your own things because you are going where God takes you. You are busy just trying to stay afloat, and fighting what comes around the bend.

These people up here on the bank do not have to worry about being afloat. They do not have to worry about anything around the bend because they do not even know that there is a bend much less where the bend is. They are just taking it easy on the bank, cooling it. They cannot understand why everybody is hurting out there. Their thinking is that anyone who is hurting ought to get the sin out of his life and get up here where we are, where they can be safe.

My friend, God is calling you to throw your life in with Him in reckless abandonment. Throw in with Jesus, just jump in, and see what happens. One thing is for sure if you jump in with Jesus, you are going with God's power because it is always with Him and His true warriors.

He has also charged me with your welfare, and you with mine. If we are out there together, I am going to help you, and you are going to help me. We are going to get around the bend. We are going to get down this river, and we are going to enjoy all of it in spite of the pain and suffering because when we get to the end, we are going to have something to talk about: "Do you remember that giant that came around the bend and attacked me, and you came to help me. You came up behind him and got him in the ribs. You remember that?" "Yeah!" We will be talking about those hard times that are worth talking about.

All these so-called big-league boys sitting up on the bank, what are they going to talk about? "You remember that little old crab that came up there? You remember that?" "Yeah, I remember that one little crab, a little bitty crab that bit you on the toe. He dug a little hole, and every once in a while he'd pop out. You stomped him to death. You were a great Christian warrior when you stomped that crab to death."

Those pretend warriors will not even be able to talk with us if we live our lives out there in that deep water. But we will be able to talk to Paul and Peter and all of them. It is important that we get hold of this principle.

Neglect Is the Sin of Omission

He is saying in verse 2, that if the law is so important that any violation of the law was met with certain and just recompense, and if this law was dispensed *by the angels*, and if God comes down on you if you mess up on this law, then what is He going to do if you

⁷ Matthew 10:39 He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it. Matthew 16:26 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? Mark 8:36 For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? 8:37 Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?

mess up on a law that was given *by His Son*? He is saying here: “*How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation.*”

I am not talking about the Mosaic Law here. We are talking about the salvation purchased by the Lord Jesus, God’s only begotten Son. He is also saying, “How are we, all of us, the Christian folks, going to escape?” It says, “If we neglect.” It does not say, “If we violate.” It does not say, “If we despise.” It does not say any of those bad things. He is talking about being indifferent or negligent.

There in the word neglect is the problem. You see the Jews who had become Christians in New Testament times were super Christians. They had brought in all that law-keeping, and brought in all this Christian grace and put the two together. They were saved by grace, and they continued keeping the law. They were hammering it out, and staying with it, and they are what our bank-sitters would call super Christians. (Sarcasm)

But God says about us shallow-water, rule-keeping Christians, “You are indifferent to the great salvation that the Lord has been speaking of and that has been witnessed to by those who heard the Lord.” Those who heard are the apostles. That great salvation which was witnessed to by the gifts and the miracles which were wrought by the Holy Spirit has been confirmed as a great salvation.

Indifference is the critical issue here. These Hebrews were self-satisfied. They were content with their own interpretation of the sanctification part of salvation, and so they had built their own channel. They had their own tributary, and they were making doggone sure that they got down their “river,” their channel, their little tributary, all the way to the end. They had forgotten all about God’s big river, the majestic great flowing river. They neglected that, and put in its place this little rinky-dink thing.

What is the church doing today? Instead of this giant river out here, we are getting our little song books, and we are getting together in a row here on this pew. We look down the row and greet those in our row. We sing a song, then stand up and sing a song, sit down and sing a song. Here comes the offering plate, we put our tithe in it marked just so that the treasurer can see and account for our donation for the IRS, and we pass it on down. We have been to Sunday school for our coffee and donuts. We do not even have to bring our Bibles. The teacher just hands us a little piece of paper: “You can read the verses and our little lessonettes on this here.”

The members say, “Do not call on me to pray; I do not pray.”

“Okay, I will not call on you to pray.”

“Do not call on me to read; I do not read.”

“What do you do?”

“Oh, I am just a regular Christian. I just come to church and Sunday school, and I sing and all like that. I will be here, I am a good attender and all of that. I have a perfect attendance pin you see for my 50 years of perfect attendance?”

Folks, they do not even know where the river is. They do not even know there is a river. They are just in here in our church listening to the sermons and going to Sunday school. How are we going to get these people into the deep water? This is your call from God! You are in this class because your deep water is far deeper than the depth of the water is for the average person. Your deep water is so far out there that you cannot even see the shore. How are you going to get these people up here on the bank, who are indifferent to God’s great salvation and totally content with what they are doing, to get into the deep water? That is your charge—to get these people into deep water without your getting out of the deep water onto the riverbank. You must stay in the deep water and get these

people on the riverbank and in the shallows out into the deep water. That is one of the roles of every minister.

A minister's job is to get the people into the Lord's army walking right behind Him. That means they must go where they do not want to go, they must see who they do not want to see, they must say the things they do not want to say, they must take risks, the kind of risks they do not want to take. That is your charge as ministers because you are in this class. You have been exposed to this level of teaching here by Hobbs. You are accountable now for what you know. It is not just that you stay in the deep water. Your job is to get all your people into that deep water. If you neglect that, if you neglect your role as a minister of God, you will suffer for it. I am encouraging you to get with it. Be the exhorter, the encourager, *the trainer*. Grab them when they are not looking; pull them into the water; get them off their feet so they cannot get away from you. Get them twisted around, a hammerlock on them, pull them out there one-at-a-time. After a while they will have to fight an enemy. You must help them to attain a victory over that enemy. You will know it, but they will not know that it is the Holy Spirit Who is out there just whipping up on those enemies. Your trainee swings, and the giant falls down. Hmmm. They think they knocked that giant down. Actually it is God Himself standing up there and pow!! He knocks that giant down. After a while, little saints like us will swing enough that we will begin to build a little muscle. Soon God will let us hit that giant. We swing and hit him but he did not fall down. We swing again and again, and finally he falls down. That is the way it works.

What do we see when we see Jesus?

When we see Jesus, we see:

1. A man lower than the angels. Hebrews 2:7.

That is pointing to the *kenosis*. Do you see that when Jesus came down and took the form of a servant, humbled Himself and was obedient even unto the death of the cross, it was a lowering down to the very bottom. When He got to the bottom (cross) and He was spit upon, mocked, despised, and cruelly crucified, that is as low as you can get. He came all the way down.

2. We see that the subjection of the world to Him is not yet apparent. Hebrews 2:8.

This is the man that we see lower than the angels. We see at the end of the *kenosis* the exaltation all the way up to Lord, and to our confession, but yet it is not apparent. The Lordship is not apparent. It is not readily seen. It looks like the world is marching on in violation of His Lordship. The world does not care that Jesus is Lord. Even the church sometimes goes its own way in its own little channel uncaring that He is Lord. The church may be splashing around in shallow water, and thinking it is doing great as long as it is successful in its growth in nickels and noses.

3. We see the vicarious atonement (Hebrews 2:9), perfection through suffering (Hebrews 2:10), and one leading the church to God (Hebrews 2:11-13).
4. He defeated the devil through death. Hebrews 2:14.

Irenaeus has helped me in some of my past battles, and I would like to share it with you because it will give you power if you can just put your mind on it when you are going through those very dark and trying times. Irenaeus said that his theological picture of the atonement goes like this: ***Satan said to Jesus while He was on earth as a Human Being, "I am going to kill you. I am going to bury you, I am going to knock you down." Jesus looked at Satan and replied, "You can come at me with all the power in the world. You can take all the demonic power and the power of all the darkness and come at me,***

and I am going to defeat you. I am going to defeat you by doing nothing more than submitting my will to my Father. By giving my will to my Father, I am going to win.

I am telling you right now, you can win. If you submit your will to Jesus. Simply by denying yourself, taking up your cross, and following Jesus, you will be a true disciple. You must get into the deep in order to be victorious over the devil. I do not care what kind of significant battle you are going into. I do not care what trial you are facing. You may even say, "It is going to take a miracle for this to work." That is a good starting place because that is what God does—miracles. It is going to take divine power for discipleship to work. He is all-powerful.

What is there in your life that you need? What battle is in front of you? What monster is looming out of the darkness at you? You want to defeat all of that? You want to have total victory? Submit your will to the Lord in self-denying, cross-bearing fellowship. You will defeat Satan himself. Satan is an angel with a lot of power, but you can drive him away like a whipped little puppy if you will do nothing more than submit your will to God. Just get in the deep, and let the deep carry you on the path that it has.

By submitting their wills to the Lord is how our forefathers were tied to the stake, and the fires were lit. They burned to death, and they never screamed. That is how our forefathers were tortured, had their arms and legs cut off, and they were ridiculed and mocked, and they took it, and they died gallantly. That is how the ladies of our heritage had a broom handle put behind their knees, and their elbows were hooked behind that handle, and their hands were tied in front of them and they were rowed out into the icy waters and rolled out of the boat. They kicked around, thrashed around, and died gallantly because the ***power of God and dying***

grace is there with any saint in the deep water. You want to meet your death gallantly? Submit your will to the Father. You will die gallantly because you will die with dying grace. If you move up to the shallows, you are on your own because you have submitted your will to yourself. Then, take care of yourself. Submit your will to the Father, and the Father will take care of you. That is the call.

5. You will see a sympathetic High Priest. Hebrews 2:17-18.

Jesus Christ knows what we are going through because He has been through it. He is ready to give you help in your time of need, but you have to need it. When you are on the bank, your need is not material things, not help, not money, not career because you have all that kind of stuff. Your need is for the conviction which leads to repentance.

When you are in deep water, you need power, you need help for your health, you need help for your family, you need financial help, you need help just to make it around the next bend. All of these helps will be provided by the Lord because you are on His Mission. You will have all the help of the Lord, you will have all the miracles, the power, everything right there. You will not become Lord and start directing His power. You are not Lord. When you get in the deep water you go where the water goes. Then the power will be there, but you do not direct the power. On the bank you can direct the power, but it is a human power. You can dig a ditch, collect money, do all that stuff, dig a little pool and swim around in it. That is where we present-day Christians tend to be.

I hope this word picture stays with you the rest of your life. It tugs at me constantly. I want your company. When we get to heaven we can talk. "You remember how we did such and such?" "Yeah, man, ***we did it!***"

Chapter Questions

1. What four facts support the contention that Paul is the author of Hebrews?
2. What are the three offices of Christ?
3. All Christians have the functions of prophet, priest and king. Describe those functions in terms of orientation and practice.
4. Describe the *Hypostasis*. Draw the *Hypostasis*.
5. Why has Hebrews generally been considered one of the epistles of the New Testament?
6. How is Christ better than the prophets?
7. How is Christ better than the angels?
8. Describe the result of a Christian staying out of the “deep water” of the river of ministry?
9. How do you stay in the “deep water” of the river?
10. Give the Scripture reference for the *kenosis*.
11. Using the descriptive words describe or draw the *kenosis*.
12. Give the Scripture reference for the opposite of the *kenosis*.
13. Describe or draw the opposite of the *kenosis*.
14. What do we see when we see Jesus?

Chapter 2

SANCTIFICATION

We will review the river concept talked about in the previous chapter.

The word, slip, in Hebrews 2:1, means to flow by. The problem that we can experience is that we can have our salvation flow by. I am not talking about the opportunity to get saved because everybody in this class is supposed to already be saved. You can still let the sanctification portion of your salvation flow by and be lost.¹

Most Christians are susceptible to being on the bank or in the shallows of the river and having their salvation flow by because of ignorance. The opportunities to jump in with God and experience all that God has for us just flows by. Those things are lost forever. You may get back out into the water and flow with God, but you can never catch up with whatever has flowed on by. If you spend your entire life in the shallows, then you lose the whole adventure; all of your adventures have all flowed by.

The resulting scenario, then, is of people trying to create their own sanctification. I have described that scenario as truly-saved Christians digging a trench or a canal to divert the water through it. They simply flow along in their own little canal. They spend their whole life digging and floating along on down their own canal rather than in the river that God made. The problem with this scenario is that we will have done nothing in God's plan. Our works will be the works that burn up, and there will be nothing left.

What counts in eternity is not that you worked like a dog during your lifetime. It is to get in God's river and flow with God, and let Him direct your path. There will be work,

yes, but the work will be directed entirely by God. The river goes up and around and about, and when you are in that deep water just keeping your head up. You go where the water goes. You do not determine your own path or which way this river is going to go. You do not even determine the speed of the river.

There is much that is apt to be missed by a well-intentioned Christian by getting on the bank and working hard whereas all they had to do was get into the water and go with God, exploring the opportunities that come to them. When you flow with God, you have the power of God. When you are with God, and going down the river, and you come upon a challenge, you meet that challenge in God's power, and you accomplish something. But when you are on the bank, you have to work hard in your own power, digging, and planning, and working it all out, and then getting the water to come into the trench. You get in the trench, and you say, "Okay, God, here is your river." God says, "No, that is not my river." "Oh, yes, this is your river. I am in it, now bless me God because I am over here swimming in Your river." He says, "You are going the wrong way. You are playing in a river of your own making."

This is the scenario that has been put before us. We talked about these Hebrew Christians to whom this letter is addressed. The Hebrew Christians are a very contented bunch. What they have done is that they have blended together their Judaistic law keeping in their sanctification and their Christian freedom in their justification. They are very self-contented. They are working hard at balancing their keeping the Mosaic Laws with their freedom. They have dug themselves a whole canal. They are working very hard in this thing of their making. They can look at

¹ Please see the doctrine of salvation in Book 1 on Doctrine of this Discipleship Series

these Gentile Christians who do not seem to be working hard at all, just doing things so seemingly easy. They say, “Look at us we are working hard. God has to be pleased with us.” There is a self-contentment that wells up in them, and this book of Hebrews is a warning which says to them, “Beware of letting your sanctification portion of salvation slip or flow by you, while you are being contented in all this religious work.”

Today many people are working, working, working in the churches, ministering all over the place, hammering away, and they are not even in the river. They are up in the shallows, playing in the dunes, pushing dirt around, trying to keep away from the insects and the crabs, and things like that. They are not doing anything that will count for eternity, but they are contented. Why are they contented? Because of misconceptions, they think that religious work equates to doing God’s will. It does not. This is a tremendous warning.

HEBREWS CHAPTER 3

Hebrews 3

3:1 Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus;

3:2 Who was faithful to him that appointed him, as also Moses [was faithful] in all his house.

3:3 For this [man] was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house.

3:4 For every house is builded by some [man]; but he that built all things [is] God.

3:5 And Moses verily [was] faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after;

3:6 But Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.

Verse one says “partakers.” That word in Greek is *metachos*, which means partner. *Metachos* is composed of *ekko* to have, *meta* with, or to have with. What you are, then, is a partner with Jesus. I mean you are a full partner. That means you get to get in the same yoke that He is in. As a matter of fact, He commands you: “Take my yoke upon you.”² That is an invitation to partnership. Can you think of anybody that deserves to be a partner with Jesus? It is impossible to think that high of someone, yet we have been commanded to come and be His partners. That seems too high of an honor to be real.

He is pointing out an opportunity here. He declares that all of the holy brethren (that includes you) are partakers or partners, you see, with the One who is the High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus. Moses is a part of the house, but yet he is a partner. As a partner, he is in the house but also a steward of the house.

Stewardship comes from the word economy. *Oikos* is house, *nomos* is law, *oikonomos*, (where we get our word economy) the joining of the two words means the law of the house. The law of the house is under the rule of the house owner. The Lord makes the law of the house, and as a steward, it is our responsibility to implement the law of the house, i.e. implement the Lord’s economy. That is what Moses did, and it says here that he was faithful.

I want to be counted faithful too. I want to be a good steward implementing the Lord’s law of the house. Now if I come up here and try to build my own house, build my own canal, I can implement my own rules or man-made traditions, I can even be the owner of the thing. But I am not going to be judged on what I did with my own house. I am going to be judged on what I do with the Lord’s house. It is His economy that counts, not mine. I

² Matthew 11:29.

need to jump out there in the deep water and go with the Lord, exercising *oikonomos*, the economy, the rules of the Lord's house.

I am part of that house, but I am also a steward in that part of the house. You are a steward in your part of His house too. Each one of us, you see, has a responsibility as a partner of Jesus to implement the welfare of His house. When you implement the welfare of His house, you are the stewards of His house.

Since I am part of the house too, you are supposed to take care of my welfare, and I am supposed to take care of your welfare. I am to encourage you to get into that deep water because that is your welfare. If you do not get out there but instead get on the bank, then you are going to be losing out on the rewards of being a good steward. If I know this and do not warn you, then I am not acting like a good steward.

In Hebrews 3:6 it says, "whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end." There are many people who seem to start reading into Hebrews this idea of loss of salvation. There is some loss of salvation being discussed here, but I want you to hear what I am fixing to tell you. It is important for you to understand what salvation is. We talked last week about how we looked at salvation as being not only justification but also a long process to get out to glorification.

You can lose some glorification, you can lose some sanctification, but you cannot lose justification. Can you understand what I am saying? It is just like this: when I come up to the gate, Jesus is the gate (justification) and I am standing there and He says, "Do you want to come in?" I could say, "I do not need to come in. I am all right." That is the typical response of lost sinners. He says, "No, you are not all right for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." You and I are one of those "all." That hurts, but then the next

sentence is devastating. He says, "For the wages of sin is death." I say, "Oops! That puts me in trouble." I say, "I do not want this death part." He says, "But the gift of God is eternal life." I say, "Oh, yeah, I like that 'life' part. Count me in on that part." He says, "But you have to receive me as Lord and Savior." I say, "I want to do that." He says, "Behold I stand at the door and knock, if any man hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him."³ When He is talking to me I hear it clearly. He is knocking on my door. "Yes, Lord, I have sinned. I open the door to my heart." I ask Him to come in and forgive my sin and give me the gift of eternal life, and He comes in. He says, "Okay, now you have the ticket, come on through the gate." I come through the gate out of the desert land.

As this scene plays on out, the next thing that I encounter is a giant river flowing by, and there are thousands and thousands of people on the bank playing and splashing around. There are about five or six floating by in the middle of the river. I say, "Oh, this place on the bank is where you are supposed to be." I get on the bank or in the shallows. Is not that where we all are likely to end up?

The current reality about sanctification plays like this: about the first time I think, "I will just follow the Lord and step out into the deeper waters," the people on the bank say, "Oh, no, you do not want to go out there! Come on up here." I say, "Oh, yeah, yeah, that is what I meant to do anyway." Sad to say, but that is the way this thing seems to work. ***When I come up here in the shallows, I am losing that part of my salvation that deals with sanctification.***

For some of you who have not had the course on Doctrine for Disciples, the doctrine of salvation looks like this (see Chart 2.1). You have justification, which is the new birth experience. It is punctiliar in its nature; it is

³ Revelation 3:20.

an event. Then you have a long process that leads out to the end of life. The long process is called sanctification. Glorification happens at your death. Death brings you into the presence of the Lord, and there occurs glorification. There is where your stewardship is going to be evaluated, and it is going to be weighed and tested and however it comes out that is the proportion of glory you will inherit with the Lord.

It is the Lord's glory, but you participate in it as a partner. If you are a partner during sanctification, you will be a partner in glory. If you take full responsibility during sanctification, you will participate in full rewards in glory. But if you do your own thing during sanctification, then your glory occurs during your lifetime on earth during your sanctification instead of in heaven where true glorification occurs. That is the way it works.

All this time in here, between justification and glorification (see Chart 2.1), is called sanctification. Sanctification is the test of your flesh against your spirit. The whole process of sanctification is continuous decision-making flesh against spirit, flesh against spirit. So your flesh wants to indulge yourself, wants to just cool it, play on the bank and stay out of the water especially the deep water, just have a good time. The Spirit is saying, "Get out in the deep water, go with God, do those hard things." You say, "What hard things? I do not know that I want to do hard things, I cannot see around the bend." That is where faith comes in because you

cannot see what is ahead.

When Jesus called Peter and the other disciples, He did not say, "Come on, Peter, if you will come with me you will get to be crucified upside down." He did not do that. He said, "You just come follow me!" Peter follows Him, and he gets out in the deep water, and he is having victory. After a while he gets up and walks on the water, out in the deep he is walking on the water. Although he won the victory by walking on the water, he succumbed to carnality by sinking in the deep. However, for most of his remaining days, he lived life in the deep. He flowed with the current up and around and every which way, until he finally gets down to the end where there is a crucifixion upside down waiting for him.

What I am asking you to do is get in the river too, and flow along with the river because God has the maximum plan for you. Your path may include martyrdom, or it may not, but it will bring you maximum glorification for eternity if you will get in the deep water and go with God.

It is to your minimum if you plan your own life, and get on the bank. The main thing is to go with God and just trust Him. He loves you so much that He wants your maximum, no matter what you encounter. I can promise you this: that no matter what you encounter, if you go with Him, no matter how big a deal it is, you will praise God for eternity. You will thank Him and thank Him and thank Him because the bigger your problems are, the bigger will be your glorification. You will just rejoice forever. There is nothing you can encounter in God's river for you that is too big for you, and it will dwarf in consideration when you put it next to the glory that you will experience because you went through it. You will look back and say, "All this glory for that little rinky-dink problem?" You will rejoice and rejoice and rejoice forever.

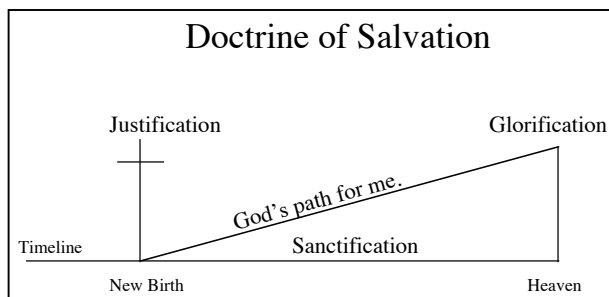


Chart 2.1

On chart 2.1, your path is an upward sloping line of difficulty. When you wander around below your line, you are going to come up short. You will miss much of your destiny, you see, because you have wandered below your line, *i.e.* spent time in the shallows or on the bank. Because you have spent some of your time on the bank, opportunities have flowed on by. There is some loss of salvation because salvation is this whole thing from justification to glorification.

Justification is the new birth, and that is what we commonly call salvation. If you ask somebody if they have been saved, we are talking about justification. But when you get reborn, *i.e.* you have been justified, then you are launched on a journey that goes on for the rest of your life. Your rest-of-life pilgrimage counts as part of salvation as well. You can lose all or part of it depending upon your walk. You can spend your life building with wood, hay, and stubble⁴ and just build the greatest masterpiece you ever saw, but when the fire tests it, it is gone in a flash.

It is important that we go with God, and travel the path that He has for us. The river is an allegory of that path. There is great potential for loss of our staying on path (see chart 2.2).

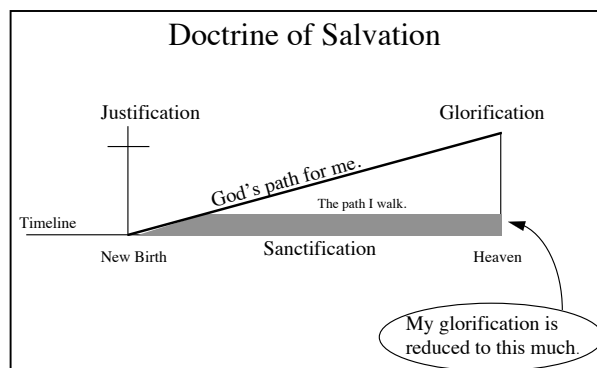


Chart 2.2

Sam: Say that a person enters salvation at justification, and spends the rest of his life

living below where God wants him to be. At death/glorification he has not reached where God has planned for him, then he does not get the glorification? Is that also the same as saying he does not enter into heaven?

V: No, he goes into heaven and gets glorification, but he gets only a reduced glorification instead of the whole part that God had planned for him. There are some who will end up on the line at the bottom where there is not much more than presence in heaven, and they will miss the whole deal concerning rewards.

Sue: Half a mansion!

V: Or no mansion! It is important for us to get this concept. That concept is being put forth to the Hebrews, and it should come to us as well. **Do not neglect your salvation.**⁵ To do so is to run the risk of loss. There will be loss! Mark it down! It is my job now to convince you to not be one of those who lose.

Some of us have been messing around in the shallows for a long time. As long as you are alive, you have opportunity to get back out into the water if God will permit. Grab somebody on the way out and pull him out there with you.

Ben: In verse 6 He is affirming that you can rejoice in the hope. He says that if you will be faithful to do what He tells you, then you have a hope of a future consummation of that hope. In God's terminology a hope is something that is going to happen if you obey.

V: Yes. Hope should be a motivator for you. That kind of hope is a motivator that drives you out there past your fears and into the deep. If everybody who gets justified should end up at the top without doing a thing, just by doing whatever you want to do by disobeying God, then there is no justice after justification. If you will still get to the end where the river goes and get the full

⁴ 1 Corinthians 3:12-15.

⁵ Hebrews 2:3.

reward without obeying God, *i.e.* get the same reward that Paul got, then why should anybody do anything? There is not any motivating hope in that scenario. You just kick back and enjoy life. There are many Christians now who are living in this kind of understanding. It is wrong and will be very costly in the end!

Jerry: Super grace!

V: Yes, and when we over emphasize grace, we under emphasize our partnership responsibilities with Jesus.

Hebrews

3:7 Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith,
To day if ye will hear his voice,

3:8 Harden not your hearts, as in the
provocation, in the day of temptation in
the wilderness:

3:9 When your fathers tempted me,
proved me, and saw my works forty
years.

3:10 Wherefore I was grieved with that
generation, and said, They do alway err in
[their] heart; and they have not known my
ways.

3:11 So I swore in my wrath, They shall
not enter into my rest.)

You need to see here this comparison of
our salvation with the exodus.

Numbers

13:25 And they returned from searching
of the land after forty days.

13:26 And they went and came to Moses,
and to Aaron, and to all the congregation
of the children of Israel, unto the wilder-
ness of Paran, to Kadesh; and brought
back word unto them, and unto all the
congregation, and shewed them the fruit
of the land.

13:27 And they told him, and said, We
came unto the land whither thou sentest
us, and surely it floweth with milk and
honey; and this [is] the fruit of it.

13:28 Nevertheless the people [be] strong
that dwell in the land, and the cities [are]
walled, [and] very great: and moreover
we saw the children of Anak there.

13:29 The Amalekites dwell in the land of
the south: and the Hittites, and the
Jebusites, and the Amorites, dwell in the
mountains: and the Canaanites dwell by
the sea, and by the coast of Jordan.

13:30 And Caleb stilled the people before
Moses, and said, Let us go up at once, and
possess it; for we are well able to over-
come it.

13:31 But the men that went up with him
said, We be not able to go up against the
people; for they [are] stronger than we.

13:32 And they brought up an evil report
of the land which they had searched unto
the children of Israel, saying, The land,
through which we have gone to search it,
[is] a land that eateth up the inhabitants
thereof; and all the people that we saw in
it [are] men of a great stature.

13:33 And there we saw the giants, the
sons of Anak, [which come] of the giants:
and we were in our own sight as
grasshoppers, and so we were in their
sight.

14:1 And all the congregation lifted up
their voice, and cried; and the people wept
that night.

14:2 And all the children of Israel
murmured against Moses and against
Aaron: and the whole congregation said
unto them, Would God that we had died
in the land of Egypt! or would God we
had died in this wilderness!

14:3 And wherefore hath the LORD
brought us unto this land, to fall by the
sword, that our wives and our children
should be a prey? were it not better for us
to return into Egypt?

14:4 And they said one to another, Let us
make a captain, and let us return into
Egypt.

14:5 Then Moses and Aaron fell on their
faces before all the assembly of the
congregation of the children of Israel.

14:6 And Joshua the son of Nun, and
Caleb the son of Jephunneh, [which were]
of them that searched the land, rent their
clothes:

14:7 And they spake unto all the company
of the children of Israel, saying, The land,
which we passed through to search it, [is]

an exceeding good land.

14:8 If the LORD delight in us, then he will bring us into this land, and give it us; a land which floweth with milk and honey.

14:9 Only rebel not ye against the LORD, neither fear ye the people of the land; for they [are] bread for us: their defence is departed from them, and the LORD [is] with us: fear them not.

14:10 But all the congregation bade stone them with stones. And the glory of the LORD appeared in the tabernacle of the congregation before all the children of Israel.

14:11 And the LORD said unto Moses, How long will this people provoke me? and how long will it be ere they believe me, for all the signs which I have shewed among them?

14:12 I will smite them with the pestilence, and disinherit them, and will make of thee a greater nation and mightier than they.

14:13 And Moses said unto the LORD, Then the Egyptians shall hear [it], (for thou broughtest up this people in thy might from among them;)

14:14 And they will tell [it] to the inhabitants of this land: [for] they have heard that thou LORD [art] among this people, that thou LORD art seen face to face, and [that] thy cloud standeth over them, and [that] thou goest before them, by day time in a pillar of a cloud, and in a pillar of fire by night.

14:15 Now [if] thou shalt kill [all] this people as one man, then the nations which have heard the fame of thee will speak, saying,

14:16 Because the LORD was not able to bring this people into the land which he swore unto them, therefore he hath slain them in the wilderness.

14:17 And now, I beseech thee, let the power of my Lord be great, according as thou hast spoken, saying,

14:18 The LORD [is] longsuffering, and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression, and by no means clearing [the guilty], visiting the iniquity of the

fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth [generation].

14:19 Pardon, I beseech thee, the iniquity of this people according unto the greatness of thy mercy, and as thou hast forgiven this people, from Egypt even until now.

14:20 And the LORD said, I have pardoned according to thy word:

14:21 But [as] truly [as] I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the LORD.

14:22 Because all those men which have seen my glory, and my miracles, which I did in Egypt and in the wilderness, and have tempted me now these ten times, and have not hearkened to my voice;

14:23 Surely they shall not see the land which I swear unto their fathers, neither shall any of them that provoked me see it:

14:24 But my servant Caleb, because he had another spirit with him, and hath followed me fully, him will I bring into the land whereinto he went; and his seed shall possess it.

Numbers

14:31 But your little ones, which ye said should be a prey, them will I bring in, and they shall know the land which ye have despised.

14:32 But [as for] you, your carcasses, they shall fall in this wilderness.

Numbers

14:39 And Moses told these sayings unto all the children of Israel: and the people mourned greatly.

14:40 And they rose up early in the morning, and gat them up into the top of the mountain, saying, Lo, we [be here], and will go up unto the place which the LORD hath promised: for we have sinned.

14:41 And Moses said, Wherefore now do ye transgress the commandment of the LORD? but it shall not prosper.

14:42 Go not up, for the LORD [is] not among you; that ye be not smitten before your enemies.

14:43 For the Amalekites and the Canaanites [are] there before you, and ye

shall fall by the sword: because ye are turned away from the LORD, therefore the LORD will not be with you.

14:44 But they presumed to go up unto the hill top: nevertheless the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and Moses, departed not out of the camp.

14:45 Then the Amalekites came down, and the Canaanites which dwelt in that hill, and smote them, and discomfited them, [even] unto Hormah.

This historical event is the provocation in the wilderness. Hebrews 3 is comparing this provocation with the status of these Hebrew Christians.

We need to compare this provocation with our status as well. We are in danger of murmuring and provoking the Lord. When you provoke the Lord, there are going to be some serious consequences. He says in verse 7, "Today if you will hear His voice." Today is an important day for you. Everyone who reads this please know that today is an important day for you. You are going to make a decision today. You are either going to provoke God or you are going to get out into the deep and go with God. When you get out into the deep, you are going to face the giants, the sons of Anak. You are going to look at the land. It is a land that swallows up and eats the inhabitants.

The problem here is that you have experienced the miracles of God. You have tasted the fruit of the promise. You have experienced it, and you bring your experiences with you and give a report to the rest of the people. Your report is either for the people to go with God or to not go out there because there are giants out there. If we stay up here in the shallows or on the bank, we will gain our comforts together because to get that fruit of the conquest, we must leave our comfort areas and go out to fight: "They have walled cities, they have giants, and the land is a hard land that devours the inhabitants."

You are going to make a decision: what are you going to do? Are you going to get into the deep water and go with God, or are you going to play it safe and stay up here on the bank and do your thing and ask God to bless you? Are you going to get out there so you can bless God, or are you going to stay up here and ask God to bless you? Are you going to let God be boss and tell you where to go, or are you going to be boss and tell Him where you are going to go? There are many of us, you see, who want to be boss and set our own paths and go and do only what we want to do. We say, "God, follow me!" Do we not do that? "Bless me as I go over here. Come on, God. I am just working away over here, hammering and digging and carrying on. Please bless my work for You." I am asking Him to bless "my" work. He is saying, "Get out here in the water, and let me bless you by giving you ***My Power to do My Work.***"

The kind of pilgrimage that God has for you, my dear friend, is a faith walk. Your own walk, what you want, is a sight walk. You play it safe, you can see everything, you can build a miniature river up here and splash around in it. Your place is safe because there are no giants in it. But God's river is a big river, you do not know what is around the bend. All you know is that He has promised to give you the power necessary to defeat all encountered enemies. He says,

Hebrews

3:8 Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness:

3:9 When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty years.

Manna Is Not for Warriors

Those people who provoked God were not blessed with rest. They were blessed with manna. Get this important understanding: those people who provoked God were not blessed with rest; they were blessed with manna! When the next generation grew up and took the sword in their hands as warriors, the manna stopped.

If you are a warrior, do not expect manna. Do not expect to sit on the bank or to be running in circles. Do not expect to be a baby of whom the Lord can take care, change the diapers, and feed by giving you manna and quail. Do not expect the Lord to give you shade and wind so that you can sit in the shallows and say, "Oh, I am being blessed." My friend, when you receive this kind of blessing, you are being blessed with a *secondary* blessing.

The primary blessing is to be chosen to take up the sword and to go into battle. That kind of duty is primary, and you are going to get dinged and skinned up in your primary blessing, perhaps even killed. You will be out in the deep wondering, "Man, I wonder what is around the bend. I hope it is not as bad as the last one."

I can assure you that your battles will get bigger and bigger. Your journey is progressive. The bigger you get, you see, the bigger the battles get. However, the thing is that no matter how big the giant is that comes against you, you will have God's power to defeat it.

Please know that we are not necessarily talking about carnal victories, victories against flesh and blood. Sometimes our battles are won through physical death. Take Jesus' death for example. He died on the cross for the greatest spiritual victory that the world has ever seen.

All victories must be spiritual in nature. They may perhaps extend to the physical, material, or carnal realm if God permits. The

example is Caleb's experience in Exodus, he came back from the spying mission and said, "Let's go take the land" because he visualized who God is. Even though we look like grasshoppers to the enemy, we may look at the enemy, as big as he is, through the lens of faith, and they will appear as grasshoppers to the warrior of faith. Do not misunderstand, my friend, your victory for God may include physical loss, perhaps death. However, sometimes the victory is a physical conquest. But there will never be victory in God's eyes unless it is based entirely on your TRUST in God. Physical, carnal, or material victory is not proof that it was a spiritual victory. Instead, it may be a spiritual loss.

Rest

There is a false understanding in the church about rest.

Matthew

11:28 Come unto me, all [ye] that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

11:29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

11:30 For my yoke [is] easy, and my burden is light.

God's *rest* is not what the church perceives as rest. The church perceives rest as someone kicking back: "Okay, I am saved. Okay, Lord, do your thing. Take care of me." That is what we are prone to do. "All right, I am ready for my great blessings. Where are they? You can strap them on me, Lord, any time now. I believe I would like to have this blessing and this blessing. And by the way, Lord, please whip up on any enemy giants who may be approaching while I am busy resting." That perception is a misunderstanding of what rest is.

When God rested on the seventh day, it was after He had worked and labored in the work of *creation*. He created all that there is, everything that exists, and then He rested.

But later on, you see, Jesus says, “My Father still works, and I work also.”⁶ If He is resting and He is working all at the same time, then the rest is equal to work, or He rested for a little while, and then He picked up and started working again. What is going on here?

What we have is a change of operation. The work of creation is done in six days, and then God’s work changes. We call that change “rest,” but that rest is the new economy of God for His creation, the managing of the creation under God’s Laws. Economy means the rules of the house. God’s economy is His management of His property. The economy is put into place, and God manages as the super steward of His economy.

Again, rest means a change from the work of creation to the work of *management*, from creation to *stewardship*, from creation to *oikonomia* (economy, i.e. implementing the rules of the house). He manages what He created. The creation is in place, and now He manages His creation under His established rules.

Adam is part of the creation; Adam is part of the house (*oikos* is house) and God is the house owner. He hands the whole thing over to Adam. He says, “How about managing this creation for me. Take care of this whole thing for me. You even get to name all the parts of the creation. I am handing it to you. Now I am boss, but you are my main steward, and it is all yours to manage. Name the creatures, run it, make it profitable, keep it up. It is yours to make out of it what I want. We will do it My way.” Adam, then, gets handed the whole deal, but he mismanages and fails in his assignment.

Now it is your turn to manage. You became a new creation because you got born again. You are a new creature. The creation

part is over. God completed it. You can join God in resting from the creation kind of work by moving to managing His creation. He says, “Okay, here is my whole world; I will put it in your hands. You and my other saints are my stewards, and I want you to manage all of creation and improve it. Make it profitable, keep it clean, do it right, and make it good for Me because I am still the owner.” That is what He is saying to us.

The job of stewardship is over all of creation. Certainly that includes ecological concerns, but it goes much further than that. The most precious part of creation is mankind, and the most important part of our stewardship is, therefore, to “seek and save that which is lost (Luke 19:10).”

God hands creation to us. It is our job, then, to enter into His rest. His rest is transitioning from a creation kind of work to a management kind of work. You labor in His rest. When you partner up with Him, you will get in yoke with the Lord. Guess what? You can carry the gigantic burden of the entire world on your shoulders if the Lord puts it there because the power of God is in that yoke with you. Then you can move forward. You can move the immovable. You can carry the unpick-up-able weight. You can do anything in the power of God if you are in yoke with Jesus. Please note, however, that we are to get in yoke *with Him* (in the river), not Him with us (on the bank).

Once you get into sanctification’s discipleship, then your work is no longer the undoable work. It is the do-able work because God does the work. All you must do is yield your will, get into the river, go where the river goes, and face by faith what is going to come around the bend.

To enter into God’s rest is to cease your effort of creation. Creation is what the unsaved world is trying to do. They are trying to recreate themselves into something better. But the new birth for us is to be re-created by

⁶ John 5:17 But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.

God into a new creature. *As soon as you get re-created, you may move into His rest, and that rest is to participate in the process of sanctification, the process of discipleship, the process of stewardship.* If we think that rest is sitting down, indulging ourselves, and waiting for God, then we do not understand what rest is. Rest is to cease from the labor of creation and move into the labor of management.

The work that Adam was to do is now ours except ours is a more responsible job because we have to go and do the work of Jesus, the *Missio Dei*, which is to seek and to save that which is lost. Grab the lost; take them to the Lord so that they can be re-created. Then get them into the river so that He can make them into managers as well.

We go out into the world, and we say, “Man, do you want a promotion?” They will say, “Yeah!” “You want to be a manager?” “Yeah!” “Do you want to manage the whole world?” “Yeah!” “Well, come on, I can get you hired because I know the boss.” You take him up there, and God says, “You are hired! Jump out there and manage my creation,” and they say, “Now wait a minute. I thought the workers were supposed to do the work, and the manager sat back and just cooled it by resting.” That is what some managers do. But we are supposed to get out there and hammer away. First, manage yourself by getting out there in the deep. Then God will use you to manage all of the problems that you will encounter as God manages the river.

There is great misunderstanding about God’s rest. Many think about God working and sweating and everything for six days, and then He says, “I finally got that done.” Then He just fell down on His sofa, and He just lies there resting. So this same misunderstanding is prevalent throughout the church. You see if we start taking salvation to mean only justification, and nothing after it, an event kind of

salvation, then we get this same idea that as soon as we get born again, we just fall on the sofa and rest. But it is not like that at all.

After justification comes sanctification. In sanctification there is discipleship which is to be in yoke with the Lord to manage creation. This creation includes our own creaturely selves. Managing self comes via self-denial, taking up the cross, and following Jesus. That is the kind of rest that we will have. It is no longer a work of creation (justification) but a work of management, *oikonomia* (the sanctification process—implementing God’s rules of the house). It is to manage all that God gives you in your sphere of influence to bring as great as possible of an eternal profit to Him in your trip down the river (discipleship). Your eternal rewards in heaven (glorification) will depend on your willingness to follow Him in *kenotic* discipleship.

Do We Assign God His Work?

Another misconception that is found in the church is the perception that God rested for only one day, and then He went back to work doing what we ask Him to do in our prayers. Many of us are just whiney babies. We do not engage in working for God in His mission. Instead we engage in our own missions of climbing in power, possessions, entertainment, and other such self-indulgences. Then when we are into a religious venture of our own choosing and making, we ask God to make it work. We go on our own mission, and we pray to God to bless our work. Basically that concept is the reversal of God’s command to follow Jesus. Instead it is our asking for Jesus to follow us.

Hebrews

3:12 Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.

3:13 But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be

hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.
3:14 For we are made partakers . . .

Partaker is partner.

3:12 . . . of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end;

The word, confidence, is *hupostasis* (stand under). Look at it like chart 2.3. We are looking at one Christian. Christ is at the top, and you are directly under Him. If you look at being partners with Christ, your confidence in Him will be when you are standing directly under Him. In this case, you are totally in yoke with Him. This is when you have confidence.

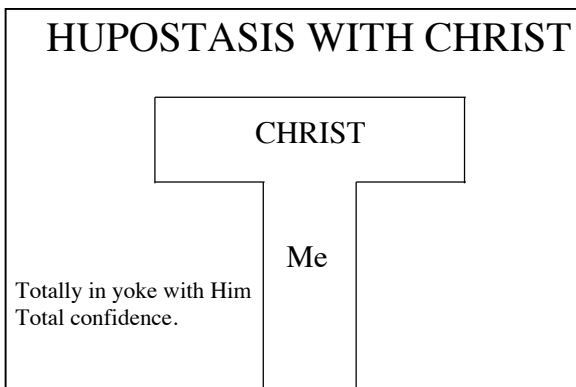


Chart 2.3

Chart 2.4 portrays the saint without confidence. When Christ is pushed over to one side, but you are off to the other side, there is no confidence. You are still saved, but the person separated from Christ is up on the bank or in the shallows of the water doing his own thing. He has no power because the power comes from being a partaker (partner) of Jesus Christ in His Mission. The first chart shows a person who has divine power. The separated person has only human power. He does not have divine power, but he is still saved.

Exhortation

Here is an example of something good that happens sometimes. Fred comes into a

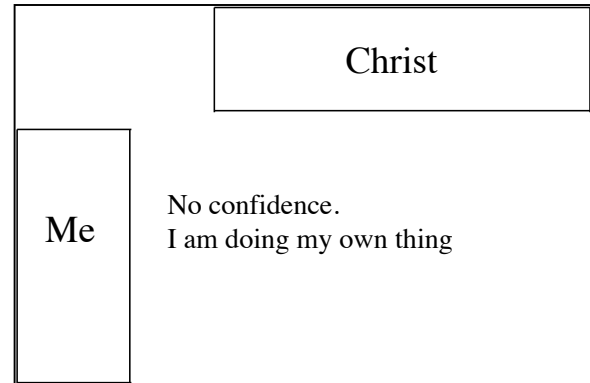


Chart 2.4

class like this and hears about this stuff and repents. Then when he leaves the class he gets down the hall a little ways still resolved to being in yoke with Christ. He meets a friend, Vernon, who asks him how he is doing. He tells Vernon of his commitment. Vernon says, “You need to get into the deep water.” Fred says, “Oh, I forgot all about having to do anything past the commitment. You are right. I have to get out there.” Fred is soon out in the deep water, and he has divine power helping him. He is just floating along, and then he sees a monster. He also sees Sam coming back, swimming hard toward the bank. Fred says, “Where are you going, Sam?” Sam says, “I am getting out of here! There is a monster back there.” Fred says, “I have the power of God to see me past that monster.” He grabs hold of Sam and says, “Turn around, man, don’t you remember what we are supposed to do?” Sam says, “Oh, yeah! My fear made me forget.” Then they both go back out into the deep, and they go on and start having victory in their lives.

We are supposed to exhort one another daily like Vernon did with Fred and Fred did with Sam. When we talk about exhort, we are speaking of positive things. We are not talking about beating them over the head or things that injure and make one never to want to be around one of those holier-than-thou people. But if you can just grab hold of your brother and say, “Come on! We will do it

together. We must stay out here in spite of the way it may look.” It says here in Hebrews 3:13, “exhort one another daily, while it is called today; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.”

To be deceived is to believe something that is not true because you think it is true. You come around the bend in the river and meet the dragon, and the dragon says, “I am going to kill you.” When you are in Jesus Christ, you can say to that dragon, “You can do anything you want to do, but I am going to defeat you because I am submitted to Jesus Christ.” You see, you can have victory over that dragon. But if you believe the dragon, you will turn around and start swimming back to the bank.

What we want to do is to uncover this deceit because you do not know where you are deceived. Every one of us is deceived in some area of life. There is only one person who has never been deceived. The rest of us are deceived in something. We struggle with trying to figure out what is true and what is false.

Some of you are deceived more than others. You are the ones who think that you know it all. You find out via the Word where your deceit is. You study the Word of God, and then you dialogue over Its meaning. Sometimes we do not understand the Word, or we get a deceitful twist to the Word, and we believe a lie. In our dialogue somebody could say that the Word does not mean what you think it means. You say, “Golly, do you mean that the Word could be saying something different?” You begin to check your understanding, you ask somebody else, and they say, “Yes, your understanding is wrong. I have been deceived on that too!” That is one very important way for you to pinpoint your deception and get it out of your life.

The Hard Heart of Deceit

This evil heart in verse 12 is something that every one of us has. The evil heart is the inherent desire to climb up, to indulge self. Every one of us has that. There is an evil heart in you. Do not let it harden. Continue to deny yourself. The first requirement of discipleship is to deny yourself. You will want to climb up, but when you do, catch yourself, and say, “No, I have to be sacrificial. I have to deny myself. I cannot be up here sitting in a chair drinking lemonade. I have to be out there in the battle.” The first requirement of discipleship is self denial.

Hebrews

3:15 While it is said, Today if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation.

3:16 For some, when they had heard, did provoke: howbeit not all that came out of Egypt by Moses.

3:17 But with whom was he grieved forty years? [was it] not with them that had sinned, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness?

3:18 And to whom sware he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not?

3:19 So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.

What I want you to do here is see that the whole process, everything to do with salvation, has to do with belief. Salvation is by grace through faith—every part of it. There is not a part of it that is not by faith. You see, you get in the water out there in the river by faith. You go down the river by faith, not by sight, not by works, but by faith. You submit your will by faith, not by works, not by sight, but by faith. All of salvation has to do with what you believe. The belief that I am talking about is the belief that is existential. You depend on it so much that it actually impacts your existence. What you believe, truly believe, is how you act. What you are going to do is based on your belief. If you do not

believe it, you are not going to do it. If you believe it, you will be out there doing it.

What is going to harden against doing it is that hard heart of selfish desire. Your heart is going to come in there and start to harden and try to turn you away from your faith and cause you to walk by sight. It will be the spirit against the flesh, faith against sight. You are going to see all these Christians on the bank who are cooling it and living the religious life of ease. They are considered big-league saints by the institutional church's definition. You will start to think that you need to get up there too with the majority.

Deceitful thoughts come from looking with your eyes of flesh. When you look out and see saints being burned at the stake or tied up with ropes and drowned, you may say, "Now hold it. God does not want me to suffer." You have heard a deceitful cliché in Christian circles and say: "That sounds good, yeah, I will put that down in my systematic theology: God does not want me to suffer."

That deceitful principle is one of the first things we are going to learn. Then it says over here in Hebrews that God wants me to enter into His rest. Now that we have established an incorrect base line for our theology, we interpret everything else incorrectly: "Yeah, that is what I want. I do not want to suffer. I will just lay around up here and rest."

We are getting our perverted theology in this way. We just take these institutional church ideas and put them as theological planks right there in our system, one plank after another. We are building our systematic theology, and it all sounds good. That, dear friend, is an evil heart that is hardening.

What we must do is understand that every part of salvation is faith or spirit against sight or flesh. When you follow the Lord, there

will be sacrifice, *kenosis* (see chart 2.5). There is no escape from sacrifice in discipleship, but let me tell you that there will be great joy in anticipating the unseen glory at the end.

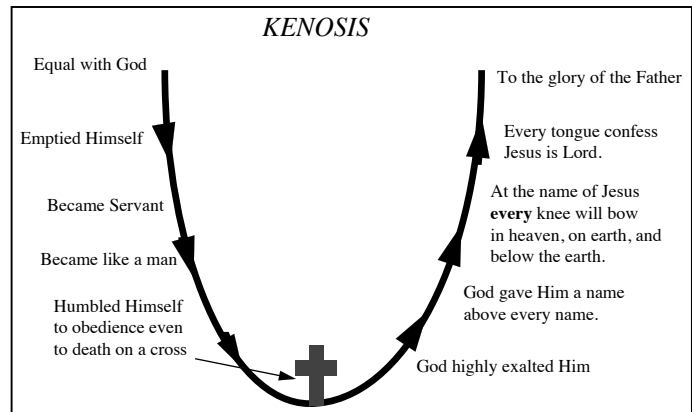


Chart 2.5

All you have to go by is what God promises. He just says, "Follow me. Lay up treasure in heaven, deny yourself, pick up your cross and follow me, and I will give you more than your heart desires. Anything you lose on this earth I will restore unto you hundredfold." All you have to go on is His Word. So, going on His Word is a faith position. When the saint gets out in the water, instead of indulging himself, he allows his life to be controlled by another force. Submitting to God is a faith proposition based on believing the promises of God.

But if the saint looks up at the bank with his eyes and sees all these other saints cooling it, having a good time, encouraging him to come on up on the bank with them, he will be looking with his carnal eyes. If he believes what he sees, the next thing to happen will be that he is climbing up out of the water. Those saints will lure him with, "We are going to have a revival, we are going to start a church-building project, we have a nice little river here. What are you doing out there? There are problems out there with great hardship. God does not want you to have hardship. Come on up here." You will soon be

climbing up out of the water. You will have traded your faith vision for sight vision. When you do, you lose the hope because hope is all of faith. All of salvation is by faith; it is not by sight.

That deception is coming, and you will have people trying to convince you of their methodology. They themselves are deceived. Therefore, they do not know that they are trying to deceive you. They are just telling you a bunch of traditional stuff from institutional church lore, and you must be able to strain out all of these many voices pulling at you. You must hear the voice of the Shepherd Who loves you enough to have died for you. He is the One you must follow, only Jesus. Sacrifice for the One who has sacrificed. Jesus is that One, not a dead institution. You will have, then, the true hope, not the hope of sight.

The law of the harvest is that the one who sows to the flesh will reap corruption.⁷ If you move to the bank of the river, you will reap corruption. He that sows to the Spirit, though, will reap life.⁸ That will be a life of glory that goes forever—never ends, never! You cannot beat that deal, but you must be able to do it by faith or it will not work. No faith, no glory. That is tough!

DISCUSS THE WILDERNESS PROVOCATION AS DESCRIBED IN HEBREWS 3:8-13

1. The hardening of hearts. Heb. 3:8
2. They got manna instead of rest. Heb. 3:9

Manna is a blessing for babies. In the wilderness wanderings, God blessed Israel with more than just manna. He blessed and blessed and blessed and blessed, and sustained them for forty years, in a place

where life could not be sustained. I am simplifying and just saying manna, but that is just one of many supernatural blessings. Water gushed out of rocks and quail flew daily into the camp are such examples.

3. They grieved God and knew not His ways. Heb. 3:10
4. God swore against their rest. Heb. 3:11
5. It can happen to us. Heb. 3:12

He says, “Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God.” It does not mean that you lose your salvation, but it certainly means that you can depart from the living God. All you must do to depart from the living God is reverse the *kenosis*. Where He went down, you go up. Where He is self-sacrificing, you become self-indulgent. That is departing.

6. There is exhortation against deceitfulness. Heb. 3:13
7. God’s rest is the work of stewardship or management.

Item 7 defines the rest that was mentioned twice above. I am adding that because you need to get this in your mind about this business of *oikonomia*, economy, stewardship, and management. When you are entering into God’s rest, it is a ceasing of your labors for self-creation and then entering into management of what God has already created.

The first job of management is to manage self. That is why you deny self, to manage yourself. You do not allow self to stampede out into all manner of indulgences. Denying self is the first requirement of self-management. Once you get self under control, you can then become a steward of the household of God, and that is why some of the first requirements for pastoring is that you do not be a striker, you do not be a drunkard, or you do not do this or that other stuff. You practice self-control. When you have managed your-

⁷ Galatians 6:8 For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

⁸ *Ibid.*

self and your own little house, you can then try to manage the larger household of God.

If you enter into the management of God's house, and you mismanage God's resources, then you will lead people out of the deep water. You could very well end up building yourself a great empire on the bank. It looks good. The steeple can be seen for miles. The money is rolling in, the membership is growing, and it is going good. But you have not led anybody into the deep water. Actually, the reverse is true. You have led them out of the deep water, and you are using God's resources for self. It may look good, but you are ruining their chances of actually earning rewards and "a well done thou good and faithful servant"⁹ from God. When their rewards go down, yours go down twice as fast. It is a heavy responsibility on a steward in God's house.

We have to be extremely wary. There are temptations for the steward of God after he launches a *kenotic* endeavor. He gets part of the way down in self-denial, and then turns the *kenosis* upside down and starts to climb. In his mind he can easily think that all is okay. You can be deceived, you see, into thinking you are doing the work of God, and it can be wrong, wrong, wrong! The test is what is going to happen to your people.

You pastors, teachers, and other ministers, your responsibility is for your people. What happens to your people? Are they growing? Are they getting into the deep water? Are they exploring their gifts? Are they throwing themselves by faith into the fellowship of Jesus? Or are they being drawn away, seeking their security in you or in the institution. Are they coming out of the great endeavors, coming up where it is safe, and just doing the religious, church-thing. You must get your people out there.

You equip, you encourage. You always have babies on the bank, but they are growing, then you have some teenagers moving into the shallows, then you have some middle-agers out further. Your elders should be out in the very deepest water. You want your elders to train those middle-agers (I am speaking of spiritual age and maturity now), who are next to be moving into deep water. Those, in turn, should train the teenagers, and the teenagers should be training and bringing along those who are moving from babyhood to childhood. You want to exhort **all** of your people.

Ministry should be participatory, not superstar ministry. Not, "Look at me, I am doing good, I have the big church over here." No, that is not it. NOW GET THIS: ***ministry for the elder is to get the people working, growing, moving, doing, exploring, and having the great adventure.*** Each one of them has a great adventure in store for him if you will teach him to deny himself, pick up his cross, and follow Jesus.

Then God will say to the good under shepherds, "Hey, pastor (or other minister), you did good. You have stored up great riches in heaven because you helped your people to store up riches in heaven. I am going to put you up here in charge of much of my business, big boy, and for eternity, you are going to manage a ton for me."

The minister, though, that scatters (causes the saint to follow anything or anyone other than Jesus) the sheep and indulges self will go up to the judgment throne and say, "Here I am, God; I came to get my rewards." God will say, "Now hold it right there, little man. You messed up everything that I entrusted to you. I trusted you with my resources and my saints. You did not do it right. I tell you what, here is a nice little chair, sit in it right over there for eternity. Do not even get up. You just sit there, kick back, and relax. I will take care of you with manna. Now, all the

⁹ Matthew 25:21

saints out in the deep water, come on up here, I have some work for you to do in partnership with Me. See that nation over there? I want you to take care of that nation.”

See how it is going to work? Your joy will overflow when you hear God’s reaction to your self-denying, cross-bearing fellowship. Trust me, get out there and do it. You will be grateful for eternity.

Mary: What happens if it is reversed? The pastor is out in the deep, but he cannot get any of his church out there.

V: We actually have some of that. You must continue to exemplify, pray, teach, and preach *kenotic* discipleship faithfully. The Holy Spirit will take it from there.

The church is like a vat of milk. When you have a vat of creamy milk, you need to separate the cream from the milk. You stir that vat gently until the cream rises to the top. Every preacher has a vat, and the Lord puts in the milk. He gives the pastor a paddle, the pastor stirs the vat, and stirs and stirs and stirs. After a while the cream will rise up, and you skim the cream off the top and place it in vat-2. Then you stir both vats, stir and stir and stir. Cream will rise again in vat-2, and then you skim off the top of vat-2 and put it in vat-3. Then you tell the cream of vat-3 to stir in vat-1. Then they start stirring, certainly with smaller paddles, but they are stirring. Then they get cream off the top and separate it into another vat. Then you have more vats going and a bunch of stirrers. As the “cream” rises to the top it is put to work stirring. If you are faithful to use your deep water people, God will keep adding more milk to your original vat.

Faithfully ministering to your people like I have just described will result in a group who can do work in your absence, who can preach when you are gone, who can make the pastoral visits, who can even start a new church for the Lord, who can answer ques-

tions and teach. They start teaching others how to stir. Your people start training the stirrers. Pretty soon the pastor pulls partly out of the assembly line, and he becomes, then, an exhorting pastor-teacher. He says to his people, “Go for it, Do it.” He is getting one guy to rise to the challenge, and to another he says, “You are doing good.” To another he says, “Let me teach you about a technique.” He is growing his people up, and when his people start growing, he is growing too. The only reason he is alive is to grow his people.

Ministry is a chain thing, and it works. You ministers just **get your eyes off self!!!** Your concern is the welfare of your church. I am speaking of your people, not the institution. The welfare of your people is your highest priority, not your welfare, but their welfare. When you start growing them, your stock with God goes up, and goes up fast! But if you grow self by growing a mere institution at their expense, your stock goes down.

HEBREWS CHAPTER 4

4:1 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.

This is a threat that should induce fear in the born again Christians. There is the possibility that you can come up short on this rest thing. After this letter, the blood of these Hebrews is not on Paul’s hands. This letter puts it on them. It is their responsibility now. Well, guess what? Here you are too. It is too late now, for you to avoid having your own and your people’s blood on your own hands. We need to fear lest we should come up short. I do not plan on coming up short. I am going to tell you the whole thing, and whether you like it or not, I am still going to tell you. I am going to exhort, I am going to encourage, and I am going to help you to find how to get into that deep water. But I want you to be aware

that there is a threatening situation here, and the threat is that you could come up short. So, fear coming up short and losing the promise.

Hebrews

4:2 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].

This verse shows the difference between knowledge and faith. Verse 2 says there must be more than just the knowing of the Word. You have to believe the Word, and what I am seeing is that this business of knowledge without faith is a repeat of that old heresy called *Gnosticism*. *Gnosticism* is when you put your faith in knowledge, and knowledge will not get you anything if you do not apply it. To believe the truth is more than just to know the truth.

James says, “To know the truth and not do it, to him it is sin.”¹⁰ The worst thing a person can do if they do not plan on doing it, is be in this class because you are fixing to know it. If you do not plan on doing it, you are heaping sin upon sin. It is stacking up. We must be ready to apply it: if you know the truth, then do the truth.

I once said that I would like to experiment in a church by preaching one verse and giving an invitation for everybody to do that verse. If everybody does not respond, then I will teach that verse the next time. And I would tell them, “I am going to preach this one verse until everybody is willing to do that verse. When everybody is committed to do that verse, we will do the next verse.” We are going to step through being doers of the Word and not hearers only of the Word.¹¹ We will just keep on trucking on through, adding verses and becoming full-blown doers of the

Word and see how long I would last in a typical church. I have been thrown out of some places, and I expect to be thrown out of more, but that is all right because I am honored that the people can see enough of a difference to want to throw me out.

Gnosis, knowledge, has to be mixed with faith. To hear something is not the same thing as faith. To apply it is faith. You must know it, and you must do it. Doing what you know, because you believe it, is faith. You must combine knowledge and action. If you just know it, you are accountable to do it, and it is sin to you if you know it and do not do it.

There are many people running from Bible study to Bible study, and they are stacking up sin upon sin. They say, “Man, we got a blessing.” You did not get a blessing, you got a ticket for a whipping. Then they run to the next Bible study, and come out of there floating in ecstasy with goose bumps. They say, “We’ve got it now, we are getting a blessing.” No, you are getting in line for a whipping. They just keep on stacking up sin on their heads.

Non-doers do not even know what is happening. If they could just get to doing what they learn, then it would become part of them. That is how you grow. But there is a wide spread misconception among the saints that all you have to do is just know it. You can quote chapter and verse, just knock it out. That kind of saint is generally considered to be a real spiritual person, but actually that is a bad situation to be in.

Henry: I have never seen a church where they “did” what you are suggesting.

V: I know it. For one thing it takes a brave pastor to even talk like I am talking. You see, I have the elite; I have all of you. You, on the other hand, have to go to where you are not believed. You have to go where the people do not want to hear this stuff. They want their ears tickled; they want rest to

¹⁰ James 4:17 Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth [it] not, to him it is sin.

¹¹ James 1:22 But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.

mean kicking back. They do not want to hear about a river and big monsters and all that stuff.

When the spies came back with the fruit, the people said, "Yeah, we need some fruit." The leaders said, "God wants us to go up there to get it today." "Oh, no, we are not going up there." Then they all mourn, "We cannot have any fruit?" They labor in prayer all night long, and they beg God, "We must have some fruit, God, please give it to us." The next morning they gather around and have a vote. They change their minds and say, "God wanted us to go and capture the land yesterday. So, we will go get the fruit now. We could not go yesterday because we were not ready, but we are going today." Then God said, "Do not go today. Your opportunity was yesterday. The people in the land are going to tear you up because you are going on your own terms. You will not last very long on a mission in which I am not fighting for you."

There is opportunity and responsibility in doing what you know. If you do not get into the deep now, the opportunity will flow by and be forever lost.

Hebrews

4:3 For we which have believed do enter into rest, as he said, As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest: although the works were finished from the foundation of the world.

4:4 For he spake in a certain place of the seventh [day] on this wise, And God did rest the seventh day from all his works.

That passage reflects the Genesis 2:2 passage. God did His creation in six days, and the work was finished. Today, the work of re-creation is done in the blink of an eye, and the work is finished. From that point of re-creation on, the work is stewardship, management, a complete change of scenario.

Hebrews

4:5 And in this [place] again, If they shall

enter into my rest.

4:6 Seeing therefore it remaineth that some must enter therein, and they to whom it was first preached entered not in because of unbelief:

You remember the murmuring that I read to you where the people had sent the spies in? The spies came back and gave such a scary report. It was not a built-up, false report. They just told what they saw, but what they saw was with the human eye, not the eye of faith. The human eye will fool you. The people responded then saying, "We cannot conquer those giants; we cannot take this land." There was, however, the other minority part of the group who said, "Let us go up and take the land." That was the minority group that had the eyes of faith and were able to believe God.

So, you have the two kinds of spies, and then you have the people, the whole population listening to the majority report with one ear and the minority report with the other ear, and they are saying, "God, did You bring us out here to die? Did You bring us out here so that our wives and little ones will be prey to these giants. It would be better if we had died in the wilderness or died in Egypt. As a matter of fact, let's elect a captain to lead us back to Egypt."

Here are the people in the re-creation. They came through the Red Sea, and they are poised on the border of the Promised Land. He is saying, "Go take the land and enter into my rest. Take my yoke upon you and be in my rest¹² for my burden is light."

Now today, we who have been re-created look around: "There are giants all around here, and I thought this Christian new birth thing was going to be a bed of roses. I did not know I would have to suffer and all like that! Let's get us a captain and go back over where it was cool. We had good jobs, we had

¹² Matthew 11:29.

everything going for us, we had money and all this good stuff. We did not have the responsibility of all these baby Christians, all the time murmuring against us. Every time I come up with a plan, they say, 'It cannot be done.'"

You see, that scenario is like our wanting to turn back to our enslavement like a dog to its vomit.¹³ Like a pig to its mud hole. God does not like that kind of behavior or attitude. When He encountered that lack of faith, He said, "I swear in my wrath, you are never going to enter into my rest." He did not heave them over to Satan out here in the desert land so that they are lost again. He just allows them to become idle, and He says, "Okay, enter into 'your' rest. You are not entering into 'My' rest. You just do your own thing. Walk in circles. I will feed you manna, I am going to demonstrate my power for 40 years, and your carcasses are going to fall out there and rot. Just sit down, cool it, you do not have to fight any more battles, no more battles for you, no deep water for you. You do not even have to plow the ground and bring in a harvest. I am going to take care of you, feed you everyday. I am going to shadow you, keep the heat off you, I am going to make your shoes last for 40 years. You just walk in circles there, just cool it. Just rest. Do not get in My rest, get in your own rest. This is the kind of rest you want? Then have gobs of it. It is all yours."

When you get to glorification after a lifetime of your kind of rest, He will say, "You remember how you rested? Have a seat and do the same kind of nothing, for eternity." That is what they are going to reap. I do not want that. When He has a job in heaven that He wants done, I want Him to say, "Hey, Bill, I've got a job for you." And I will run joyfully up to Him because He picked me to do what He wants done. But class, I must do that now if I want to do it in heaven!

¹³ Proverbs 26:11.

Hebrews

4:7 Again, he limiteth a certain day, saying in David, To day, after so long a time; as it is said, To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.

4:8 For if Jesus . . .

This is Joshua.

Hebrews

4:8 . . . had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of another day.

Now, note that Joshua led the people into the Promised Land, but that is not accomplishing the rest that God has for you today because you must cooperate with Jesus in His present mission to enter His rest for you.¹⁴ This rest for Joshua's group is a "type" of the rest that God has for you.

Here is Joshua and his people plodding around in circles in the wilderness. The adults are dying off leaving only their babies that they used as an excuse to avoid taking the promised land. Their excuse went something like, "We cannot go in there; they will eat our babies." Amazing, these great warriors who have come through the wilderness, who have fought, who have come through the Red Sea, who have defied Pharaoh and the entire Egyptian army, who have seen the miracles of God, who have seen and tasted the fruit of the land, said, "We cannot go in there, they might eat our babies."

God, in turn, said to them, "You are going to fall in the wilderness. I am going to take these babies in there and conquer the land with them." These great Israeli warriors fell over, fell over, fell over, and pretty soon they are all dead and gone, and all that remain are these babies who are now adults and are raised up by God to do what their parents failed to do. They get a helmet, sword, shield,

¹⁴ In the first rest, it was God-Joshua-rest. Now, it is God-Jesus-rest. Joshua led God's people into physical battle, and now Jesus leads the saints into spiritual battle.

spear, girdle, and breastplate, and they are led by Joshua into the land, and they take the land. The babies! who did not see the greatest miracles of God fight the wars.

Imagine how the parents carry their babies along in the exodus. They are walking along in family groups, going through the Red Sea with a wall of water on each side. You are saying, "Pharaoh is coming, we must go!" You have a pack on your back and your child by the hand. He is walking by your side happy because his daddy has him by the hand. He sticks his finger in the wall of water. He sticks his hand in there. He is just enjoying it; he does not know anything. He does not fear anything.

After the great escape from Pharaoh on the other side of the sea, he listens to the stories, and he thinks about the wall of water, and is told that God had parted the Red Sea and that they had walked through on dry land. "Oh, God did that!" He is being trained up and nurtured in the Word of God and God's providence. The child is growing on that Word of God, but what is happening to the warrior parents? They are shrinking, because to know the truth and not do it, to him it is sin.¹⁵ It will dwarf you, and kill you if you know the truth and do not do it. Beware of what you know. If you do not plan on doing it, please know that you are in danger. The only truly helpful plan is to obey God's Word. Commit to it now.

I am going to help you get past that, problem. Pray with me now. *"Dear Lord, I want to do Your Word. Please receive my commitment to You now. As I learn these discipleship principles, I swear now to You, my Lord Jesus, to apply them to the best of my ability. Please do whatever is necessary to enforce this commitment that I am making to You. In Your Name Jesus and for Your Glory, I pray this prayer to You."* If you prayed this

prayer and you want it to apply to your life from here on out, say, "Amen" out loud right now.

Please see that these babies, who have grown up to become God's warriors, received all this nurturing in God's Word. They are just like us, just crazy enough to believe it. God says to them, "It is time to go in and take that land." They each get a big ole sword; they can hardly pick it up. God said go in. So, they are going in. Thus they take up their swords to the best of their abilities, and they take the land. How did they do it? They obeyed God and just walked around the city. They just walked around Jericho, walked and walked, then the walls fell down. They said, "Look at that! How did that happen?" When you obey God, great things will happen.

If what Joshua's group did had been the "rest" for us, then there would be nothing for us to do. What Joshua's group did was a type of rest. If it had been the final rest, we would not be talking about this rest here in Hebrews because it would have already been done by Joshua. That is not your rest. Your rest is to enter the rest of God Who is in the stewardship phase of His plan. You are the re-creation, and now you are the ones who get to be in partnership with Jesus Christ in His management of all that which He has redeemed. That stewardship is what this rest is all about.

We have here a promise and an exhortation. We need to hear this. Do not let our hearts harden. God's rest is to deny ourselves, pick up your crosses, follow the Lord Jesus into His Mission of redemption, and do what He assigns us to do.

Hebrews

4:9 There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.

4:10 For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God [did] from his.

4:11 Let us labour therefore to enter into

¹⁵ James 4:17

that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.

4:12 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 discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

4:13 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.

What we are being exhorted to do here is to be diligent about getting into this rest. Do not let it slip by. Study it. Talk about it. Pray about it. Make an effort, test your knowledge, do what you know. Do a little bit more. Test it. Do a little bit more. Test it. Know a little bit more. Do it. Do a little bit more. Test it. And grow a little bit more; you will turn into a great warrior if you just do that process. It is a simple process.

Hebrews

4:14 Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast [our] profession.

4:15 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.

4:16 Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

There are promises in this passage.

Why should we fear coming short of God's rest?

1. There is no profit/rest without faith. Hebrews 4:2
2. Many of God's people enter, but some do not because of unbelief. Hebrews 4:6
3. A new day, "today," is announced to you for you to enter. Hebrews 4:7
4. The new day comes because Joshua's rest was not complete. Hebrews 4:8

5. There is a rest available for Christians. Hebrews 4:9

6. Let's cease our own works and enter God's rest. (A new kind of works built on faith in God.) Hebrews 4:10-11

7. We will be judged by the Word of God. Hebrews 4:12-13

NO EXCUSES ARE ALLOWED:

8. No excuses because Jesus is our sympathetic High Priest in the Holy of Holies. Hebrews 4:14-16

9. No excuses because we can hold fast our confession. Hebrews 4:14

10. No excuses because we can come boldly to His throne. Hebrews 4:15-16

Sally: So what you are telling us in this rest analogy or explanation is that we have stopped working toward our salvation—once we receive Christ, that work is over as compared to God building the world in six days.

V: Yes, justification is over.

Sam: Then we move into what is called God's rest. It is not in the world's understanding that we enter rest by stopping work, but we move into a new mode of work—the managerial stewardship work of God's kingdom. Right?

V: Yes. You are right on the money. It is a total change of "kind" of work. The first work is an impossible work, and that is why it is such a laborious job. It is a work of our own definition. We want to save ourselves according to our own plan. That will not work. We must go through God's creative work. He is the creator. When we get through that by being re-created, then *our* work comes which is easy. The work of managing compared to the work of self-creation is a snap. It would seem like rest. Besides that comparison, we have the necessary power to do the work because we are in yoke with the Lord. All we have to do is yield our wills, and He will provide all the power.

Tim: We are resting; He is doing the work.

V: Yes. God provides the power to do His work through us.

Jack: For those who do not enter God's rest in the river, even though there were chances or opportunities for them to get in, does there come a time when those opportunities can be lost forever?

V: Yes, it can happen. That event is called the provocation. The murmurings of Israel provoked God to wrath. There are three words for wrath: *thumos*, *epithumos*, and *orge*. *Thumos* is a flash of anger. It comes up in God's face, and then He does something about the cause of the wrath, then the wrath subsides. I am not talking about God as reacting, because God knows before hand what you are doing and what He is going to do. *Thumos* is pretty bad in that it usually gets you some stripes from His rod of discipline. He just whacks, and you jump back in line, and then the wrath subsides because you have responded by getting it right again. You are back on the right path. I have experienced this level of God's wrath.

Epithumos has the panting or heavy breathing with *thumos*. When God gets to *epithumos*, I am out of here. I want to be striding quickly on down God's path for me. I do not want to be around when God's wrath is *epithumos* because all manner of bad things are going to happen. Someone is going to get a terrible whipping, and things are going to get broken.

Orge is an abiding wrath, and that is the wrath that He had with His people when they provoked Him in the wilderness. *Orge* does not subside. It does not go up like a flash and come back down. Nor does it involve heavy breathing kind of wrath. It comes slowly. It builds while His people persist in their sin: "How can they continue to do this? I brought them out of Egypt by doing ten miracles to

deliver them. They have seen Me, I have delivered them, and they say that they want to go back to Egypt! They do not believe Me when I say that I will give them the land. Okay, your carcasses will fall in this wilderness, and there is no escape for you."

When He comes to that point of frustration with continued disobedience, that is it for the child of God, God's children, God's people, the ones whom He delivered. He says, "Okay, just walk in a circle for forty years. Be the laughing stock of the world. You will die out there, and not only that, I am going to embarrass you even more. While you are walking in a place that has no water and no food and no clothing, nothing to sustain life, I am going to demonstrate Who I am to you for forty years." They just walked around in a circle, walked around in a circle in the wilderness. They even confirmed their lack of belief by not seeing their wanderings as punishment. They actually began to say, "We are the greatest people in the world. God is blessing us. Look at us, we have this manna and the quail, and water, and shoes that will not wear out, and all this! Look at this!"

Today's people who are walking around in circles for their whole lives say, "Look at this! I do not even have to fight a battle, I do not even have to pick up a sword. I am just cooling it. Everybody is swooning over me. Look at this, I am the greatest child of God."

Facing your battles is when the temptation enters, you see. That temptation is to murmur against God because of your problems. When you start flirting with going back to your carnal captivity and murmuring against God when He has demonstrated His power, and He is calling you to be in yoke with His Son, watch out! He will pull you up a chair, make you sit in it, and that will be it. If your persistence in lack of faith and murmuring ever comes to *orge*, that is it.

Tom: In your point number 8 where it says “Because Jesus is our sympathetic High Priest in the Holy of Holies,” is Jesus sympathetic or compassionate in that sentence? I need the clarification for study purposes.

V: Both. Sympathetic would be that He has the same understanding and passions, and compassionate would indicate a willingness to help.

Tom: Okay, that is what I am looking at, compassionate because He helped them after they rebuked His Word. Sympathetic because He understood what they were doing. But the question is: He understood what they were doing, but then He was angry because they knew better. Is that true?

V: Yes, God expects corresponding action to follow knowledge.

Every one of us has a challenge in front of us because none of us are running the maximum race. There is improvement in front of every one of us. Some of you may think that what you are facing is an impossible task. Some of you may not want to go and do what God is calling you to do. In every one of us is an evil heart that is seeking to rise up and harden and give us justification for not doing what God is calling us to do. We are looking for rationalization for our disobedience. We are looking to have our own way and bypass what God is calling us to do.

I do not know what it is that God is calling you to do. But I know this much: God is calling you to do something. There is no question about that. It is up to you to hear God’s voice and follow Him into the deep water. That means then that you cannot do your own will, set your own path, do your own work. It means that you must yield your will to Him. When you do that, you lose control.

Many of us are control freaks. We must have control, we must know what the next

step is, and all of that. That is not living by faith. I do not know what God is calling you to do, but I do beseech you to look at your life and see where it is that you need to launch out and take a step of faith and get out into the deep water. There are surely some biblical truths that have come to you that you are not doing.

The most important thing to God is saving the lost. His whole mission is built around His statement: “I came to seek and to save that which is lost.”¹⁶ That is why He came. That expressed purpose means then that in order to be in yoke with Him, we need to be about witnessing and tracting and ministering, encouraging others to do the same, and getting our brethren to grow a little bit, challenge them, link arms with them, walk into the deep water with them, show them how to swim, how to dog paddle, how to float, and model these things for others to follow.

There are many things that you need to consider. However, to come through this class having talked about the river of chapter 2 and the “therefore” of chapter 2, and the fear of chapter 4, but yet walk out of here and say, “Boy, this was a fun class,” but your life does not change would be terrible. That is not good, folks. My friend, the ball is in your court.

Please evaluate your life now. What are you gifted to do in the Mission of God? What training do you need in order to do it? Do you have the faith to get out into the deep of God’s river? What is your next step? If you are not sure, then fast, pray, and ask an older trustworthy-brother for counsel. Study God’s Word and meditate on it. Seek and you will find. Knock and it will be opened to you.¹⁷

¹⁶ Luke 19:10 For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.

¹⁷ Matthew 7:7.

Chapter Questions

1. List the three parts of salvation, and explain each or draw the chart that illustrates the parts of salvation.
2. Compare the results of sanctification ignored by the children of Israel when they refused to enter Canaan at Kadesh-Barnea with those that they actually received.
3. Illustrate the *hupostasis* with Christ and its opposite for the Christian.
4. Discuss the wilderness provocation as described in Hebrews 3:8-13.
5. Define Gnosticism.
6. Why should we fear coming short of God's rest?
7. Define *Missio Dei*.

Chapter 3

QUALIFICATIONS FOR PRIESTHOOD, WARNING & EXHORTATION

HEBREWS CHAPTER 5

Jesus as High Priest

Hebrews

5:1 For every High Priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things [pertaining] to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins:

5:2 Who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way; for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity.

5:3 And by reason hereof he ought, as for the people, so also for himself, to offer for sins.

5:4 And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as [was] Aaron.

This is describing the human High Priest that we are going to be looking at to see if Jesus fulfills these qualifications.

1. The High Priest is taken from among men. Hebrews 5:1

He has to be a man. So it is a man who is coming out from among men. He is ordained to the things of God. He will deal with sacrifices for sin.

2. He also has to have compassion for men. Hebrews 5:2

It also says that He has compassion for the ignorant and on them that are out of the way. That compassion is going to come from his own infirmity. This tells you something about your own infirmities, the struggles that you go through. If you are going to serve as a Priest, you need to be able to have compassion on those people who are going through these struggles. The best way to have

that compassion is for you to have been sensitized in those same struggles.

Notice that He is talking about two kinds of people to have compassion on. One is the person who is ignorant, and there are many people who are ignorant. We too need to have compassion for the ignorant and not an aloofness and an arrogance where we elevate ourselves and look down upon them. Instead we are to have a compassion for them.

I will tell you right now, every one of us is ignorant in something. We need to have compassion shown to us also in those areas.

The second kind of person we are to have compassion on are those who are out of the way. They are not on their path or in the river, but out of the way. They need compassion also. There are times when you are out of the way. Therefore, you need compassion as well, and you should be sensitized to that need from your own experience.

3. He needs to be able to sacrifice for his own sin. Hebrews 5:3

The High Priest gave sacrifice for his own sin. And he also offered for the sins of others.

4. He is not self-appointed. Hebrews 5:4 says, "And no man taketh this honour unto himself."

The highest kind of ordination is to be born for that purpose. We are going to look at the Lord now in chart 3.1, and compare Him against these qualifications.

Is Jesus a man?	Yes, He is a man.
Does He have compassion?	Yes, He has compassion.
Offering for sins?	He does offer for sins, but not sins for Himself. He offers for our sins, and He only makes one offering. That is it. It is a perfect, once, and finalized kind of offering.
Is He is self-appointed?	He did not take this honor to Himself. His Father gave Him a greater appointment than the regular High Priest who is also appointed by God. However, God is not the regular High Priest's father. Jesus' ordination was in His birth. His Father is God!

Chart 3.1

Now let's look at the details.

Hebrews

5:5 So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an High Priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to day have I begotten thee.

5:6 As he saith also in another [place], Thou [art] a Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.

5:7 Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared;

5:8 Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered;

5:9 And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;

5:10 Called of God an High Priest after the order of Melchisedec.

I want to focus a little bit on some details showing how the Lord met these qualifications which are significantly high. The Lord met them, and He met them in a much greater way than the regular High Priests.

Jesus Is Eternal High Priest

This thing about a High Priest after the order of Melchisedec is an understanding of His eternity. Jesus is not going to be the kind of High Priest that Aaron was. Aaron's High Priesthood passed on to another man,

but the Lord's High Priesthood never passes away because He is eternal. Therefore, there is only one High Priest for us today, and that High Priest is the Lord Himself, Jesus Christ. That office will not be passed to another. It will never pass away. It is an eternal Priesthood, and it is constant.

There will never come a time, like in the description of Pharaoh, where there arose a king of Egypt who knew not Joseph.¹ We do not have to worry about that problem occurring with our High Priest. Every time, no matter who gets reborn, no matter what era they are getting born in, our High Priest will know him. There is a constancy about this which gives us stability and confidence.

Jesus Is Constant

Our High Priest's personality does not change. He is the same today as He was yesterday. He is going to be consistent right down the line. No matter what happens in the future, the Lord is the same. You can count on that. He acts consistent with the written Word. He does not vacillate with time and try to send another different message like our courts today, which make rulings based on what kind of message they want to send. Our judgments from today's courts, then, are

¹ Exodus 1:8 Now there arose up a new king over Egypt, which knew not Joseph.

based on what kind of message the judges want to send, not on the law and being constant and consistent. The Lord is not like them. The Lord and the Word are constant and consistent. The integrity of our High Priest, then, remains absolute. His perfect integrity gives you and me stability upon which we can take our stands.

Jesus Offered Up Prayers with Tears

Hebrews

5:7 Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared;

This is our Lord we are talking about here. These are strong words. He offered up prayers and supplications with strong weeping tears, and God heard Him because Jesus feared. The kind of fear we are talking about here is He feared God, the same kind of fear you are supposed to have. You should fear God. There is a justice in God, and it is not going to waiver, and it is not going to be where you can come in and get off the hook with some fancy talking. It is going to be like a rock, and it is not going to pass away, and you can count on it for eternity.

Jesus Feared God

The Lord feared God. God sent His Son on a mission, and the Son feared not doing that mission, feared disappointing the Father, feared actually goofing up what He was sent to do. He also had human hurts and pains and agony and anxiety. He experienced the kinds of things which you experience. When you look at your death and shudder at it, you may want to turn away from it. You look at it and say: "No." Then you come to the One who is the author, and you say, "Oh, God! If my mission can be done some other way, let this thing pass from me."

God heard His Son's prayers, and He sent an angel to nurture Him right there so that He could go through what was in front of Him. But the Lord feared. He is looking at His death. He can hardly look at that trial. He looks at it, "No! Father!" He came to the One who can deliver Him from death, and He asks in reverential fear, and the Father heard the request because of the fear. He sends an angel. Please notice that He does not deliver the Lord *from* the death. He sends an angel to help Him go *through* the death.

Understand this: This is your model; this is what you are going to have to do. The reason you are in this course is so you can get hold of this understanding of fear of mission right here. This is the answer. You know what Jesus said? "Not my will but thine."² When you can do this, "Not my will but thine," then the Lord God will send you angels, and you will be able to walk through things that you cannot even imagine going through right now. You are going to have the power of God to sustain you through your mission, and when you go through it, you will bring glory to the Lord because you have denied your will. Self-denial is the answer. You need to know that the reason people do not reach their spiritual maturity is because they are unable to deny their own wills.

Requirements for Discipleship

You see the spiritual walk and spiritual growth are all built upon the very first requirement in discipleship. God says that if you are going to follow Him, you must first deny yourself. If you cannot do that, you can never mature spiritually. You cannot achieve God's will for your life unless you deny your own will. Without such denial you cannot get into the deep water. If you cannot deny yourself, then the only thing that is left for

²Matthew 26:39 And he went a little further, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou [wilt].

you to do is deny God's will. You are either going to deny your own will, or you are going to deny God's will.

Now the Lord, in His prayer, begged for relief. He did not want to go through that crucifixion thing, but He said, "However not my will but thine be done." That is the clue; that is the key to discipleship; that is the key to maturity. Denying your will is the key to getting into the deep water. It is the key to everything that anybody has ever done that amounts to anything concerning Jesus.

Let me give you a different scenario. This is the scenario that most people want. You are one of them, and so am I. It is that we want to mature and have our own wills, too. That is where we are.

So when it is time to go through a trial, we do not want to go through it. No! And we pray, "Get me out of this mess." We stop right there. We want total deliverance and say, "Lord, get me out of this mess." We forget about that "not my will but thine" part. That is where the Holy Spirit comes to pray for you with groanings that cannot be uttered. You cannot even say the words: "Nevertheless, Lord, I will just go on through that thing if that is what you want." The Holy Spirit says it for you because you cannot make yourself say it. You are sitting there, and "Oh, no, Lord, oh, no." Then you get a whole bunch of folks praying, "Oh, no, Lord" for you.

That is where we are. This is the key to spiritual maturity, the ability to deny yourself, to say, "No, not my will but thine." That is the whole essence to every step along your path. When you take a step in your spiritual walk, it is one of self-denial. Each step is a step in self-denial. While in self-denial, you will encounter the carrot that dangles around in front of you. The carrot is to indulge yourself because everybody else is practicing self-indulgence. But you have to say, "No!" You take a step. The crowd says: "Oh, come on, it

will be all right." Even though you want to follow the crowd, you must say: "No!"

The Lord has given us the model (see Chart 3.2). He preached it. He said pure and simple, as clear as it can be said, "You must deny yourself as a first requirement." Then He demonstrated it, He prayed it in His prayer. It is all the way through His preaching and His praying and His model or example. In all three things, He demonstrates this principle.

There is no shortcut to discipleship, and

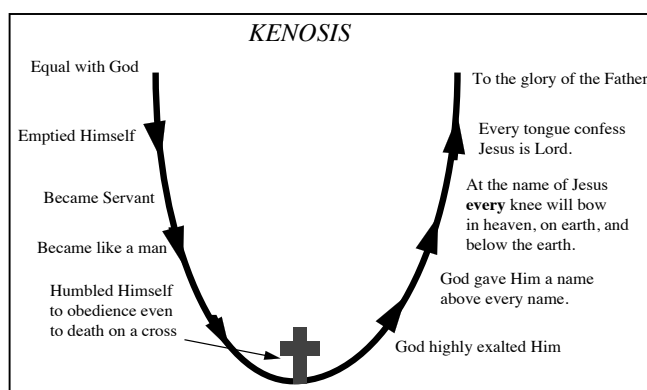


Chart 3.2

there is no way you can have your cake and eat it too. That is where we are—we want to have our own will along with the celebration of spiritual maturity and the rewards and the fanfare and the angels swooning over us. You might as well confess it because that is where you are. But the Lord is consistent. How wonderful He is to be able to do this self-denial, and do it as a man—demonstrate the impossible. He did not just preach to us. He did it!

He guarantees that you can do it too, because He will give you the power. The Holy Spirit will be there to give you that power. Angels will be dispatched to your aid, but they are not to deliver you out of your task, they are to carry you through your task.

Jesus Learned Obedience

It says in verse 8:

Hebrews

5:8 Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered;

You need to see about this learning obedience. Jesus Himself had to learn it. This is our Lord that we are talking about. Jesus had to learn obedience. The way you learn obedience is by doing the things you do not want to do. You are learning self-indulgence if you do nothing but what you want to do. But in obedience, you have to learn through suffering. It has to be self-denial, which contains the *kenosis*.

We have talked about the *kenosis* in here. Your path from your new birth to death is downward. You leave your position of self-exaltation at your new birth, and from that point on you say, "I am just a sinner saved by grace." You even get to sing *Amazing Grace* and that you are a wretch. A wretch is down at the bottom. You just keep on coming down. You come down, down, down, to ultimate obedience that is at the bottom. Then it says not only obedience but obedience unto the death, even the death of the cross.

Obedience is part of the *kenosis*, and this *kenosis* is a downward trek built upon obedience, and the obedience is learned in suffering. You see where it says in Philippians 2:5-11 that He obeyed unto death, and then even the death on the cross. So it is a suffering kind of obedience.

We like to do it just the other way around: obedience is interpreted as our getting everything that we want. You see we tie our obedience to good things. But the Lord had to learn obedience by suffering. That means, then, that your faith is also going to be tested because God loves you. If God loves you, He wants the very best for you. That means then that He is going to put in front of you those kinds of battles where you can get your faith tested, and you can have victory because if your faith is there, and you are willing to deny

yourself, God will give you the power to win any victory.

You can even stand in the midst of the fire and do like one of our forefathers, Michael Sattler, did who had made a promise to the brethren before being put in the fire. He knew he was going to be burned, and the brethren came together with him, and they were praying and in agony, and they were weeping, and they were embracing him, and they said, "Oh, what if God does not give you the power to endure it?" He said, "I tell you what I am going to do. When I am in the fire, and if God makes the death of the fire bearable, I will raise up two fingers to you so that you will see clearly that God is making it possible to endure even the fire. Then you will have no fear going to your own death."

His plan was to raise up two fingers, but his executioners tied his hands behind him. So he stuck his arms into the flames to burn the ropes, and when the ropes were burned, he held up two bones to signal that this death was possible. Do not fear the fire—fear God.

You can do these seemingly impossible things. We have our history where our forefathers who have gone before us have done these things. They did them because the power is there when you are in sacrificial obedience. If you fear God, then deny yourself. God gives the power to do it. Angels are surrounding you.

When you go through these hard trials, and you are crying out, "Oh, God, deliver me from this! No God, not my will but yours be done." Things will begin to happen around that kind of person. God hears that kind of prayer, and He starts sending angels: "Gabriel, how about going out there and helping that one go to the death honorably." Gabriel brings in a whole platoon of angels to come into your situation. You are lifted up, you are made strong, and you do not even know what is happening. But all of a sudden you are feeling strong, no pain, you are

standing there confessing that the Lord is your Savior in the middle of your death. Yeah!

Stephen was stoned. Stones started hitting him and breaking his head bone, and all this kind of stuff, and he is dying. He looks up and sees the Lord standing. He is bringing great honor to the Lord.³ That is what you must do, and you cannot do that by doing your own thing. You must deny yourself. You must answer God's call. Step out, do it. Get in that deep water, and go with God. Learn obedience, learn it, learn it! That means you must suffer, and the very minimal suffering is self-denial, just saying no, to yourself.

I have two sons who had difficulty saying no to themselves. They could say no to me, but they had a hard time saying no to themselves. What you have is law to help those who cannot say no to themselves. You have the law that says no to them. If they really cannot say no to themselves, they will be put in a cage so they cannot do what they want to do. My younger son was confined frequently to just the street in front of our house, that was as far as he could go.

When he was in High school, he came to me and said, "Dad, this isn't right. All my friends are going all over the place. I cannot even leave my street. It is embarrassing. I need to have my boundaries extended." I said, "Okay." I listened to his plea, and I extended his boundaries. He went off, and the next thing I saw was that he had climbed up on top of a Mister M store. When I saw him up there, I thought, "My soul! You get back over on our street."

It got so bad with my sons that one of the things that I did was to cancel their birthdays. I pretended that they were not as old as they thought they were. I canceled the oldest one's birthday first, and he really grieved over that. I set him back in age a whole year. Then my

younger one watched that, and said, "I am not going to do that," but he did something similar or just as bad, so I canceled his birthday too and set him back a year. The older son told me the other day that I stopped him from getting his driver's license until he was of age by my count (I don't remember it but he says it's true).

My daughter watched all this, and she said, I will never do that, and she was so good, that I almost gave her an extra birthday. My two sons are one year younger than they think they are right now (smile). That is where the law comes in, you see, when dad becomes the law that restrains his child.

Self-denial is extremely important. It starts off even down in the family. You are looking for the toddler not to touch the stove, and things like that, you see, and you are trying to build into them the ability for them to say no to themselves: "I will not touch the stove even when daddy is out of the room." That is what you are trying to do.

In your discipline within the family you are beginning to teach them what discipleship is all about. That is the pattern. If they will not be self-disciplined, then you have to use law or external discipline to restrain these people from their wills.

To Be Perfected

We are looking at the word, perfect, in verse 9.

Hebrews

5:9 And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;

I want you to see what perfect means. We have looked at the model for the doctrine of salvation several times. What we are looking at right now is the word, *perfect*. Jesus was made perfect through His obedience in the midst of suffering. This is not a statement that says that Jesus was at one time imperfect in our understanding of the word perfection.

³ Acts 7:59-60.

Let me tell you that this word means that He got to the end of his journey.

God set the path that the Lord was to walk, and on that path, He had to take the *kenosis* model, which is self-denial. He had to empty Himself of His own glory and of His own will and become obedient, obedient unto death. That meant, then, that the sanctification path is a path of learned obedience through suffering, and by walking that path of learned obedience through suffering, He got to the end. *Telos* is translated as perfect, but it means end. Perfected means that He got to the end.

We get our word tail, like a dog's tail, from this word. It means the end of a dog. To be perfected means that you are going to your end (see Chart 3.3). Jesus got to the end. He walked the path without wavering. He did

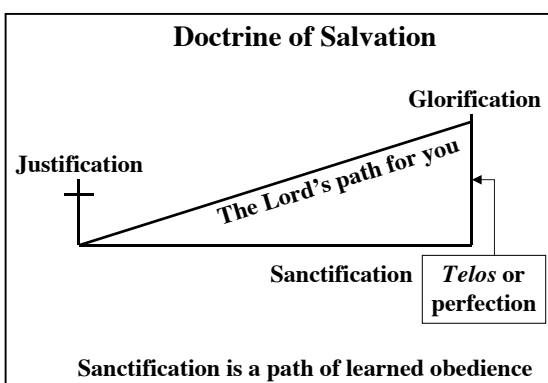


Chart 3.3

not come down and say, "Oh, I think I should not have to do this because I am God's Son. I am the Royal Son. I am the Lord, therefore, I should have the applause and worship of men, not the spit and the whippings and the mockery and all of that." On the contrary, He denied Himself, and by denying Himself, He walked the path which looks like the *kenosis* (see chart 3.4), and it led to learning obedience through suffering, and He went to perfection, went to the end (*telos*).

You are to be perfected the same way as Jesus. You are to be walking on the path that

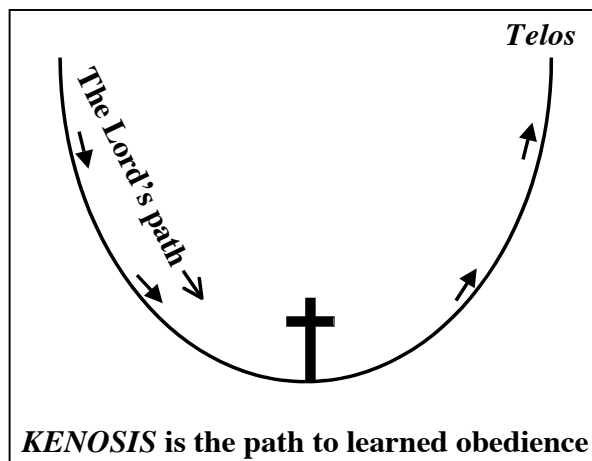


Chart 3.4

looks like the *kenosis*, and learning obedience and getting to the end. You can walk this path, and you can get to the end that God has just for you. You need to get to your own end, not to somebody else's end. God has a plan just especially for you. If you do not do the plan God has for you, who is going to do it? There is not another you. You must meet God's will on your life in order to be perfected, *i.e.* get to the proper end of your journey.

Sam: I am sitting here, and I am thinking: "I do not like to talk about suffering because I have to do it." But I am trying to look at this and see that there is hope for me even in the midst of the trials and suffering. I can get through it if I look for the reason and hope that are there in the midst of suffering. There is purpose to suffering. If I look for God's purpose and meaning rather than concentrate on the suffering, then I can say, "Okay, Lord, I am going to go through this trial to learn obedience." The meaning will come. It is for my good, but my good is determined by God.

V: Yes. That is very well said, Sam. Our good from the suffering comes always in the eschaton, but sometimes it is also known in the now.

When the Lord came through His life on earth, He faced all the sufferings and requirements on His life for what lay on the other side of the cross. The greatest joy of all His Lordship lay on the other side of the cross.

When you are suffering in this life, and you cannot go on the trips you want to go on, and you cannot have the things that you want to have, then you are laying up treasure in heaven if your losses are due to serving Jesus. You cannot do service under God and love your money, your wealth, your power, your status. You cannot do that. It is contradictory. How can you deny yourself the things that you are wanting? Your heart yearns for those things. You may have to be alone and live a lonely life. You may have to live in a country where you do not even speak the language and everybody treats you as an outcast. You may have to be different in many ways, such as not enjoying the kinds of things your friends enjoy because of the hope that lies ahead for you. Class, in your pilgrimage, you can do the exact same thing as the Lord. You can endure all things yet be content and full of joy because of what lies on the other side of death. Look to the other side!

Upside Down Kenosis

If you start heaping up treasures on this life's side of the cross, you will begin to climb, the reverse of the *kenosis* (Chart 3.5), because all of your friends are going to say, "God does not want you to go hungry. God does not want His children to suffer. He does not want you to be ill. He does not want you to have to stand in the fire. He does not want people to call you names and treat you bad." You see what I am saying? How easy it is to pervert the Christian life. Pretty soon, you will say, "God does not want me to do all of that. He wants me to have everything, feel good, not have any worries." It is easy to get into that trap. Watch out for it. Who is going to teach your children how to be self-denying,

to reach for the hope, and to run their races, to please God? Either you are going to teach them or they will not learn!

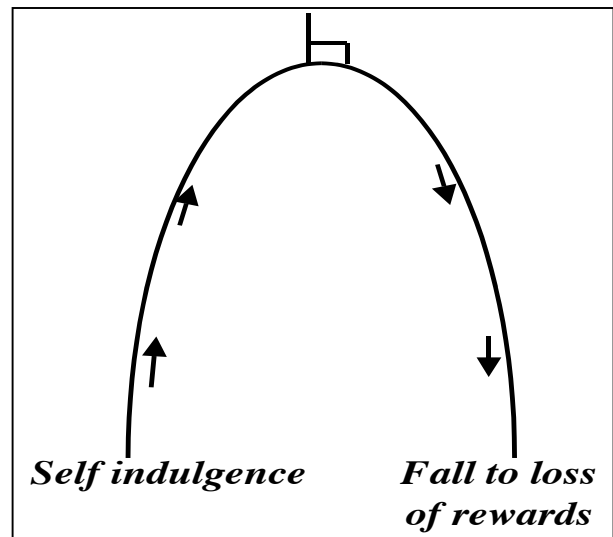


Chart 3.5

God's Description of the Hebrews

Hebrews

5:11 Of whom we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing.

5:12 For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which [be] the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.

5:13 For every one that useth milk [is] unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe.

5:14 But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, [even] those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

What is God's evaluation of the Hebrews?

1. Dull of hearing. Hebrews 5:11

It is hard to preach to many Christians today. I know that some of you pastors have to preach to people who do not have ears; it is hard! Revelation chapters 2 and 3 dealing with the seven churches has a repeating clause that comes back over and over again, "He that

hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.” I used to read that, and I would say, “Why would He put that in there? Everybody has ears.” But I found out that everybody does not have ears. You can preach from now until doomsday, and there is not even one word which will penetrate some people because there are no ears there.

Dull of hearing does not mean that these Hebrews have no literal ears. They have not gotten to the point where they do not have ears. They have ears, but they are hard of hearing. There is a dullness there. You know how when you get sensitized to something, that something will start jumping out at you when you read the Bible. You think, “Golly, I never saw that before.” That is because your ears have become alert, and you are sharp of hearing then. But there are other times when you can read through something that is earth shattering without blinking an eye.

You can observe some folks who read something earth shattering, and you think, “Well, when are they going to shout, faint, or react?” They just went through that main part there and nothing happened. It is because of a dullness. They are not alert. They are not being impacted by the seriousness and depth of those words as they read them or as you read them to them or as you preach to them. There is a dullness but not a total lack of ears.

These Hebrew Christians have a dullness like that. They can hear, but they are dull of hearing. That means, then, that God wants to teach them something, and He has gotten to a part that He is having a difficult time conveying to them. He says, “It is hard to be uttered (verse 11), but I have much to tell you.” Why is it hard for God to utter this? It is not because it is hard for God to voice it, it is because His audience is dull of hearing.

I have experienced this over and over and over. I can say some things that should be earth-shattering. Receptivity varies widely. I

can come into some classes and just lay it out there, and the people just grab it joyfully, and it is good. I can go to other classes and lay just a morsel out there, and they rage, and they want to attack, fight, and argue. Go to a whole different class, and I cannot say enough. Everything I say is gobbled up while they are anxious for more. They just drag it out of me and relish it while hungering for more.

The Hebrew Christians here, because of their lack of ability to hear, are limiting the amount that can be preached. That is tough! This is hard on the preacher. When you get into the shoes of the preacher and experience this dullness, then is when your heart breaks because you want the people to know something. The inability to pass on the critical information to your people creates an agony that weighs down on you.

Here you are in a situation in which you have all of this information from God that you need to convey. You are struggling, and they do not want to hear it. You leave without being able to say what you needed to say. There is heartbreak in all of this kind of experience for the speaker, the teacher, the preacher who has a knowledge from God that he wants to convey. The people have one chance at it. This is it, and you cannot even tell them. It is a terrible and hurting thing.

Let’s look at Matthew 13:11-17.

13:11 He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given.

13:12 For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath.

13:13 Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand.

13:14 And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye

shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive:
 13:15 For this people's heart is waxed gross, and [their] ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with [their] eyes, and hear with [their] ears, and should understand with [their] heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.
 13:16 But blessed [are] your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear.
 13:17 For verily I say unto you, That many prophets and righteous [men] have desired to see [those things] which ye see, and have not seen [them]; and to hear [those things] which ye hear, and have not heard [them].

What I want for all of my students is that statement in verse 16, "But blessed [are] your eyes, for you see: and your ears, for you hear." I do not want you to be dull of hearing.

Dullness of hearing comes from the lack of ability to do self-denial. If you have a pet indulgence, and you want to stake your Christian pilgrimage on that indulgence so you can have your cake and eat it too, then when someone preaches learning obedience through suffering, you will think: "Whoa, I do not want to hear that. I am not going to hear that. God does not want me to suffer. He can let all those other saints suffer, but not me because I am a special saint."

That is the way we do it. When we feel like that, we cannot hear about learning obedience through suffering. I have encountered those people who cannot hear discipleship's requirements in sanctification. That is the main thing that the Hebrews had a problem with.

Shirley: That sounds a lot like Moses when he kept going back to Pharaoh. I mean Pharaoh made a real simple choice to not believe it. And the more he kept getting confronted with the choice, his armor kept growing thicker and thicker.

V: It sure did. That is the process of hardening, where God hardened Pharaoh's heart, and Pharaoh hardened his own.

Romans 11:10

11:10 Let their eyes be darkened, that they may not see, and bow down their back away.

V: Okay, let what be darkened?

Shirley: Let their eyes be darkened.

V: Okay, here is a statement in which there is going to be a lack of perception. It is a situation that you can fall into.

Shirley: Can I read my version? Let their eyes go blind so they cannot see, and their backs grow weaker and weaker.

V: It is progressive. We are talking about the spiral down in the triangle of piety.

In apostasy, there is disobedience and a moving away from the Lord. On the other hand, the opposite of apostasy means that you are right with the Lord, you are on your path, and the Lord is marching along, and you are right behind him, walking along. You are learning obedience through suffering, and you are walking the path of self-denial. As you stand right behind the Lord, He takes a step, you take a step, He takes a step, you take a step. You are in maximum light, and your ears are so sharp that you can hear a whisper from Him.

On the other hand, apostasy means to step away from, to stand away. *Apo* is from, *stasis* is to stand, to stand away from. At one step away, you can hardly hear, and your light is dimmed. Another step away, you are getting in the darkness, and you are not hearing anything. When we get into the next chapter, I will show you the results of a progressive apostasy, but right now when our one step is away from God and towards self-indulgence, we dull our abilities of seeing and hearing.

When God says, "Follow me, Bill," I say, "Yes, Sir, I am following you." Then He

takes a step, I take a step, He takes a step, I take a step. He steps into danger, and I stop. He says, "Follow me!" Then I begin to rationalize my not going into a situation of danger and suffering: "The Lord does not want me to suffer. Therefore, moving into suffering must be the wrong thing to do." I just start stepping away, you see, because I am unwilling to deny myself and learn obedience through suffering, *i.e.* walk the path of self-denial. Walking that path is required in order to have maximum light, clear vision, and be close enough to hear the intimate whispers of your Lord.

That deviation into apostasy is what the Hebrews are doing. It does not mean that they are evil, unsaved people and all that kind of thing. What it means is that they are like us rejecting the sufferings required in sanctification. These Hebrews are hard hitting in justification and in ministries inside the fellowship. They are in the midst of the Roman persecution where the Christians are dying terrible deaths. Where are we? We are in the midst of good times. When comparing the Hebrew situation with our situation, what would He say about us? He would probably agonize: "My soul, how could you saints ever get to the pampered and self-indulgent point where you are?" This is hard for us to hear.

2. Their growth is stunted. Hebrews 5:12

Hebrews

5:12 For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which [be] the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.

The Hebrews' growth, then, is stunted. What did we identify earlier that will stunt your growth? It is the inability to sacrifice your will. The essential for all spiritual growth is to set your will aside, and set His will in place. Not your will, but His. "Not my will but Thine" is the key to spiritual

growth. So when He takes a step, you take a step, He takes a step, you take a step.

When He steps into danger, you just step right in there with Him. Step in there! The thing you need to fear more than the fire of being burned at the stake is the fear of not stepping in His steps. That is what Jesus feared. He feared disappointing God more than the crucifixion. You need to fear being out of step with God more than whatever threat is in your path. You need to fear not getting in the deep water more than anything you are going to face while you are in that water. Fear failing to follow God! That is where the whole answer is, and in order to do that, you have to sacrifice your will. Not my will but Thine. It seems so simple that when we say it, everybody knows that it is correct, but it is the easiest thing to forget in the midst of all this pain and suffering, or even of losing out on our self-indulgence.

Right now, where you sit, you know that your understanding is right on the money. You know exactly what I am saying, but five minutes after you put down this book, it is going to be tough to know and abide in what we are saying. You need to remember it when you are in the heat of the fire. You may even see the fire when they are lighting it. And then He says, "Okay, take a step." You say, "What am I getting into?" At this very point of questioning, you will have to recall that self-denial and learning obedience through suffering are going to be tough. However, this is where you must live out your theology. That is the test of discipleship, *i.e.* learning obedience through suffering.

3. They are unskillful in the Word. Hebrews 5:13

Hebrews

5:13 For every one that useth milk [is] unskillful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe.

This description follows right along with verse 12 where it says, "You ought to be

teachers by now, but you are still having to be taught the first principles.” As you grow, you become skillful with the Word. The Word becomes the sword in your hand with which you can set the enemy to flight. You become skillful with the use of the sword in battle.

4. Meat goes only to the mature who through practice have sharpened their skills, and their discernment. Hebrews 5:14

Hebrews

5:14 But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, [even] those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

This verse tells us why we have a church today that cannot tell right from wrong. Because many of today’s Christians are not on meat and are still on milk, we have, then, churches which are embracing hedonism, homosexuality, abortion, divorce, women teaching men, celebrating Santa Claus, Easter bunnies, and witches of Halloween, movies of the occult, and other evils. These evils, though against the Word of God, are rampant in today’s church. Why? It is because many Christians do not know the difference between right and wrong, good and evil.

As we progress into our apostasy by stepping away from following our Lord, we are getting darker and darker and darker, and according to the book of Romans, there will come a time when good will be called evil and evil will be called good. It is a reversal of values, and it is even going to progress to the point where the apostasy will reach the level where the apostate will take joy in discipling others into that apostasy.

I am telling you that there is going to come a time, and we may now be there, when we have apostate Christians leading others into apostasy and taking joy in it because they think that they are serving the Lord.

Before we move away from meat, I want you to look up some scriptures.

John

4:32 But he said unto them, I have meat to eat that ye know not of.

4:33 Therefore said the disciples one to another, Hath any man brought him [ought] to eat?

4:34 Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.

Notice the word, “will,” in here. “My meat is to do the **will** of him that sent me.” Milk drinkers *know* the Word, but meat eaters *do* the Word, not just know it.

We come back to the question, how do you walk this walk? The answer does not change. The first requirement is to deny yourself by saying, “Not my will but thine.” It is “doing the will of Him that sent me,” not doing my own will. It is not in just knowing the Word, but in denying myself and allowing His will to guide my behavior. That has to be the first step for you to spiral up into Christian maturity.

You see the only way for you to mature is to do battle inside of your own mind—whose will are you going to do? Every fiber of your being is going to be fighting for doing your own will, satisfying yourself, enjoying life, getting all that you can get, being all that you can be. But self-denial opposes self-will.

The next requirement is to take up your cross. This means that you will be ever ready to die for your faith. Your life is over, and now the Lord’s life is all there is. To allow Him to live through you must not be considered a trite little statement that is so popular in our churches. What does it mean? It means that you have been set aside for the sole use and good pleasure of the Lord. It means that you must allow the Lord to spend you in any way that He chooses. You are a slave who has been purchased by the Lord Jesus through His death. He owns you as a

resource to be used as He sees fit. You cannot do your own thing. Your likes and dislikes no longer have any persuasion on your life because you are a dead man to your self.

The baptismal rite symbolizes what has taken place. Immersion into the water symbolizes your death and burial. Your coming up out of the water symbolizes your resurrection into a new life. If you have been raised to new life, then why the command to take up your cross? Because you still have your old sin nature in your flesh that will compete with the Spirit to take control of your actions. Your cross is needed to crucify that old man so that you can continue to walk in the Spirit.

The third requirement is following the Lord, doing His thing, not doing your thing. There was a missionary that was coming back from China on a ship (this is a story that I read when I was a student). He was on a ship coming into New York and passing close by the Statue of Liberty. Coming out to greet this ship were many fireboats. They were shooting sprays of water, and there were bands playing, and there was much celebration.

This old missionary was down on the lower level standing at the rail looking at all of this pomp and ceremony, all of this turning out to greet his ship. He was old and decrepit and had spent his life in missionary service in China. For an instant, he thought that the celebration was on his behalf because of his great life-long sacrifices. However, he quickly remembered that aboard the same ship on an upper deck was the President of the United States who was coming in from his vacation. The president had not spent his whole life out there in self-denying sacrifice for ministering the life-giving Gospel to the hopeless people who were lost and headed for hell. No, the president had spent his life receiving the applause of men. There he is up there, and all this pomp and ceremony is for

him. This old missionary looked out and compared what this President had been doing, which is not self-denial, with what he had suffered during his whole life. He did not get to have his life; he had the Lord's life. He thought, "Why is all of this celebration for his home coming, and not one person knows my name, not one? There is nobody here to greet me. Nobody to say, 'You did good.' There is nothing here for me." But he heard a voice in his spirit that said, "You have not come home yet, my son."

That homecoming celebration with pomp and ceremony, you see, will come **after the cross, after death**. You can endure the cross only by looking forward to the joy on the other side. I am here to tell you that if you follow the path of the *kenosis*, you can have joy in the midst of suffering by looking to the other side. Your hope is consummated on the other side of the cross. There you will be exalted. If you are not exalted on the other side, then the *kenosis* is a lie. But we have every confidence in this future exaltation because the Lord Himself is consistent with the written Word. The Word is true, not one jot or tittle is going to pass away.⁴ We can hang our hats on this principle.

HEBREWS CHAPTER 6

Move Forward in Sanctification

Notice that this passage begins with that famous word, therefore. That means that since you know all this stuff from before, then you should put it to practice.

Hebrews

6:1 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,

6:2 Of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of

⁴ Matthew 5:18.

the dead, and of eternal judgment.
6:3 And this will we do, if God permit.

So in this statement, he says that since we know all this stuff from the first five chapters, we must do something with it. The thing we are going to do is that we are going to leave the foundation of justification. You see, here is our model (Chart 3.6). See Justification? We are going to the right of that point, to the doctrine of Sanctification that leads to our end, *i.e.* Glorification.

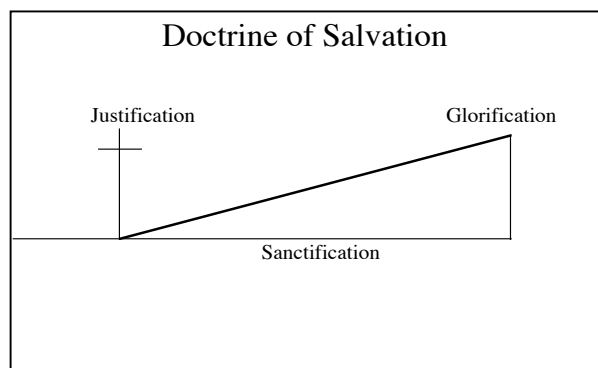


Chart 3.6

You can imagine also that the river is going in that direction. We are all flowing together. Justification is a past event, an event of new birth. It is over with, we do it one time, and bang, it is over. It launches me on a path of learning obedience through suffering which looks like the *kenosis*. I am going to launch out into the deep.

What God wants you to do is walk up to this justification and perceive it as the wonderful gift that it is, to see what He has done for you. Open up the door of your heart and receive the gift. Then step into death to yourself and life to the Lord. Death to self means that He wants you to get into the river's deep water and flow with Him by denying your will. Your carnal will is to get on the bank. His will, however, is to get out into deep water. Jump in, and zoom along with the water. Wherever the water goes is where you go, up and around, bumpity bump, bumping into obstacles all around. As you are going,

you are to set your hope on that which lies ahead at the *end* of the journey. You are looking as best you can to spot any monsters. When you see one coming, you will probably want to turn around and swim back to safety. However, you are supposed to look at that monster, and then look past the monster at your hope which is at the end of your journey, and say, "Ah, my strength is in the One Who provides that wonderful hope. I will face my trials in the strength of my hope." You see, you gain your strength-giving hope by looking out here at the end of life, at glorification.

The Hebrews splash around a little, then they look at this event of justification in their life, and they celebrate that event. When they get through celebrating it, they say, "We need to celebrate that rebirth again." So they celebrate it again and again and again. They go through life backwards because they are always looking at their past event of justification. They celebrate their past rather than getting strength from God to move towards their future hope.

When the monster trial gets them, they say, "Oh, the monster has me! Save me, Lord, get me out of this." That is their prayer: "Get me out of this." All that bit about not my will but thine, all that is gone. All they know is that God died for them, they are the precious apple of God's eye. They have been celebrating for so long that God loves them so much that He does not want them to suffer any hardships. He suffered the hardships for them. When the monster gets them, they wonder why. Their prayer does not ask for help to go through the suffering. Instead it becomes: "Lord, get me out of here; you already defeated the monster. Why is it getting me?"

You see, when Christians are walking backward while looking at this justification event on the left of Chart 3.6, they will go on their path of sanctification all the way out

here to the right of the chart while looking in the wrong direction. Their lives will not be focused on achieving true discipleship (sanctification), and they will be wobbling all around down in here below the sloping line. They are going to end up down here at the bottom right corner because everybody gets to the end.

Once you get justified, you see, you are going to go all the way to glorification. You are going to be perfected (brought to the end). You are going to get there, but you may lose a ton of opportunities for earning rewards while you are getting there if you are walking while looking backwards, looking at the first principles, laying again the foundation, dealing with the doctrine of baptism.

Many people have to get baptized umpteenth times before it really takes. When that is our life, what kind of Christian pilgrimage is that? The monsters are laying out there waiting to get you, and all our strength and perspective and vision are gained by seeing only the first principles. It says here, "Hold it! Quit doing that!" He says, "Therefore since I have taught you all this other stuff about the river, learning obedience, and the *kenosis*, turn around and look forward, quit looking at first principles. Turn around and look at your hope at the end and flow towards it, get on down the river. Quit rebuilding the foundation."

Let us say that you are going to build a house. You must first lay a slab for the foundation. You must get it just right. You have the blueprints, and you have the forms, and you lay the foundation perfectly. Then you say, "Man, we did good on that, let's do it again." You lay another one right on top of the first. Then you repeat this process time after time. After a while, you will have a slab that is as thick and as high as the house should be. You still have not started building the rest of the house. You just keep laying that foundation over and over again, and you

are not getting to the structure. You are still laying again the foundation. Class! Just lay it one time, then mush on, get in the river! Do you have ears to hear the command?

Hebrews

6:1 Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection;

Perfection, the end at glorification, is where we are going: get in the river, look down at the end for your hope, and face your monsters in the perspective of your hope. Always look at your hope and live life in that perspective, i.e. in your hope at the end. Look at that monster; look up at the hope. When you look up at that hope with faith in the Lord's enablement, courage will well up in you. You can go through anything then. If you do not look at the hope, then all you see is the monster. In that case, you will turn around and swim hard to avoid it.

Tom: I need some clarification. Does *kenosis* mean suffer?

V: No, it means emptying oneself. The *kenosis* is explained in Philippians 2. It says, "Have this mind in you that was in Christ Jesus." If you have His mind, you will humble yourself, become the servant in the form of a mere man, while having no reputation and becoming obedient even unto death. The principle of *kenosis* is found everywhere in the Bible, but it is explained most clearly in Philippians.

Re-entering God's Plan Requires God's Permission

Hebrews

6:3 And this will we do, if God permit.

When you are messing with God you stand to lose more than what is manifest to us right now. What I have demonstrated to you in talking about the river is that when you get in the river and you are flowing with God, then there will be an ever-present enticement

to come out onto the bank. Should you come out of the river and into the shallows, you will see other dedicated saints in the deep going on by.

Once you have come out of the river, there is a chance that you will not be able to get back into the deep water. This terrible consequence is demonstrated in the provocation of God in the wilderness because when the people were told by God to go in and take the land, the people said, “No, we’re not going to do this” because they feared losing such a battle. Joshua and Caleb said that Israel should follow God’s orders and conquer the land. The people rejected the advice from Caleb and Joshua.

The people had seen the fruits, they had walked with God, they had seen God’s power demonstrated in their exodus from Egypt. Later that night, the people began to regret their decision to reject God’s command. They began to weep and wail, and said, “We have done wrong!” The very next morning they said, “We change our minds; we repent; we are going to go into the Promised Land. We are going to do it just like we are supposed to.” Moses said, “It is too late. Do not go! God is not with you; you will be defeated.” They said, “Oh, no, God told us to go; we are going to go.” They went tearing out there, and they got defeated because they did not have the permission of God to re-enter the deep water.

That was just one night’s time out of the deep water for the Hebrew nation. They never ever got back into the deep water. They spent the rest of their lives walking in circles in the wilderness until they died.

When you trifle with God you stand a chance of never getting back into the deep water. Last semester, a student asked me whether or not you lose anything when you get out of the water. My answer to him was that you lose all of that opportunity that goes on by. It is forever gone! You may possibly

be permitted back in the river, but all of that you would have had, all those good opportunities to glorify the Lord, are forever gone. There is nothing you can do to get that lost part back. All of the tears, weeping, and wailing, none of that gets it back for you.

Losing those opportunities is the best-case scenario. We are assuming that you can even get back in the water. According to verse 3, you may not be able to re-enter the water: “This will we will do **if God permits.**” Just getting back into the water requires God’s permission. Not only do you lose the opportunities when you exit the deep water, but you may also lose the ability to get back in. The worst-case scenario means spending your life in the shallows. That means that when you get down here at the end of your journey (glorification), you end up short of where you were supposed to be.

If we should disregard God’s denial of re-entrance, then we will be overcome by one of the monsters. We must have God’s permission to re-enter the river. That is a scary thing. Getting in and staying in are within the capabilities of your own will. Getting out is also within your will, but re-entering afterwards may not be within your will’s capabilities.

John: To try to come back on your own without God’s permission will be utter . . .

V: Yes . . . utter defeat just like the guys in the wilderness. They repented. But the problem was that they did not go “when” God said go. They repented and wanted to go the very next day. It did not work. Even then God swore in His wrath that they will never go back into the water, never! How about that? What if God calls you to deep water, and you come out instead, and He swears in His wrath that you will never get back in. That should put a fear in you. It does me!

Sometimes God Will Not Give Permission to Re-enter His Plan

Hebrews

6:4 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,

6:5 And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come,

6:6 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.

I want to show you something in here. First of all you need to see that you and I, we, are partakers of the Holy Ghost. Partakers means we have with the Holy Ghost. The word is *metachos* (to have with, *i.e.* partakers/partners) with the Holy Spirit. You have common possession with the Holy Spirit of divine things. You are a partner of the Holy Spirit. That means then that when you are involved in God's task, the Holy Spirit has linked arms with you to give you the power to do all the tasks of God. You provide the will, and He provides the power. The Holy Spirit is right there with you, arm in arm. Where you are going in He is going in. When you think that you are doing something, it is really the Holy Spirit that is doing it through you. All that power! People get saved when you speak! You think you are doing something, but it is God Who is doing those wonderful things through you. All that power in your ministry is from Him because you are a partaker, *metachos*, a partner.

It says here in verse 4, "You are a partaker." That word partaker is a little bit weaker translation for the word *metachos* than the word partner. *Metachos* is to possess with, to own with, to have with. You have it, He has it, and you both have it. You go into the deep water together. You are a partner with Him.

Jesus tells us also to be in yoke with Him. That is to be in partnership with Him. He will provide the go-power on His side of the yoke. Still yet, you must fit your neck in His yoke. He puts His neck in the yoke, and you put your neck in the yoke. When you start pushing, you will say, "Golly, we are moving a mountain here." It really is not you who is supplying the power to move the mountain. You are moving the mountain, yes, but it is He who is supplying the power, you see? However the "effect" is that you are doing it because the power of God is in partnership with you. Without your doing it, He is not going to do it. He will just let it set there until somebody comes along who is willing to put his neck in the yoke. Then that person and He go together. That is when things start happening.

It says right here that you and I and these Hebrews, if we mess with God, we may not get His permission to get back into that deep water because of our partnership with the Holy Spirit.

The Scripture says also that we have tasted the good Word of God. I dare say that there is not a soul in this room who has not tasted it, and said, "Man, God's Word is the best thing I have ever eaten"—the Word of God served up and eaten, or assimilated, into your own being. We all would crawl on our hands and knees just to get another bite of God's delicacies. Certainly, we "have tasted the powers of the world to come." We have seen God in action. We have seen Him in action in our own lives. We have seen Him in action in others' lives, transforming people, working miracles in our midst. Yes, you have seen this. You have tasted this good gift. However, in verse 6, it says that "if they," if you, if I, shall fall away, it is impossible to renew us to repentance.

The word for falling away starts with *para*. We get the word, parallel and the word, parable from this prefix. A parable means to

cast along side. A parable illustrates real life with a parallel story. The use of a parable is to cast a story along side of real life. A parable helps you to understand real life by giving you a more understandable story which is parallel to the more difficult real-life lesson to be learned.

This “falling away” mentioned here in this scripture means to fall along side. The word has two parts: *para*, along side, and *pesantos*, which is to fall. For the case where you are out in the deep water, this word means to fall along side of. It is to come out of the deep water and dig your own channel. There goes the main river out there somewhere. You are going in the same direction as the main river while you are splashing around in your little channel. You even have a little current in your channel, and you are asking God to bless you as you splash along in your self-made channel. That is the picture of falling along side of.

Here is the danger! If you get out of the real channel and get into this make-believe world, you have fallen alongside of God’s path for you. You may be very content with going along in your merry little channel. Perhaps some great saint will come along to rescue you and pull you into the water and say, “Man, do you not understand? The deep water is out here. This is where we are supposed to be. You have tasted the good fruit, you have tasted God’s Word, you have enjoyed partnership with the Spirit, yet you forsook the real pilgrimage, and you have adopted this artificial river.” You may say, “Oh, yeah, I remember about the *kenosis*, we studied that, I remember that, I need that. I am going to get back in and work that plan that God had for me.”

Danger! You must have God’s permission because you cannot repent your way back into the plan that you left. The people in the wilderness could not repent themselves back into the Promised Land. You do not

trifle with God. To fall along side of, to substitute some artificial junk for what God has in store is to run the risk of falling along side of and never being able to get back in there.

You cannot repent yourself back into the original plan if God does not give you permission to get back in it. That is what it says here in verse 4. That is why he has this “permission” in verse 3.

When you come through justification you get full permission and the ability to get into the deep water. That ability was purchased for you through the crucifixion. You get that ticket to get in, so you get in, and you say, “I do not like this ride. I want a different ride.” You get out onto the bank, and then you say, “No, I think I would like to get back in there.” That is trying to accomplish the same thing once again. You are putting Christ’s crucifixion to an open shame. He bought you that ticket, He bought you the Promised Land, He bought you the river’s destination, and you get your ticket when you come through the gate. If you do not get in there, you are despising what He bought for you. If you come to the bank, and you tout all of your worldly glory, and you start investing your life in nothing but dung (as Paul calls it),⁵ you may go too far on the bank, and not have the right to get back in. That permission may be withheld.

Pat: You are obviously talking about people who have accepted Christ.

V: Yes, this book of Hebrews was written to saved people.

God is not giving an empty threat to a Christian who exits the river. But please note that he is certainly giving them plenty of warning, and “this we will do.” He is warning us clearly. The “we,” in verse 3 means

⁵ Philippians 3:8

that the writer is including himself in the lot, and I include myself in the lot as well.

Jill: It seems funny that he does turn it and say, “You know those people who have fallen away, etc.”

V: Yes, but what if he said, “**You** have fallen away, and no amount of repentance. . . .” See, we are glad that He did not say that.

Living for Self May Cause Rejection from God's Plans

Hebrews

6:7 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:

6:8 But that which beareth thorns and briers [is] rejected, and [is] nigh unto cursing; whose end [is] to be burned.

Here is a statement of comparison of the soils. We have seen the parable of the soils. You are a soil, and you are going to bring forth fruit, and it is going to come from the seed that is sown in you. We are sowing that seed right now. You are just sowing it here and there. You are going to go along sowing the seed. There is going to be a watering. The Holy Spirit is watering it even right now. Your seed is beginning to kick out little roots which are going down. Soon the tiny little plant is going to break through to the surface, and it is going to grow up. Your goal is for each one of those plants to bear fruit. But, you see, God causes the fruit and all positive things along with the rain and the seed. All we are is the soil. To be the soil means that you have yielded your will, and you are just the soil. To take that other analogy: you are out here in the deep water. You do not direct your path in the water. You go where the water goes. You yield your will and just flow along and go where God is taking you.

When thinking of yourself as the plant, you bear the fruit of the Spirit. The Spirit produces that fruit in you. The Spirit does

His work in you, the seed does its work in you, and if you do not bear fruit, then you will be nigh unto cursing. It does not say that you are going to be cursed, but that you are going to encounter a burning, not of you, but of all the junk you bring forth.

When your fruit is wood, hay, and stubble, it is going to be burned. When the fire is set to test your fruit, it will burn up, and then you will have nothing! You will be saying, “What happened to all my fruit?”

In contrast, there are going to be others who are going to labor, yield the will, learn obedience through suffering and self denial of the *kenosis*. Their fruit is going to be gold and silver and precious stones which will withstand the heat. The fruit is going to remain to their credit after testing with fire. This person will be blessed, but the other one who has been denying the warning will lose his rewards because his fruit did not remain after the test. It all burned up.

Class, God is hammering away with some threats here, and hopefully the dull Christian ears are going to pick up a few of these words. “We will if God permits,” hmmm. That starts some thinking. “It is impossible to renew?” Hmmm. You know that the thinking man will start correcting his understandings. Even Christians with dull ears may begin to hear. My ears are beginning to hear. Your ears are beginning to hear.

Though this was another threat concerning this business about the blessing of the earth and the cursing of the earth,⁶ God goes on. He wants to give these saints some hope (verse 9).

Hope for You

Hebrews

6:9 But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak.

⁶ Hebrews 6:7-8.

Even though I said all of this, I am persuaded of better things of you.

Hebrews

6:10 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.

6:11 And we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end:

Look down to the end of your journey where the rewards of glorification reside. There is the substance of your hope. Look down there in full assurance of the hope at the end.

Hebrews

6:12 That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

Here is what he is saying. He has been talking to these Hebrews who are saved people just like us. Here he is offering up some hope. I am persuaded of you so much so that I could say the same thing right here to you. I am persuaded that God is righteous, and He will not forsake the good works that you have done, those things that you have done where you have ministered to the saints and are even now ministering to the saints, He is going to reward that, but I want you to go further than ministering to the saints. I want you to imitate those brethren who are launching out into the deep water in order to minister to the unsaved. That is what I want you to do.

I want you to ***multiply your ministry*** where you are not just ministering to the saints. I want you to go into the world and take the Gospel to the world. I want you to step into the deep water and take the *Missio Dei* upon your shoulders and seek and to save that which is lost. I want you to be in yoke with the Lord Jesus Christ, to forget your plans and your will and your desires, and get in the deep water and to go into a life of self-

sacrifice with His living His life through you. I want you to be like that old missionary coming back from China when you have given your whole life in self denying service, sleeping where it was impossible to sleep, and being in bad situations. A life where you never got to go where you wanted to go, and you never got to enjoy the people you wanted to enjoy. You are coming back on the boat, and you see all the pomp and ceremony for someone else. That is what I want for you. Now, if that is what you want for your people, then you will teach them to do the same thing!

The principle, perhaps not the specifics that I have described, is what Jesus wants for you too. The greatest thing that you can have is to not have anything because if you can deny yourself to this level (the level of John the Baptist), you see, you are maximizing what the Lord can do through you because you become a willing vessel with no will of your own. Your faith, then, approximates the faith of a mustard seed. A mustard seed does not say, I think I will do such and such. It has no will. Your job is to defeat your will. Fight your will. Defeat your will. This is hard stuff, isn't it?

However, since we are already in the context of life, we must use it for God's Glory. So, we become stewards who must manage our possessions on behalf of God. Those possessions are material goods, time, spiritual gifts, relationships, etc. This management must be in true discipleship. We must deny ourselves, pick up our crosses, and follow Jesus into the deep. Indulging ourselves on the bank will bring us rebuke.

"Followers of them" means to imitate them who through faith and patience inherit the promises. Do you remember what patience is? Standing under the big burden. Do you remember that image? Patience is to remain standing under the burden of the *kenosis*, i.e. discipleship, while it is just mashing you down. You stand in there and

you grit your teeth while every part of you is saying, “I want to get out from under this.”

Because of God’s power given to disciples, you can practice patience. However, detractors will come. When somebody says, “God does not want you under that burden!” You should say, “God gave me this burden.” And then when multitudes observing your sacrifices say, “God does not want you under that burden! He loves you; He does not want you to suffer,” you should say that Jesus did not “want” to suffer the cross either, but He did. Beware! After hearing the majority opinion that suffering is not God’s will, you will want to roll that burden off of your back and just step out from underneath it.

Class, Jesus had to pick up His cross. He had been whipped, He had been beaten and treated so badly, He was desperately weak and hurting, but He had to pick up His cross, and He carried that cross without dropping it. He carried that cross until it mashed Him down. He fell under it. His patience was unwavering. ***He did not drop it!*** And then another man came along, and so graciously and so wonderfully picked up that cross. Could it be you are to pick up that cross off of the Lord’s back and put it on your own back? Will you do it? Lord, count me in! Class, the cost is great to do so, but even greater not to do so. Oh! just the possibility of missing that opportunity is too terrible to consider.

Describing Those for Whom It Is Impossible to Renew unto Repentance

This statement is assuming that God’s answer in verse 3 is “no.” If God does not give permission for repentance in verse 3, then verse 4 comes in with the “no.” These are the Christians of whom it is impossible to renew unto repentance.

Their descriptions are as follow:

1. They were once enlightened.
2. They have tasted the heavenly gift.

3. They are partakers of the Holy Spirit (partnership).
4. They have tasted the Word of God and the powers.
5. They have fallen alongside.

Fallen alongside is not a falling away. I want to jolt you here. Falling away does not indicate a long fall away outside of salvation like you fell slam out in here (outside the sanctification area in chart 3.6). That is not what it is saying. It is saying that while you are on your path, you fall alongside of that path. Instead of being in the deep water, you are up in the shallows digging your own channel. You are alongside of the big river. It is not a falling away like way out of the river into the desert somewhere. It is not losing your salvation as some people want to say. Please be afraid of this warning because it is threatening all saints right now. Beware, be on guard, fight against being involved in any detour no matter how small it is.

Tom: Is it like a parable or like a parallel, and then it looks suspiciously like the same thing.

V: That is right, Tom, it does.

Tom: It does not look totally different to an outsider even.

V: To an outsider it could look the same. A carnal Christian still should be able to tell the difference until he/you/I should step far enough away that the darkness begins to come in and obscure the differences. Apostasy will render you blind so that you cannot see as clearly. That is where deception flourishes.

Tom: It is maybe that you are still preaching, but your sermon is not really . . .

V: . . . on it, right dead center on the *Missio Dei*. The sermon or lesson is just a smidgen off center, but it can devastate your life. To the world, however, it would look right.

I want you to be afraid of this threat. It has scared me, and I am very nervous about it. I must make sure that I am not being deceived and slipping over and taking some easy path and calling it Christianity.

John: Lip service!

V: Yes, lip service by true Christians! It is tricky. We must be alert to be disciples.

Paul: I was thinking about the river analogy. I think this might fit, too. The falling alongside is analogous to a person on the bank walking along. I think he might look up across the river and see some guy walking along on the other bank at the same speed and compare himself to him. Because they are walking at the same speed, they could conclude that they are doing all right. They forget that they should be in the middle of the river being taken along by the current.

V: That is a good analogy. We always tend to look at other saints and evaluate ourselves based on them, instead of looking at the Lord.

Paul: We overlook the ones in the river because there are so few of them. Instead we look at the vast majority walking along on the two banks.

V: That is a good image of present day Christianity. As a matter of fact you could be passing them because of a faster walk. You might even say, "Man, look at me. I am doing great!"

Paul: The other day, my mother asked me what all I was doing, and I told her about going out on the streets and stuff. She said, "Oh, do not be doing that. It is too dangerous." She said, "Write them a letter if you are concerned about them." She does not comprehend the *Missio Dei*. Her idea of discipleship is not flowing along in the river. It is to do something similar but without surrendering full control to God!

V: What God wants and what traditional Christianity has become is not the same thing. I encounter this difference all the time.

How Did God Encourage the Hebrew Christians?

1. He expressed optimism for their fruitfulness. Hebrews 6:9
2. He recognized or acknowledged their track record of ministry toward the saints. Hebrews 6:10
3. He desired their diligence to the end. Hebrews 6:11
4. He desired no slothfulness, but imitation of fruitful saints. Hebrews 6:12
5. He indicated that faith and patience are the road to blessing. Hebrews 6:12

God's Promise

Hebrews

6:13 For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself,

6:14 Saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee.

6:15 And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise.

6:16 For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation [is] to them an end of all strife.

6:17 Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed [it] by an oath:

6:18 That by two immutable things, in which [it was] impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us:

6:19 Which [hope] we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil;

6:20 Whither the forerunner is for us entered, [even] Jesus, made an High Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.

He is talking about the **hope** that is set before us, and he is saying that it is a sure and certain anchor for your soul. When you are in

the river and you are flowing along, and you see the monster, please focus on the hope beyond the monster. The hope is at the end. When you see that hope, you will be able to look down at the monster in the perspective of that hope. That monster will diminish and shrink down in size in that perspective.

The challenge then will become something that you can relish as an opportunity to go through because of the promise of the hope on the other side of the trial. That hope becomes an anchor for your soul. It is immovable, it is immutable, it is sworn to by God, and God cannot lie. It is there at the end, and you have a rope tied to it and yourself. You know that you are going to get to that hope because you have an anchor there and a rope, and you are not going to lose that hope. Let the problem, anything that stands against you, diminish in your mind because how can that thing keep you from that hope. How can you lose it when God has sworn it with an immutable oath?

God has given two immutable things, His Word, and He has sworn upon His own name. If that hope is lost, God is made a liar. You see, that hope cannot be lost. There it is; it is yours. You cannot lose it. It is the anchor for your soul. Look at that hope, and judge everything in that perspective. That is where things of this life will shrink down, and you, too, can be that courageous saint that stands up and is counted. The angels will say, "Man, look at that saint!" The great cloud of witnesses will celebrate your stance, your confession, your behavior, your action in the midst of battle. Satan will flee and say, "Why did that guy stand in there? He kept looking up at the hope! I could not get his attention down here. I could not shake his confidence because he kept looking at that hope."

6. God thus confirms His heirs via the oath.
Hebrews 6:17

You need to see something about Abraham. Abraham was given the promise, and

having the promise he began to walk. He is looking at the promise, and that promise is his hope. He sees it as something in the long distance, and he is walking towards that promise. He is going and going and going and going, and he does not get there. He dies before he gets there. And not only did he go and go and go and die before he got there, I want you to see in verse 15 that He patiently endured. Do you know what that means? He is going on his path (see chart 3.6), but on him is this giant burden. He was enduring this pressing weight patiently, but he was struggling. He was not just strolling along; he was under the burden.

Part of this burden on Abraham was to sacrifice his son: "I want you to give me the life of your son as a sacrifice, your only son, the son of your old age." Under the burden, Abraham was just about mashed down. He was sinking down, struggling, struggling, and the promise was out there in the distant future. He thought: "All I have is the immutable oath of God, and I must give my son, but yet my son is the answer to this hope. I must sacrifice to get." The immutable oath of God is the anchor. It cannot be moved even if you have to give your son.

Abraham "appears" not to receive the fulfillment of the promise in his lifetime. He walked all the way and died before he got there at the end to receive his hope. Do you think he is going to get the fulfillment? You had better believe he is going to get the fulfillment because **the fulfillment always comes after death in the kenosis**. It comes in this model (chart 3.4). You go down, down, down, down, under the burden, and then you receive the fulfillment of the promise. If you can set your eyes on the distant peak of glorification when you are going down in sacrifice, (please note that all of you are facing all of this) look up, look up and face that suffering with courage, boldness, and an assurance that the promised hope cannot be taken away. Reception of the

fulfillment of the promise rests on the immutable oath of God.

7. He gives us encouragement to grab hold of hope as an anchor. Hebrews 6:18.
8. Our forerunner is Jesus who has gone behind the veil. Hebrews 6:20

I want you to see the veil. Here at the bottom of the *kenosis*, at the cross, at death, is where He goes behind the veil. The Lord has now been exalted. He is on the other side of

the veil, and He has been exalted. The Lord has lived, been crucified, and gone behind the veil. He has been perfected. He is the forerunner behind the veil. We have testimony to His accomplishment from those who have seen Him. He is the resurrected Lord, and you have done business with Him. He has spoken to you, you have spoken to Him, and hopefully you will touch His tears, and He will touch yours.

Chapter Questions

1. Describe the high priest taken from among men.
2. How does Jesus qualify as high priest as compared to the qualifications set forth for me?
3. What is the key to discipleship?
4. Read Hebrew 5:11-14. What is the evaluation of the Hebrews?
5. In reading Hebrews 5:11-14, explain what is meant by milk and meat.
6. Describe those for whom it is impossible to renew unto repentance (Hebrews 6:4-6).
7. How did He encourage the Hebrew Christians? Hebrews 6:9-20

Chapter 4 JESUS' PRIESTHOOD AND PROMISE

HEBREWS CHAPTER 7

We are going to be looking at some theology here, but first I am going to read the first ten verses of chapter 7. Then we will look at verses 11 through 25, and we will do some theological discussion on that passage. We will finish chapter 7 and go on into chapter 8 which we will break into two parts, one part in this lesson and the other in the next.

Melchisedec, the Eternal High Priest

Hebrews

7:1 For this Melchisedec, king of Salem, priest of the most high God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him;

7:2 To whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all; first being by interpretation King of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is, King of peace;

7:3 Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God; abideth a priest continually.

7:4 Now consider how great this man [was], unto whom even the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils.

7:5 And verily they that are of the sons of Levi, who receive the office of the priesthood, have a commandment to take tithes of the people according to the law, that is, of their brethren, though they come out of the loins of Abraham:

7:6 But he whose descent is not counted from them received tithes of Abraham, and blessed him that had the promises.

7:7 And without all contradiction the less is blessed of the better.

7:8 And here men that die receive tithes; but there he [receiveth them], of whom it is witnessed that he liveth.

7:9 And as I may so say, Levi also, who receiveth tithes, payed tithes in Abraham.

7:10 For he was yet in the loins of his father, when Melchisedec met him.

What relationship did Melchisedec have to Abraham?

1. Abraham paid tithes to Melchisedec. Hebrews 7:2
2. The better blesses the lesser. Hebrews 7:7
3. Levi paid tithes in Abraham. Hebrews 7:9

When we start thinking about who Melchisedec is, we have to wrestle with various answers. One such answer is the theory that he is an ideal that is represented by a named person. In this case, he would be an ideal, but not a real person. Another answer would be that he is a real person, perhaps a pagan priest or something like that. And then there is the idea where I come down. I think that He is the person of Christ prior to the incarnation.

He has to be divine if He is eternal, which the Bible says He is. Is he a pagan priest? No, why would Abraham pay tithes to a pagan priest? Is he an ideal? No, if Abraham actually paid him something, then he is not just an ideal or a fictitious name or something like that. He is a person. There is somebody there back then, now, and in the future. I believe that He is actually the person of Christ prior to the incarnation. You can disagree with that, and come up with your own theories. You have the right to be wrong. (Laughter around the room)

Jack: Would that eternality be seen in verse 3? "Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God; abideth a priest continually."

V: Yes, that verse is describing deity to me. If it is describing deity, and Jesus is a high priest after the order of that deity, then that tells me that the Lord's humanness is

patterned "after" His deity, i.e. it would be a description of Christ "prior" to the incarnation.

I think that according to this description, Melchisedec has to be deity. If He is deity, then He is either God the Father, God the Son, or God the Holy Spirit. I have to conclude that He is God the Son, but prior to the incarnation because it happened with Abraham prior to the birth of Jesus.

Pete: So then, what was He then, if He wasn't incarnate?

V: He was still Spirit in a spirit body. Later, the Spirit took on humanity at the incarnation where the result was the birth of the God-Man.

Pete: So Abraham was paying tithes . . .

V: To the Lord.

Pete: To Jesus.

V: To Christ before the incarnation, and then after the incarnation, Christ Jesus is declared the High Priest after the same order that He was already in.

Pete: It says made like the Son of God. Is that what your translation says in verse 3?

V: "Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like unto the Son of God, abideth a priest continually."

He has to be either God the Father, God the Son, or God the Holy Spirit, or we will have another deity that crept in here. I opt for the Son of God before the incarnation because the Bible says: "Like unto the Son of God."

Sam: Christ is a High Priest right now. There is no reason to think He was not a High Priest back then.

Ted: Is that what Jesus was talking about in John 8:56 when He said, Your Father Abraham rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it and was glad?

V: Oh. That is good, Ted.

Pete: Where is this Salem?

Sam: That is Jerusalem.

V: Yes, but salem is also a word for peace, i.e. *shalom*. He is the King of Peace.

Sam: It has to be Jesus.

V: Yes, I believe that He is the King of Peace. However, please know that I am not absolutely certain of my claim about Melchisedec. There is still some mystery there about him. This is merely my injection of my opinion into this discussion here as to where I come down on His identity.

Steve: Is his name significant? I mean, does the name mean something?

V: Yes, Melchisedec means that God is my righteousness. That describes Jesus.

The Need for a Priest Like Melchisedec

An eternal High Priest Brings Perfection

Hebrews

7:11 If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood, (for under it the people received the law,) what further need [was there] that another priest should rise after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron?

I want to ask you what is the answer to the question within verse 11? He asked this question: Why should another order be called that is not after the order of Aaron?

Sam: Well, because the Law did not bring perfection.

V: Okay, good.

Paul: If Melchisedec was Christ, then His order was a higher order than Levi's.

V: Okay, good. So we are moving to a higher priesthood.

A New Priest Is Needed for a New Covenant

John: We move to a better covenant because it is not dependent upon what we do. It is dependent upon what God has done. The other one was dependent upon our keeping the Law.

V: Yes, a better covenant.

Wanda: Because it was everlasting.

V: Yes, why is it better?

Linda: Christ brought a permanent sacrifice, not a temporary sacrifice. He brought the one that took care of all our sins forever.

V: That is right. Melchisedec was basically a foreshadowing of Christ and the New Covenant. The way Melchisedec is described and the way I come to my conclusion that He is Christ is because it says that He is for ever and ever, no beginning and no ending, no record of beginning or ending. That is a description of God who is without beginning and without ending. That description classifies Melchisedec as eternal.

Here is the doctrine of salvation (chart 4.1). The gospel presents this kind of eternal salvation.

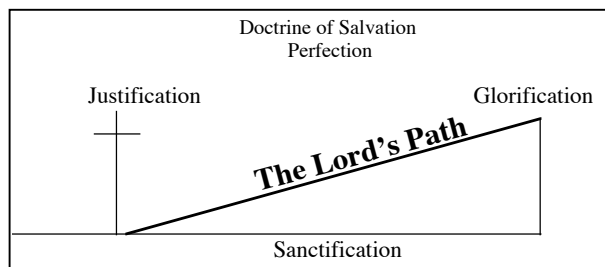


Chart 4.1

What kind of picture would you have for the Law? Is it a picture of lostness, or of salvation? Would it be this picture in chart 4.1? Would it be a part of this picture? Or is it something entirely different? What is the Law?

Tom: It may have very narrow boundaries.

V: So, it would be a line?

Tom: Yes.



Chart 4.2

V: So chart 4.2 is a picture of salvation for the Jews under the Law?

Sam: How about another line so that it is like a road with two boundaries.

V: Like this chart 4.3 here?



Chart 4.3

Sam: To continue in salvation, you must stay between those two boundary lines. Would the two lines not extend to glorification, though? If you are saving yourself through works, which neither you nor anybody else could ever do, but if you could, then you would be glorified.

Joe: Wouldn't it actually be a series of dots rather than a line? With justification, you enter into salvation, but the people in the Old Testament went through a series of cleansings via sacrifice (chart 4.4).

V: Okay, then you would have sin and law and sacrifice. Then you go a little more, and then you have sin, law, and sacrifice again. This would be repeated as iterations throughout the lifetime of the person.

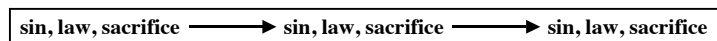


Chart 4.4

Take this model (chart 4.5) instead. By election you enter the path of God. As you walk on that path, you sin and drop below the path. What do you do?

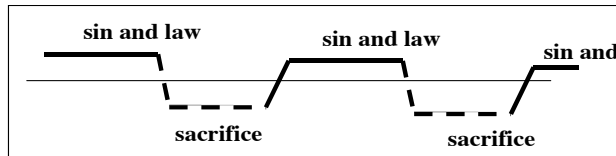


Chart 4.5

Paul: Make a sacrifice.

V: Yes. So you have sin, then you have law, then you sacrifice and get back in. And then you sin, law enters, you are out, and so you sacrifice to get back in.

James: Those under the Old Covenant were justified by faith just like we are. You know, the Bible talks about how faith was reckoned to Abraham as righteousness. Even though he did the law thing and all of that, it really was not the law thing that made him righteous. It was really faith.

Perfection Is at Glorification

V: Yes, James, faith was Abraham's justification and is the only way to justification. Remember, Abraham was not under the Law because he was prior to it.

Before Christ, keeping the Law resulted from faith (believing God's Word), which provided the sacrificial system of maintaining sanctification via obedience to the Law and all its requirements. For us after the cross, the principle is the same. Faith in Jesus (God's Word incarnate) is our justification and obedience is our sanctification. Now going further, where is perfection?

Sam: At glorification.

V: Okay, and why is it at glorification?

Sam: Because of the sacrifice, Christ's death.

V: The Lord's death?

Sam: We enter into His presence, and when we are present with Him we have perfection.

V: Do you remember what the word is? The word that is translated perfection?

Sam: *Telos*.

V: Good, that is because perfection is at the end; it is the goal. And so in the model of Christian salvation, perfection is at glorification because that is the end goal. If you wander off the path while walking in your sanctification process, glorification is still perfection even though you lose a portion of your rewards. You still are perfected. Perfected is not solely a qualitative statement. It is quantitative as well because it means that you have gone to the end of your journey (see chart 4.6a).

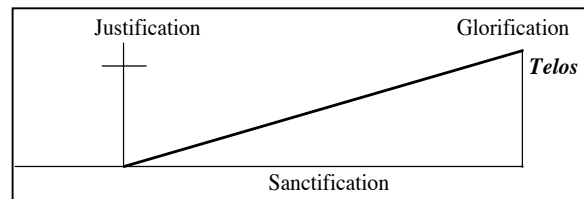


Chart 4.6a

Qualitative and quantitative meanings are carried in the word perfection. The word perfect has the same idea of a 60-watt light bulb compared to a 100-watt light bulb. Both are perfect in quality, but one is brighter than the other in quantity. Christian perfection contains these two meanings.

There is perfection in the Gospel, but there is no perfection in the Mosaic Law model. There is no getting to the end under the Law. You have to have the new Gospel system in order to get to the end. You can be enroute in the Jewish system, between the lines or going through the process, but you cannot get to the end.

Sam: You are not complete.

V: That is correct, Sam. There has to be the addition of the new system.

A New Covenant Is Needed for Perfection

Hebrews

7:11 If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood, (for under it the people received the law,) what further need [was there] that another priest should rise after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron?

So, God is saying that if you could get to perfection this way under the Old Covenant, then there would not have been the necessity for the Lord to die. If perfection were available via the Law, then we would have had our workable plan. Thus it would have required simply that we get on with the plan and get to the end. But since we cannot get to the end via the Law, we had to have another plan without destroying the first plan. The new plan is going to require a change of the priesthood and a change of the covenant because it is going to achieve perfection by getting us to the end.

Now if the priest of the first covenant was to be an earthly priest, and this covenant was of the Law, then the priest would have had to be after the order of Aaron. But since this is a change of covenant and a change of priest, then He is going to make the new high priest after the order of Melchisedec which is an eternal high priest, and that means then that He will always be there for the purpose of intercession. That is what the priest's duty is—to intercede for the people. The priest faces God and brings the people's problems to Him.

Larry: Don't you think that also in this whole picture of what we are looking at here, the rent of the veil from top to bottom fits right in here because that opened up the access to God?

V: Yes, it sure did. Now, everyone has access to God under the Gospel.

Priest and Law Are a Package

Hebrews

7:12 For the priesthood being changed,

there is made of necessity a change also of the law.

Now the necessity is derived from the fact that the Law and the priesthood come together as a package. God gave the Law, and God assigned the priesthood. He designated the tribe of Levi to be the tribe of the priesthood. He then called Aaron from the tribe of Levi to be the first high priest. Then the next high priest would be of Levi's lineage all the way down to the time of the New Covenant.

Now if that package of covenant and priest comes together, and God changes one out, He will change the other out as well. Therefore if the priesthood is changed, by necessity, the covenant has to change. They are a package hooked together.

Hebrews

7:14 For [it is] evident that our Lord sprang out of Juda; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood.

Jesus came out of the tribe of Judah, but Aaron came out of the tribe of Levi. If you are going to be in the Law system, you must have a Levite as your high priest. If you are going to be in the New Covenant system, you cannot have a Levitical high priest. The high priest has to be out of the tribe of Judah, and He has to be after the order of Melchisedec. Jesus is the only person that meets those requirements.

Paul: He is justifying the changing of the covenant and high priest to the Hebrews of the book of Hebrews who are stuck on the fact that the priests need to be out of the tribe of Levi.

V: No, Paul. The High Priest for the Hebrews is Jesus because they are saved just like us. Their justification is good. However, their lives of sanctification are taking a detour. They are trying to keep the Law for their sanctification rather than denying themselves, taking up their crosses, and following Jesus in discipleship. They are busy building

a legal tributary to swim in instead of going into the deep current of the river.

The Problem with the Hebrew Christians

Here is a group of Hebrew Christians who are bringing back this old system, adding it to or superimposing it onto Christianity and are considering themselves far more religious than those who just operate on grace. We call this process legalism, and we have it all around us today because it evolves into institutionalism.

Paul: Going back to Melchisedec, though, is the way God is explaining it because they know who Melchisedec is?

V: Right, they know from the Scriptures. They also know that Abraham paid tithes to Melchisedec and that Abraham is the highest prophet under the old system. If Abraham paid tithes to Melchisedec, and the Lord is of the order of Melchisedec, then this new system is higher than the old system.

The New Covenant Gives Hope

Hebrews

7:15 And it is yet far more evident: for that after the similitude of Melchisedec there ariseth another priest,

7:16 Who is made, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life.

7:17 For he testifieth, Thou [art] a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.

7:18 For there is verily a disannulling of the commandment going before for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof.

7:19 For the law made nothing perfect . . .

What does that mean when it says that the Law made nothing perfect? It means that the Law does not get anything to its end.

7:19 ...but the bringing in of a better hope [did]; by the which we draw nigh unto God.

This new system is the better hope. Why does He use the word, hope?

Paul: Hope is the focal point at the end to look to.

V: Exactly. It is this **end** point here at the end of sanctification (chart 4.6a above). It is the point of perfection, the *telos*, the point of glorification.

Every one of us has a hope for that future attainment. We are heading to an end, and the end is perfection. What is the only way to get there? Only via Christ! Therefore, we get into this model (chart 4.6a above) by going through the gate of justification. For sanctification, we get into the river; get way out in the deep, looking for God's current to take us to His goal. Those on the bank want God's goal but not his route to it. They want a route of their own definition! The Hebrews want to get there by keeping the Law.

Hear this now: the people on the bank want the full-blown end point, the full goal, to get all the way, and to hear the words, "Thou good and faithful servant," but they do not want to get there by going in the river. It breaks my heart, but they do not know any better. They think by getting on the bank and just staying out of trouble, minding their P's and Q's, just trying to keep from being an evil person, that they are going to hear those wonderful words. The Hebrews were doing it by keeping the Law, not by discipleship.

Those of you out in the water, you see, have the understanding that in order to get all the way to God's end to hear those words and be pressing towards the hope of your calling, you need to be in the deep water. ***It is your job to get your people from off of the bank and into the deep water, to get them out of their ignorance.***

Sam: Something else that I think is really important concerns people who think that hope is something that they want to happen. Hope is actually something that has been taken care of and will happen.

V: Yes. The Christian hope is absolute. Everyone that is justified by Jesus will go to the end, i.e. perfection. However, whether they get there in the deep current of God's river or whether they stay in the shallows or on the bank will determine their rewards at perfection.

Ted: Our vision is to be looking towards that hope.

Paul: Hope is actually seen with the eyes of faith—believing that the thing hoped for can be reached.

V: Yes. When we are looking way down at the end, as we are on our pilgrimage, we have the hope, and the hope is built on the promise of God. That promise is immutable. It is going to happen.

Your Christian Choice Is Between Freedom and Legalism

Larry: You were saying that the legalists are trying to return sanctification back to the old system. Would they be considered as ones who would be standing on the bank?

V: Yes, because they wanted to keep the Law for their sanctification, but the New Covenant system requires you to yield your will to the Lord in sanctification. Jesus will have you to not only stay within the Law, but He will also have you do His ministry that He has designed specifically for you. Holiness is a Christian in the deep current of God's river.

Remember that holiness has two facets: one is moral righteousness, and the other is being set aside for God's exclusive use. Thus, sanctification is a justified person that is flowing along in the deep water of God's river.

I got a test back from one of my Internet students today that was really good! He said that when you get into water that is deep enough to lose your footing, then it does not matter what your will is, you go where the water is going. I like that image.

I can imagine, you are kind of wading out there and as long as you maintain your footing, you can resist the flow. As soon as you get too deep and your feet scoop out from under you, then away you go.

Sam: Another thing, too, is that once you are over your head, you are over your head. It does not matter how deep it is, whether it is 10 or 50 feet deep.

V: That is good, Sam. In applying the Doctrine of Salvation (as seen in chart 4.6a above), and you are on your path (the upward sloping line), then you are in the deep water, and your will has been yielded up to the Lord. The Lord is taking you where He wants you to go and using you in His plans. The reason you are yielding your will and facing the deep water and all of the obstacles and perils that are out there is because you can look all the way to the end with the eyes of faith. You have the hope of God's Word that He is going to be pleased with you.

That hope in God's promises will hold you in the deep water. If you try to codify your sanctification, then you are trying to revert to the old covenant's sanctification of rule keeping. It does not matter what these rules are. They can be modern-day, nice sounding rules, *i.e.* "I think we ought to meet on this day, be in this building, put our money in this plate, and do this and this in order to have done it right." This is playing on the bank.

When you start adding on, you are doing the same thing that the Hebrews did. They had their Old-Covenant system added on to the New-Covenant system. All they wanted was to get a few rules in place, because after all, Moses, the great patriarch, gave us those rules, such as priests, sacrifices, tabernacle, ceremonies, etc.

I ask: "Why should we not add them? Won't they make us more religious?" My

answer is "NO!" Adding to God's plan will ruin it, not make it better.

You can start making cases for various little additions, and bringing those things into the faith. We do the same things. We just do not do it in the Hebrews' way. We do it in a Gentile way. We add on some things that get you out of the deep water and up here into rule-keeping on the bank.

The next thing you know, God has to follow you because your rules say you are going to walk lock-step in a different direction. When following a code, you are not in God's river. When you are struggling down the path of your own making, you have been deceived. The deception is this: instead of being free and being taken by the current of the Holy Spirit, you have moved out of freedom, adopted a bondage of some kind, added on the handcuffs, gotten yourself some leg irons, and gotten terrible weights of impediment added to your burdens. You are all bound up trying to move on the path of your own making, and now you are beginning to be deceived into thinking that because you are bound up in all of your present difficulties, you must really be living a great Christianity of many good works.

But friend, God is saying, "Do not be re-enslaved. I bought you and brought you out of slavery. I took you away from the oppressor." It is the same thing that He did when He delivered the Jewish nation out of Egypt.

God Delivered the Hebrews from Slavery

The ancient Hebrews were in Egypt where Pharaoh had enslaved them. They were laboring hard under their oppression to make the bricks. They cried out to God for Him to get them out from under Pharaoh's oppression! God heard their cry, and He sent Moses to deliver them. Moses goes and tells Pharaoh, "God said for you to let My people go!" Pharaoh refuses to let them go. God reaches down and whacks the Egyptians. He

continues to refuse. The next thing you know God whacks harder and harder, and finally Pharaoh says, "Get those people out of here. I am tired of being beaten up by God."

When the people come out, Pharaoh comes after them again like Satan coming after you right after justification. You come to a point where there is nothing but the sea. How are you going to get out of that mess? Here comes Satan. There is the sea. You are trapped! God delivers His people again; He just parts the sea for His people. Again, He prevents His people from bondage by holding the water back away from them. After God's people get through the sea, here comes Pharaoh's army pursuing them, but God just lets the water go and drowns all of them.

When the people got into the wilderness area, they were on the path that God had for them. God used a column of fire by night and a cloud by day to keep them in His deep river-current. God said, "I have brought you out of the bondage you were in. I took you out of the bondage from which no man could escape, brought you through a barrier that no man can cross, and have put you on My Path to live a new and exciting life." He said to the Hebrews, "I want you to look down the path. Everything is going to be taken care of by Me, and I am going to take you *on my path* to My place for you, my Promised Land. I am going to give it into your hands.

The Hebrews got out in the wilderness, and they said, "Oh, now, wait a minute. We are going to die of thirst out here! We must have some water." God tells Moses to take them to some water, but the water is bitter. They say, "Oh, we are going to die with this bitter water." Moses goes to God and says, "These people are complaining about everything we do." God said, "Yes, and it is going to get worse."

My friend, you are going to be just like Moses. It is your job to get the people through the wilderness *on God's path (in His*

deep river current) to the Promised Land. It is your job to demonstrate deep-water Christianity, to get them into the deep with you by breaking both the ignorance and the legalism that is holding them in bondage. You see the ignorance is that there is some alternative that is better than just grace for a personal walk with Jesus as your Lord. The legalism is that many Christians are following an institution or a tradition *instead of denying themselves, taking up their crosses and following Jesus Himself*.

The exodus, travel through the wilderness, and taking the promised land foreshadow the stages of justification, sanctification, and glorification of Christian salvation (see Chart 4.6b). The leading of the children of Israel out of Egypt foreshadows the leading of us out of sin's bondage into justification (the first step towards perfection). All of the various elements of the Exodus foreshadow something.



Chart 4.6b

Now if we are on God's path for us, and if we add on any kind of human tradition or rules that impede our ability to stay in the deep water, we are, perhaps unknowingly, getting into the shallows. Please understand that principle. It is simple.

For you who know this principle of deep-water freedom, it is going to be imperative for you to stay in the deep water, demonstrate to

the others what freedom in Christ means, and also to break down those things that are holding people in bondage. That is a hard, hard, hard job! But it is your job! I cannot make it easy for you. It is going to be the hardest thing you are ever going to do. It is going to be hard enough for you yourself to stay in the deep water much less to break down the walls of ignorance for those up here in the shallows of institutionalism. That failure of rescuing the ignorant is going to be bad enough, but it is going to be terrible for you if you should get out of the deep water and join the ignorant masses.

It is your job to break down the walls of ignorance for those friends and loved ones, your church members. Those people are assigned to you. Breaking down the walls of ignorance is what you must do. If you do not do it, who is going to do it? It will not happen all by itself because the opposite is what is happening by itself. The general tendency is to move off of God's Path (see chart 4.7) by getting the restraints and impediments mentioned above added to our paths so that we can really, really, really know that we are really walking a good Christian walk because of its difficulty and busyness (sarcasm).

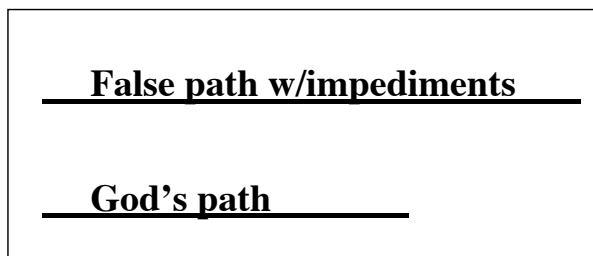


Chart 4.7

In the perfection models (charts 4.6a & b), is justification positionally relational or ontological? And in the false model (chart 4.7), which is it?

Larry: I think the false model is ontological because it has to do with man's carnality and sin. The perfecting model is focused on

hope. That hope is Jesus Christ. I notice that God's path goes up toward the focus point at the end. The false model portrays a carnal man that is walking a path of his own design. He does not really know where he is going.

Paul: That crooked path shows that his positional relationship was not constant.

Paul continued: My understanding of ontological is that it is a state of being. When I go through the new birth I am ontologically changed. That would make, in my opinion, the perfecting model ontological. The false model is the one of positional relationship because we are putting distance between us and the Lord when we sin. We often call that breaking fellowship with the Lord. When that happens, we have to repent to restore that fellowship.

V: Okay, that is what I was looking for, Paul. You have a really good understanding.

Now, what I want to do is to explore what the effects are if the Law will justify you relationally, but you are not permanently (ontologically) changed, i.e. not newly born through the Law.

Unlike the Galatians, justification, was not the problem with the Jews in the book of Hebrews. Sanctification was their problem.

However, I want to talk just a little about legalism in connection with justification.

Law and Justification

In using the Law for justification, the attempt is to have your sins covered by your own actions. The sins that separate you from God are covered by your sacrifice, but it is not a permanent covering. That means then that based on your behavior, you can put a new barrier between you and God that has to be dealt with. That barrier has to be removed for you to be rightly related to God once again. So then, what is the issue if you have only a positional kind of relationship with

God and not an ontological relationship? What kind of salvation is that?

Paul: Temporary.

V: **Yes!** It is temporary. It changes based on your behavior.

In an ontological salvation, which is a new-birth salvation, your new ontology does not change because of sin because you have been re-born as a child of God! When you misbehave, you are still a child of God. If you are in the deep water, you are a child of God. If you are on the bank or in the shallows and you have many secular possessions and comforts and you are going your own way, you are still a child of God. But you are a rebellious child of God going your own way!

Paul: You mess up the fellowship, not the relationship.

V: Almost! You mess up your fellowship and your "positional" relationship. Here is what I want you to see: Positional relationship is a measure of how close or distant a person is in relation to God. Your behavior can start pulling you away from God even though your ontology doesn't change. If we talk about relation to God in the form of blood relation, in the form of ontology, then we are in this picture (charts 4.6a & b) which is an ontological salvation or a relationship that is built upon not just behavior but also on who you are in your being. That is an ontological statement.

In the non-perfecting system (chart 4.5), your relationship with God varies from close, to distant. It is changeable by your behavior. And it could be reinstated by repentance and sacrifice. Under the Law, restoration of positional relationship was achieved by the covering up of the sin with the blood of the sacrifice, but it was temporary. Now why was it temporary?

Sam: Because it was not the **perfect** sacrifice.

V: That is right, Sam! The sacrifice did not last all the way to the end, i.e. forever.

Now, what about behavior under the Law? Can that change the relationship?

Larry: Yes, bad behavior changes positional relationship, and it can only be restored by repentance and sacrifice under the right covenant and right high priest.

V: Good, Larry. Now what if you are covered with the sacrifice of the Old Covenant with an Aaronic high priest, can your behavior then change your positional relationship?

Larry: Yes, because your sin changes it.

V: Right. That is why we have the iterations here in chart 4.5 above. The iterations show that your behavior broke your positional relationship with God. The Law tells you that when the break occurs, repentance and a sacrifice is required to cover your sin. Once the sacrifice is made, you may go along rightly related to God positionally until you sin again.

Always in the non-perfecting model, the positional relationship is as wobbly as your walk. When your walk is good then you are rightly related, but when your walk is bad, you have to have something to rightly relate you back again.

When we come to the perfecting model of the New Covenant with a permanent high priest, we have a model that saves you completely. The non-perfecting model does not. You have to move from the non-perfecting model to the perfecting model in order to achieve perfection.

Why is the perfecting model effective forever?

Paul: The sacrifice of Jesus Christ is complete.

V: Yes, it is perfect and complete. Now what else?

Larry: Because you are ontologically related to God because of your new birth.

V: Excellent, Larry. That ontological relationship is permanent. However, positional relationship, which includes but is not limited to "fellowship," is not permanent.¹ Even though sin breaks our fellowship with God and puts distance between God and us, we can be restored. Our positional relationship can be restored by our repentance which will be used in the advocacy of High Priest Jesus Who lives forever to plead for your forgiveness to be under His atoning sacrifice. Even though repentance is still needed, no more sacrifice is required.

In the new birth there are two things that happen to your sin. One is the sacrificial payment for sin, and the other is the taking away of sin, the casting away of sin. These two accomplishments are foreshadowed in Israel's sacrifice in the wilderness. In that sacrifice, two goats² were required. One was the scapegoat. You put your sins on the scapegoat and then let him out of the gate to wander in the wilderness. This act was the taking away of sin. The other goat was the sacrificial goat that was killed so that the blood, then, covered the sins of the people. This act corresponded to the payment for sins. The Day of Atonement involved both goats in order to teach us what the new birth is all about.

Jesus was the total sacrifice. On Him was put our sins just like the scapegoat, and also because of His blood our sins were paid for through the sacrifice just like the sacrificial goat. In Christ you have the scape and the payment. The scape is where the sins are put

¹ Fellowship is either in good order or broken. But positional relationship can be much more varied as is indicated in the various depths of apostasy in Romans 1.

² Leviticus 16:6-10.

on Him, and the payment is when His blood is shed for my sins.

Law and Sanctification

If you have in the perfecting model an ontological salvation, what part does behavior play? What happens in behavior? Where does that play out in salvation?

Steve: In the ontological change in yourself?

V: No, Steve, that is still ontology which does not change. What about behavior?

Sam: Sanctification.

V: **YES**, in sanctification! After the new birth's establishment of a new ontology, comes the sanctification process in which you should begin to behave like who you are. If you do not act like who you are, it does not change who you are. You are still who you are because your new ontology does not change. That is why you have the hope of the perfection because you are a child of God in your ontology. Your hope of perfection is guaranteed because of who you are, not what you do. It is guaranteed that you are going to go to the end. But now the rewards and how far you get on your path (in the river) depends upon what you do in your sanctification.

That behavior in sanctification is what the book of Hebrews is about. God wants to move His people into understanding what part our actions play in the doctrine of salvation. If you are in the non-perfecting model, how you act has nothing to do with glorification because you don't get to the end under the non-perfecting model. You just die enroute. You never get there. The Bible says that you fall short of the Glory of God.³

Wanda: You mentioned that the non-perfecting model never gets to glorification; I don't think it ever gets to justification.

V: It does not get us to justification either. However, it serves our comprehension. The Old Covenant serves the same purpose concerning the covenant as John the Baptist did in introducing the Lord to the world. John the Baptist did not bring salvation to the world. He introduced the Lord to the world. The Law introduces the Gospel. The non-perfecting model is like the prophet telling us why we need to have the perfecting model.

You cannot get to perfection under the Old Covenant. If you cannot get there from here, and all you have done is fail, fail, fail, then that tells me that I need a new answer. That understanding is the purpose of the non-perfecting model. It introduces the new answer, i.e. the perfecting model. It is a tutor for me so that I know that I need the Gospel—I need a promise of Good News. If under the non-perfecting model, you cannot get to perfection, then how are you going to be perfected?

Linda: By believing God's promise that the perfecting model is going to come.

V: Yes, by looking forward to the cross. This is like Abraham and Sarah looking forward to the birth of Isaac while past their childbearing age. Your hope is based on God's Word, His Promise.

Paul: We are looking back to it; they were looking forward to it.

V: That is good, Paul!

Linda: They had to have faith that it was going to come.

V: Yes, God is telling them throughout the Old Testament that all of the Old Covenant foreshadows the New Covenant: "If you will just look forward to the Messiah, Whom I am sending, He is going to do one absolute and eternal sacrifice, and He is going to serve as the High Priest administering that sacrifice throughout eternity. He is going to

³ Romans 3:23.

give you the opportunity to be perfected. Believe Me because I say it."

He says to His people, "Believe Me." Abraham believed God. God responded to him, "I reckon your belief as righteousness for you." The Old Testament saints got their righteousness the same way we do; they looked forward to the Messiah in belief. They just did not live long enough to get to see Him. But they believed God, and so, they get there after death.

On the other hand, we are out here after the cross looking back on the cross with belief. Thus we are in a position in which we can live in the righteousness because we have already reached not only a present salvation ontologically but also our future glorification as a hope. However, we still believe the same thing that the Old Testament saint did. You believe God. God gave the provision, and we believed Him, and that is how you receive your righteousness. ***Without belief there is no righteousness.***

Steve: That means that salvation worked in the Old Testament times, but they were still looking forward to the cross which was yet future to them.

V: That is right. But now if the people under the Old Covenant lived through the crucifixion without believing that Jesus is God's Son, the Messiah, or if they live on our side of the cross without believing God because they are still looking forward to the Messiah, they above all people are deceived.

When Antichrist ascends to his throne, the nation of Israel is going to be prone to accept him readily as the messiah whom they have been expecting. But the 144,000 of the converted Jews who are going to be out there witnessing are going to be deep-water people trying to rescue the perishing and to pull the lukewarm Christians off of the bank.

I want to look at verse 25 before we leave this passage. This theological part is difficult.

What we have been trying to do here is to compare and contrast these two understandings of perfection so that we could get a theological understanding of this verse.

Hebrews

7:25 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.

Here is the Lord Jesus saving me to the uttermost. There is no part of me that is unsaved because of who Jesus is. I get saved to the uttermost. In the non-perfecting model (Chart 4.5 above), there is no permanent justification or glorification. It does have a sanctification based not on justification but on election. Sanctification alone is not a complete salvation. It is only temporary and relational in position.

However, under the perfecting model, I am saved in my being! I am saved also in my relationship. I am saved even in my walk. I am saved even when I am dead. I am justified, and I am going to be glorified, and my salvation is going to launch me into an eternity of salvation. I am saved to the uttermost under the perfecting model because of Who my High Priest is.

Hebrews

7:26 For such an high priest became us, [who is] holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens;

7:27 Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself.

7:28 For the law maketh men high priests which have infirmity; but the word of the oath, which was since the law, [maketh] the Son, who is consecrated for evermore.

So, Christian salvation is eternal. That means then that my salvation has no end to it. I just continue on being saved because of the eternality of our High Priest. My salvation

will last as long as my High Priest lasts. Thus, my salvation is the perfecting model. I get to glorification and keep on going forever.

CHAPTER 8

The Tabernacle and Priest Foreshadow Things in Heaven

Hebrews

8:1 Now of the things which we have spoken [this is] the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens;

8:2 A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man.

8:3 For every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices: wherefore [it is] of necessity that this man have somewhat also to offer.

8:4 For if he were on earth, he should not be a priest, seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law:

8:5 Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, [that] thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount.

Here is an example of something in heaven being represented by something on earth. The tabernacle is an earthly type of the spiritual sanctuary in heaven in which Jesus is its High Priest. Therefore, the pattern of the tabernacle on earth had to be with precision and maintained just as God said because it taught something about heaven.

The same earthly representation of heavenly things occurs with all of the Old Testament. When you are reading the Old Testament, you are seeing a pattern of something in heaven. It is a foreshadowing of something spiritual. There has to be some relevance of the Old Testament to the New Testament because there is no dichotomy in God's Word.

Since we are New Testament people, many of us think that much of the Old Testament does not apply to us because it is law and sacrifices and tabernacle and all those things of Israel. That is not the way we are to regard the Old Testament. Certainly we stand in the New Testament, but we learn something about salvation and heaven and the spiritual realm by looking back at the Old Testament. Even when you look at the Day of Atonement and the two goats, it will teach you something about the Lord's crucifixion. We need to see those valuable relevances without getting hung up with trying to revert to the imperfect covenant. With an application of its old code.

Here is what most people do. They go back in time and observe a particular ceremony conducted by the Jews. They say, "Oh, this is a precious ceremony" of which God said, "Keep it exactly the way it is." So we become a people being put back in bondage. We can no longer be free. We reach back into the Old Covenant and get that ceremony and carry it over to the New Covenant. We then gather around to do the ceremony the way Moses did it. This is what the Hebrews were doing. They were moving back under a bondage to legal observances. This is legalism. It is a rule keeping. It is a codification of the free walk with Christ in sanctification.

Class, the free walk with Christ is to get into the deep water!!!! Codification of the free walk of following Jesus would demand that everyone walk the same path. But Christ's path is specially designed for each person. His **rules** for walking on His path for you are constant. They are His Word. But His **particular path** for you is unique to how He has gifted you and wants to use you. That path, dear saint, is the river. You can know and keep all the rules of the New Covenant, but if you do not get into the deep water, your knowledge condemns you because you will not go where God's Will would have taken

you. ***This is the problem being addressed in the book of Hebrews.***

The saint who gets into the water goes skidding along, but sometimes unfortunately he finally gets a toehold and stops. He says, "I've finally got a good rule here." He hangs on. Then he tells everybody else, "When you are coming down along here, put your foot down at this spot. There is a rock right here on which to get a good toe hold. There is a good rule right here." Then we think we are really doing something because we are applying a rule out in the middle of the river. Actually what you have done is you have gotten a foot purchase in the same way as if you had climbed out of the water onto the bank where you can stand relaxed. This is what rule keeping does.

Legalism Is an Attempt to Stay Under the Old Covenant

In my other class on the book of John, we saw that you do not even know where the wind comes from or where it goes, but like the wind is he who has the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.⁴

I have the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, but sad to say, I have a penchant for rule keeping also. But so do you. When we do that, then I know where you blow from, and I know where you are going. I can tell. I can even write it out ahead of time. I could just say, "Old Vernon, on Saturday he is going to do this, on Sunday he is going to do that." I could check with his friend, and his friend would say, "Yeah, you are right. That is exactly what old Vernon is going to do."

But we are supposed to be blown about by the wind of the Spirit. How else can God use you the way He wants to use you? If He wants to use you, He has to be able to take

you where and when you do not want to go, get you to do things you do not want to do, and spend you in ways that you flat out do not want to be spent. You are a purchased slave of Jesus, and a slave does not do what a slave wants to do. He also does not do what his fellow slaves think that he should do. A slave does what the master wants him to do. We just jump in the water and go where it takes us. That is what we are being called to do. We are not to grab man-made rules of religion, ropes of self-will, and hanging vines of comfort and indulgence as you go by in the river current.

Hebrews

8:6 But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises.

8:7 For if that first [covenant] had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second.

8:8 For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a New Covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah:

8:9 Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord.

8:10 For this [is] the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people:

8:11 And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest.

8:12 For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.

8:13 In that he saith, A new [covenant], he hath made the first old. Now that

⁴ John 3:8 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.

which decayeth and waxeth old [is] ready to vanish away.

What are the better promises upon which the New Covenant is established?

1. The promise of grace. Hebrews 8:6-9

You remember the Old Covenant? It said that the Lord called Moses, and furthermore, it told what God wanted the people to do. Moses carried the Words of God back to the people, and the people listened to the Words of God, and they all with one accord said, "All that the Lord has said, we will do."⁵ So Moses took the words of the people back to God, and said that the people said that they would do whatever You say. He repeats it, and gives them the words, and the people hear the words, and they say again, "All that the Lord has said, we will do." Moses goes back and tells God again. God says, "Ratify it. Sprinkle them with blood." Moses ratifies it, and sprinkles and seals the Covenant in blood. Then the people go out and refuse to do all that God said. They blew it. The fault of the Old Covenant is in the people's part. The people messed up their part, but God did His part.

Now the people were willing in their hearts, but they messed up, and so God set up some sacrifices and some rules for them so that they could deal with their messing up. They had already messed up. So what were they going to do? Was the Covenant void? No, it had been ratified. It had been sealed with blood.

They needed a new plan for getting back in right relationship with God! God gives them a plan which contains a high priest. He selects a priestly tribe. He gives them everything they need to begin to walk between the lines or walk on this path (see Chart 4.5 above) because they have been elected. They were chosen as God's people, and He is going

to take them into His land. He is going to make them His witnesses to the entire world, in spite of their failures to do all that the Lord had said, so that they could become vehicles of the promises of God.

The people messed up, but God comes to their rescue with this sacrificial system to cover up the mess-ups. They continue to mess up and fall. They get lifted back up, but they fall again. The whole time between Egypt and the cross is nothing but one mess up after another. Mess up, clean up, mess up, clean up, mess up, clean up.

Sounds just like us, does it not? The problem is that they cannot get to the end that way. With us, our mess ups are cleaned up permanently by God. That means then that we are going to get there to the end because it is not a-getting-there based on our behavior. It is getting there based on God's behavior. Getting there is based on the Promise. The New Covenant is the Gospel of Promise. That means then that if you get justified, if you receive the Promise, if you believe God and are counted as righteous and given a new birth, you are going to get there. Even if you stand on the bank for the rest of your life, you are still going to get there because it is based on Promise. God did the work, and He is going to get you there. You do not get yourself there. You are going to get there on the Promise of God.

The New Covenant is a wonderful system. It contains destination and rewards. Destination is based on God's works, and rewards are based on your works. It has no flaw in it because you cannot ever mess it up. Is that not good?

2. It is a promise of inner change. Hebrews 8:10

God says that He is going to write the law in our minds and on our hearts. The imperfect model, however, is based on external change. You run the path between these two

⁵ Exodus 19:5-8.

lines (Chart 4.3). It is like a big channel. You are running along, and you bounce off the edges. The Law keeps you between the lines because it is an external guide that is helping you to stay within the path. But under the freedom system (perfecting model) guess what? You can do anything you want to do as long as you allow God to change your want-to's all the way down into your spirit and will.

In the New Covenant, there is an internal change that happens. As a matter of fact, an internal change is exactly what happens to you when you are filled with the Spirit. When filled with the Spirit, you do what you want to do, but what you want to do has changed to what God wants you to do. This does not mean that your flesh wants to do what your spirit wants to do. That dichotomy between your flesh and the Spirit will remain as long as you are alive in a flesh and blood body. Those of you who know how to deny yourself, also know that what you should want to do is what the Lord wants to do. But if you cannot deny yourself, then what you want to do is indulge yourself, and self-indulgence is what you will end up doing. As a result of self-indulgence, you are up here in the shallows. It is really very simple.

3. It is the promise of immediacy. Hebrews 8:11

This promise is about immediate knowledge replacing mediated knowledge. Please consider Moses and the people. Mediated knowledge goes like this. Moses goes to God, as a priest, in behalf of the people. The people do not visit God. Moses talks with God and tells Him what the people need or want. Then God says, "Go tell the people. . . ." Moses goes to the people, as a prophet, and says, "God said He is a perfect God, a holy God, and He wants you to be just like Him." The people have not met God and still do not know God directly. They know about God. Their knowledge of God is

mediated by Moses, the messenger to and from God. In this example, there is a medium between the people and God.

On the other hand, the Gospel brings each person to a meeting with God Himself. You cannot get saved apart from that immediacy because the human priest cannot forgive sin. Only God can forgive sin. You must go to God and say directly to Him, "Oh, God, I have messed up. I am asking you to forgive me." God says, "You are forgiven," and you look at Him and say, "You are my Father." God says, "You are my child."

You Christians do not have to be told that you ought to go and know God because you already know Him. Otherwise, you would not be a Christian. You see, then, there is an immediacy now in the New Testament that is not available in the Old Testament because you had to have a prophet to speak for God, you had to have a priest to speak to God. But in the New Testament you are a prophet and you are a priest because you know God and meet with Him directly. You can take the people's burdens to God, and you can take the message of God to the people. Every one of you can do that. Even a child can do that. A child can pray for you, and take your needs to God because if that child is saved, he knows God.

4. The promise of sins forgiven. Hebrews 8:12

5. The promise of eternal blessing.

In the last verse the Old Covenant has not departed. Notice that. It is decaying, it is waxing old, and it is ready to vanish away, but has not departed. It is still there. The Old Covenant, the first covenant, is still in place, and there is still a very good purpose for the Old Covenant. It is still a tutor, it still helps the people who are trying to live by law keeping. It still helps them to know that they need to go to the New Covenant for being perfected rather than to try to get there the old

way which does not get you to the end. It also provides an external restraint for the person who cannot deny himself. The first requirement of discipleship is to be able to deny self. If you cannot deny self, then you need someone or a law to restrain you externally.

I had sons who practiced not denying themselves. I had to deny them externally. I had to make it painful for them in order to teach them self-control (self denying). After a while they learned that self-control works pretty good: "There is much relief from pain when using self-control. Why don't we try some of that?" It took years to learn that lesson, and they are still learning it, but so am I, and so are you.

External law is not gone, it is still in place, it still serves a purpose, and it restrains those who cannot restrain or deny themselves. Now if the Law is serving the same introductory purpose for the Gospel as John the Baptist served for Jesus, then what does lawlessness serve? Lawlessness introduces the Antichrist. Don't we have a scripture that says, "Anti-

christ is the man of lawlessness?"⁵ The Law, you see, introduces the Gospel the same way John the Baptist introduced Christ. But lawlessness, self indulgence, me first, and what I think is the only thing that counts will introduce Antichrist, the man of lawlessness. If the law is the external restrainer, then the Antichrist wants no restraint. Don't the Scriptures say, "When the restrainer is taken away, the man of lawlessness will arise"⁶? We learn about Antichrist, the man of lawlessness, in our class on the book of Revelation.

⁵2 Thessalonians 2:3: Don't let anyone deceive you in any way, for that day will not come until the rebellion occurs and the man of lawlessness is revealed (NIV). 2 Thessalonians 2:7-8: For the secret power of lawlessness is already at work; but the one who now holds it back will continue to do so till he is taken out of the way. And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will overthrow with the breath of his mouth and destroy by the splendor of his coming (NIV).

⁶2 Thessalonians 2:7.

Chapter Questions

1. What relationship did Melchisedec have to Abraham?
2. What is the meaning of the name Melchisedec?
3. Why should another priestly order be called that is not after the order of Aaron?
4. Where is perfection?
5. What is ontological salvation?
6. What are the better promises upon which the New Covenant is established?
7. Compare mediated knowledge as over against immediate knowledge.

Chapter 5

REDEMPTION THROUGH CHRIST WITH RESULTING PRIVILEGES

HEBREWS CHAPTER 9

The sanctuary

Describe the first tabernacle and the associated process.

Hebrews

9:1 Then verily the first [covenant] had also ordinances of divine service, and a worldly sanctuary.

9:2 For there was a tabernacle made; the first, wherein [was] the candlestick, and the table, and the shewbread; which is called the sanctuary.

9:3 And after the second veil, the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of all;

9:4 Which had the golden censer, and the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold, wherein [was] the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant;

9:5 And over it the cherubims of glory shadowing the mercyseat; of which we cannot now speak particularly.

9:6 Now when these things were thus ordained, the priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service [of God].

9:7 But into the second [went] the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and [for] the errors of the people:

9:8 The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing:

9:9 Which [was] a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience;

9:10 [Which stood] only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal

ordinances, imposed [on them] until the time of reformation.

1. It is on earth. Hebrews 9:1. The Old Covenant had a divine service but a worldly sanctuary.
2. It symbolized things to come. Hebrews 9: 2-5. The Old Covenant included the tabernacle's arrangements and its furnishings which pointed to things of the future.
3. It was inaccessible to the people. Hebrews 9:6-7. Only the priests and the high priests went into it.
4. It was temporary. Hebrews 9:8. The Holy Spirit's entrance was not manifest.
5. It was ineffective for changing hearts. Hebrews 9:9-10. The Old Covenant could not take the worshiper to the end point of salvation. It did not produce inner change.

The tabernacle and its processes were only a foreshadowing. Everything about the tabernacle, the Old Covenant, and the priestly duties were a foreshadowing. These things pointed to the New Covenant. Thus, we of the New Covenant must develop appropriate understandings of Old Testament scriptures.

There are people who do studies on the tabernacle—what do the things point to, etc. These are worthy considerations because all of it symbolizes something yet to come. The goal of these studies should be to determine what is foreshadowed. When you are dealing with the tabernacle, the priestly sacrifices, the ceremonies, etc., those are not ends in themselves. They are pointing to something. When we get to the New Covenant we should be able to look back on those things with understanding. We should also be able to

look at those things to give us additional understandings of the New Covenant. It works in both directions. We should be able to understand backwards, and forwards.

The Old Testament is a great teaching aid for the New Testament, but also vice versa. There is much that we can learn from the Old Testament about the New Testament and God's plans. That is why I enjoy teaching the prophetic books so much.

When I teach Isaiah, I do so from several different perspectives. One of those perspectives is to determine what God was saying to the nation of Israel. He had something to say to them in their time, facing their problems, dealing with how they were relating to God at that time. But he had just as much to say to us in that book, too.

If you study the prophets from just the historical point of view, you will miss what God is saying to us in our present times because all of the Old Testament is also pointing to where we are today. We need to see ourselves in these prophetic messages that are calling for humbling ourselves, praying, seeking His face, and turning from our wicked ways.¹

What happens many times with us today is that we exempt ourselves in our Old Testament studies. We look back and we see Isaiah and Jeremiah hammering away at the people of Israel. We say, "Boy! those people of Israel sure didn't know how to do it right, did they?" We line up and cast dispersions back on them, exempting ourselves. But everything God says about them is pointing to us as well. It points forward to the New Covenant and to us who are under the New Covenant.

When you are dealing with the people of God, i.e. Israel or Judah or whatever, you can many times just change the word and put

"church" in place of Israel or Judah. Every bit of that is pointing towards us, maybe not specifically so, but in principle. Many people do not even go into the Old Testament because they say that it does not apply to us. Well, where do they get off throwing out the majority of God's Word for us? God's Word, all of it, applies to us. The Old Testament is truly rich with pointing to the New Covenant and our understanding of who Christ is and what His dealings with us are.

Describe the Second Tabernacle and the Process

1. It is heavenly and was not made with human hands. Hebrews 9:11

Hebrews

9:11 But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building;

2. It is effective for changing lives. Hebrews 9:12-23.

Hebrews

9:12 Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption [for us].

9:13 For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh:

9:14 How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

9:15 And for this cause he 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.

9:16 For where a testament [is], there must also of necessity be the death of the testator.

9:17 For a testament [is] of force after

¹ 2 Chronicles 7:14.

men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth.

9:18 Whereupon neither the first [testament] was dedicated without blood.

9:19 For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book, and all the people,

9:20 Saying, This [is] the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you.

9:21 Moreover he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle, and all the vessels of the ministry.

9:22 And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission.

9:23 [It was] therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these.

- a. Jesus offered His own blood. His blood is efficacious for purging your conscience so that you can serve God. Hebrews 9:12-14

Efficacious means that it has the power to accomplish something supernaturally in you. The Lord's blood is efficacious to do those two things. First it purges your conscience; it is an inner work. The blood of the bulls was an outer event, but the Lord's blood provides an inner change. The blood of bulls cannot accomplish an inner change. It can only be an outer work. This sacrifice by Jesus is going to purge your conscience, and the purging of your conscience is a cleansing of the inner man. When that happens, you are capable of serving God. Having your inner man cleansed is a requirement and even a prerequisite for serving God. After your conscience has been cleansed, you are then lined up, enabled, empowered, hearing the voice of God, able to follow Him, and able then to serve Him.

This process of cleansing the inner man describes a series of things which must take place in the proper order. Many people would like to reverse that order. They want to serve God so that they can get clean. That reverse order describes attaining salvation via works.

Class, works will not get it. Salvation requires a blood remission of sins. Without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin. A works-salvation bypasses the shedding of blood. Therefore works will not be efficacious for the purging of the inner man. God said that first is the purging and then come the works. He did not say that first are the works and then comes the purging.

- b. Jesus mediates the New Testament through His death. Hebrews 9:15-22.

Why must the testator die for a testament to be effective?

Sally: There has to be a sacrifice of blood.

V: Okay, so without the shedding of blood there is no remission. But why must the testator die?

Paul: A will is never effective until there is a death.

V: So if you write a will, and you get it notarized and all like that, and it is an official document, what good is it? It is just sitting there waiting to become effective.

Paul: One thing about using a will analogy is that you can change your will as long as you are alive.

V: You are right! Let us just imagine that you say in your will that you bequest your house to this person, Mary, over here. Then before you die, you sell your house. What good is the will? When you die what good is the will since the bequest has been nullified while you were still alive. A will only becomes effectual at the death of the testator if it has not been changed. It becomes concretized at the death. The testator, then,

must die in order for the will to become effective. Until that death, it is just an intent. It may be a good-faith intent, or it may even be a bad-faith intent. Concerning the latter, it could be just to fool somebody. It could just be used to make somebody think, “Oh, wow, this is good,” but there may not be any real true intentions behind it. It, in this case, would just be a farce, unless of course the person died, then it would become real if it was in fact the last will and testament.

But Jesus died to mediate this testament. That means it is concretized; it is sealed, and it cannot be voided or nullified or changed. It is already done. We have a testament that is in place now, and we can hang our destinies on the contents. Jesus was the testator, God is the executor, and you are the heirs. You can put your life on this fact. The death of the testator has already occurred.

What is the difference between a covenant and a testament?

Paul: A covenant can be effective before the death.

V: Yes, a covenant can be effective immediately, and it is not necessary for a death in order for it to be in place and effective. Have you ever covenanted together? That covenant was put into place while you both were still alive.

Paul: If you want to buy a car, you make a covenant with a bank for the money to buy a car. You promise to pay the bank a sum of money monthly, and you can take possession of the car.

Paul cont'd: In a covenant you usually have two participants, and in a testament you have someone who is not a participant but a beneficiary.

V: Okay, that is good. A testament, then, is a one-way agreement. A covenant is two-way agreement, a two-party agreement where everybody makes some kind of agreement.

Is the Old Covenant an old covenant or an old testament?

Paul: It is a covenant.

Ted: I think it is a testament because our ways are so much lower in making an agreement.

V: So God's ways are so much higher than our ways that the testament is more substantiated and solidified in who **He** is.

Ted: God kept His part of the agreement; man did not. Because God did keep it, it is still effective.

Mary: The Old Covenant depended upon what man did. Man had to obey God. The priest had to make the sacrifice in the events of men's failures. The Old Covenant however was fulfilled by the perfect man.

James: Why did they call the New Testament the New Testament? Isn't that referring back to the Old Testament concept? It seems like there is not a testament in the Old Testament. In effect the Old Testament would have been a covenant between God and man. Perhaps, inside the Old Testament there is a testament that foreshadowed the New Testament.

John: Did that not have to do with a conditional and an unconditional . . . you know, some provisions of God were unconditional. He did it regardless of what we did. On the other hand, there were some cases where we had to do something before He did something.

V: Okay, conditionality is definitely a part of the idea of covenant, and unconditionality is a part of the idea of testament. But what I want to know here is where do you land on this Covenant-Testament business?

Jane: Until Jesus died the testament was not effective. The New Covenant is not effective as a New Testament until the death of the testator. It existed because He had foretold it and foreshadowed it and all that about what

was going to happen, but until the death it was not effective.

Joe: From that point in its beginning, it was a Covenant?

Sue: In the Old Testament we were saved by faith just like we are in the New Testament. So it was in effect then even though Christ had not died.

Sam: The law was a Covenant but it was a foreshadowing of the Testament.

Fred: The Old Covenant was a testament of law, and the new one is a testament of grace.

V: So far, all of you are right.

Paul: But the principle of grace was there.

V: You betcha, it was there in the Abrahamic Covenant. So is the New Testament part of the Abrahamic Covenant?

Paul: We are descendants of Abraham spiritually.

V: That is right. The New Testament is a part of the Abrahamic Covenant—the Covenant of blessing and grace.

Jill: Does the word testament not mean covenant?

V: No. A covenant is an agreement between living parties saying, “If you will do this, I will do that.” Now testament is this, when I die I am going to give you such and such: that is testament.

Jill: Are you not going to tell us the answer?

V: Oh, you want **ME** to answer it?

Ted: To get this more convoluted, I still think it would be both. The covenant was between God and man. Jesus died and arose and lives again. He is still living, the covenant is still in force, but yet He died justifying the testament idea too.

V: That is good, Ted.

John: I think they are both still in force.

Mary: The covenant you described was a covenant of mutual obligation; there is also a covenant of divine obligation.

V: Mary, you are describing a promise.

The Abrahamic Covenant was that God would give continuous blessings to Abraham and his seed if Abraham left his home and went with God. Please see that Abraham completed his part. Now God is completing His part. The Old Covenant was later added to deal with sin. The only Man who completed the Old Covenant was Jesus. The rest of humanity failed. So, Jesus established a testament to give His Abrahamic blessings and His Old Covenant merits to His heirs. His heirs are all who are willing to believe. What did Jesus bequeath to man? salvation’s blessings and merits. He inherited Abraham’s blessings via His ontology (His Personhood) and the Old Covenant’s merits via His Works. Then He bequeathed all of His possessions to all who will believe His Gospel. That bequest was activated and concretized by His death.

You, with the plan of the two testaments together, are condemned sinners who are going to die the second death if you do not believe Jesus’ Gospel. By believing, you bequeath your sin to Jesus. He takes it to the cross. He then bequeaths to you His righteousness and blessings. The New Testament is so wondrous that you can hardly say it in words. He gets the sin, and we get eternal life.

Who could refuse this marvelous swap? Yet, when you are out on the streets, you will find all manner of people who will refuse it. They say, “Oh, no, I am going to do my own thing. I have my thing all worked out.” Guess what they are going to do? They are going to inherit their own sin. They bequeath to themselves their own sin and its penalty. And they are going to collect their own wages for their sins.

When Jesus died, he completed the sealing of both covenants into testaments. He is the God-Man who fulfilled both covenants and then died to convert them into testaments. He fulfilled both sides of the covenants as the God-Man. When He died, He did so as the God-Man. Now when He lives, He is doing so as the God-Man. Thus, His living keeps the covenantal conditions alive even though they are also unconditional testaments. Those of us who are in Christ enjoy His fulfillment and inherit His blessings.

c. Patterns and symbols were cleansed by lower blood, but heavenly things required divine blood. Hebrews 9:23

3. Christ enters the true heaven rather than the figure (symbolic or shadow of heaven). Hebrews 9:24.

9:24 For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, [which are] the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.

The word for “figures” here is antitype. You need to think about type and antitype—shadow and image. Type and antitype can be understood by analyzing a typewriter. You have a key that has a “k” on it. That key hits the ribbon and implants the image of a “k” on the paper. The key with the “k” on it is the type; the impression on the paper is the antitype, an image of the original.

There are some things that you need to begin to think about. I am simply introducing you to the ideas of type and antitype because we do a lot of typing in the Old Testament. There are many types of Christ, *i.e.* Abraham and the sacrifice of Isaac is a type of God sacrificing Jesus. That is a type. There is an antitype about which we have been warned. That antitype is the Antichrist.

There are some things you need to study and work on. Type and antitype as defined above are just word things, but when you are

looking at the Old Testament there is much type study—*i.e.* typing. You study the types so that you can understand more about that person, that thing, or that covenant or whatever in the New Testament, but there are antitypes to look at as well. Wherever there is a type, there is an antitype. The antitype is not necessarily a bad thing. When you take a typewriter key and strike the paper, you want an antitype impression on the paper. That impression on your paper is not a bad thing unless you have made an error.

Sam: The “k” on the paper is an exact opposite of the “k” on the key.

V: Yes, the reversals are required for us to read a copy on paper. Antichrist, who tries to present himself in the image of a messianic savior, is an exact opposite of Christ.

There are some worthwhile studies in these areas. Studying the types in the Old Testament can be very interesting, but also studying the antitype can be interesting as well. Notice again that word, “figures,” in verse 24 if you have a King James Version (KJV) of the Bible.

4. It is based on the completed sacrifice. Hebrews 9:25-28. He followed the formula of two appointments: (1) death, and (2) judgment.

Hebrews

9:25 Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others;

9:26 For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.

9:27 And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:

9:28 So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.

The model of salvation contains justification, sanctification, and glorification (JSG), the whole of which is the Doctrine of Salvation (chart 5.1). What you need to do is explain to me how the death of Christ, as we have looked at it, fits this JSG formula.

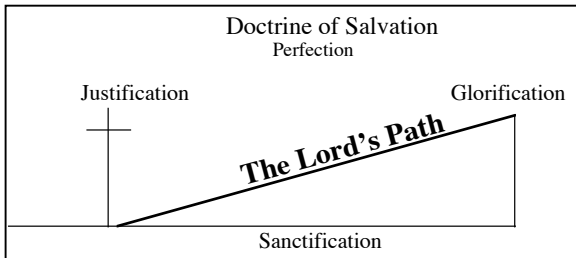


Chart 5.1

Sam: Glorification.

V: Good, glorification is where He dies, where is His justification?

Sam: He was born just.

V: Good, His birth is His justification. Where is His sanctification?

Sam: Walking from birth to death.

V: Okay, so now didn't we see in the Scriptures that He learned obedience through suffering?² His walk was as much a part of the Doctrine of Salvation as His death. He had to be obedient or else He would have come under the condemnation of the Law. But when He lived completely without sin, there is no debt of sin on Him, but He took our debt. We bequeath our debt to Him.

He was born just, and He walked in perfect obedience yielding His will. That means then that He lived in the deep water, He did not come out on the bank, and He faced monster after monster after monster going all the way to the cross. Then He died, and He died unjustly. There is, then, a debt owed to Him. Guess what the payment of that debt is. The entire universe! He became Owner, Master, Lord of the entire universe,

² Hebrews 5:8.

and every tongue will confess that Jesus is Lord.³ God has highly exalted Him.

On the far side of the *kenosis* after His cross experience, we have Jesus' exaltation (see Chart 5.2). Since He paid with His life

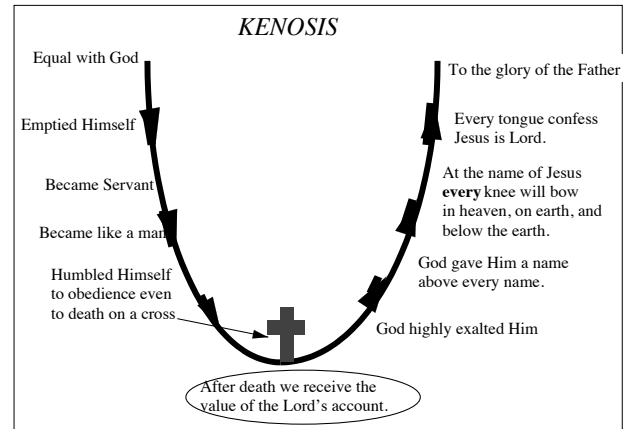


Chart 5.2

for something He did not owe, then that means He put something of infinite value, His Life, on the credit side of the ledger. Thus there is something infinite owed back to Him because He paid for something that He did not owe. What He is going to do is say, "Take that which is owed to me, that credit, and put it to their account. Put whatever is owed to me on every Christian's account." That benefit was bequeathed to us. Do you merit that? No. Did He merit this awful, unjust death? No. The merit that He has gained by paying something that He did not owe is put on your account. You do not merit that credit at all. Now that we have depicted Jesus' life, death, and resurrection on the Doctrine of Salvation model, where are we depicted on it?

James: Our new birth is our justification.

V: So then we can label justification as the "new birth." Our walk is getting into the deep water. The walk, sanctification, is our learning obedience through suffering just like Jesus did. We can have the correct walk only

³ Philippians 2:5-11.

by yielding our wills to Jesus, and that is the walk of obedience. Glorification is not during our lifetimes. It occurs at the same point that Jesus' glorification occurred—at our deaths (see Chart 5.3).

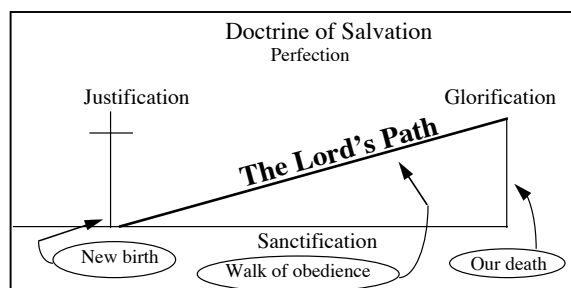


Chart 5.3

In the *kenotic* model (Chart 5.2 on the previous page), we are going to go down, down, down. We are going to carry our crosses all the way to our deaths, and our exaltations are going to come from the infinite amount of merit given to us from His infinite, never ending account. His account is of infinite value. He paid with the most precious thing ever known to the world, i.e. with His own blood. He did not owe it. The merit that comes to our account is the value of the Lord's blood. We get that merit on our ontologies (our personhoods) at the point of justification on the doctrine chart, and on the left of the *kenosis* chart prior to our deaths. The Lord's merit accrues to our ontologies. In other words, we are absolutely meritoriously righteous in our persons from the point of our new births. This imputed priceless righteousness qualifies us for our entrance into heaven to be with God.

However, additional benefits from His account are given to us as **rewards** for our own meritorious works when we die (at our glorification). In the judgment after death of our works, we get extra rewards based on our own merits. Those rewards are proportional to our sanctification walks, and their source is the infinite supply of the Lord's meritorious account. Thus our tiny little merits for

faithful works is multiplied into huge rewards by the Lord.

HEBREWS CHAPTER 10

What are the characteristics of Christ's sacrifice?

1. It takes away sin. Hebrews 10:1-10
 - a. The Old Testament sacrifices did not take away sin. Hebrews 10:1-4. Because the law was a shadow, a type of the original image, it cannot do the same as the original.

If you have a light source, and it is shining across somebody, it casts a shadow there on the other side of the person. That shadow is indicative, but it has no substance. An image has substance; it is more than just a shadow. Jesus is the Image of God. He has divine substance to Him. We were created in the image of God. We are not the image of God because His Image is not something fallen and in total depravity. Whereas we are created "in" the image of God, Jesus "is" the Image of God.

The difference between the Law and the Gospel is that the Law is the shadow, and the Gospel is the substance. The light shining across the Gospel gives the shadow of the Law. You ought to be able to look at the shadow and know something about the substance that casts that shadow. That is what we have been talking about here, about looking in the Old Testament for the types of Christ which are foreshadowed by Christ.

There are shadows in the Old Testament. We look at the shadow and you ought to be able to tell something about the New Testament by looking at the shadows being cast. But the Old Testament is a foreshadow which means it occurs before our time. You can look at this something which foreshadows that something, i.e. Melchisedec foreshadows Christ's High Priesthood.

Even though a shadow has no substance, we can see indications of the underlying substance in that shadow. The shadow is indicative but not substantial. Indicative means you ought to be able to understand something of what is causing its existence.

- b. The Lord's sacrifice was effective for taking away sin. Hebrews 10:5-10.

Hebrews

10:1 For the law having a shadow of good things to come, [and] not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect.

We have already talked about perfect in here. Perfect means to get to the end.

Hebrews

10:2 For then would they not have ceased to be offered?

If the Law took you to the end, to glorification, then the sacrifices would have kept on because they would have been effectual for getting you to the end, for perfecting you. But they are not effectual; they cannot get you to the end. That is why they are discontinued. There has been one perfect sacrifice that does get you to the end.

Hebrews

10:2 . . . because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins.

10:3 But in those [sacrifices there is] a remembrance again [made] of sins every year.

10:4 For [it is] not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.

10:5 Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me:

10:6 In burnt offerings and [sacrifices] for sin thou hast had no pleasure.

10:7 Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to

do thy will, O God.

10:8 Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and [offering] for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure [therein]; which are offered by the law;

10:9 Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second.

10:10 By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once [for all].

So when the Lord came to do God's will, He was going to do these things described here in these verses. He is born justified. He is going to do God's will. Remember, God has no pleasure in sacrifices for sin. He would rather have you obey Him—He wants obedience.

What did the Lord do? He came to do away with the sacrifices and to do God's will which gives pleasure to God. God wants obedience. He does not want repetitive sacrifices for sin. He has no pleasure in sacrifice because the basis of the sacrifice is sin. That is why He does not want it. He wants no part of it. He wants obedience, for us to follow Him. Jesus did exactly that. He came, He obeyed, and He died. The death part came to our credit. He completed all the desires of the Father.

Now the desire of the Father and the Son is for you to do the exact same thing. It requires a perfect obedience, but it requires the taking of the cross with you in your obedience because guess where you are going. You are going down in self-sacrifice, too, ***not for sin but for obedience***.

Today's popular obedience feels good. This obedience that blesses your temporal body and that you want to do because it is going to get the applause of men is not the kind of obedience that you have when you deny yourself, take up the cross, and follow Jesus.

First, deny yourself.⁴ This sets the pattern, then pick up your cross, and then obey Him, follow Him, yield your will to Him just like the Lord Jesus did for the Father. That is what you are to do as well.

You did not just bring the cross so that you could build muscles under it, you are going somewhere. You are going to Golgotha. You have your instrument of death on your shoulder. You are going on towards your death. You are going to go towards the sacrifice. Your path of crucifixion is continuous self-crucifixion, self-crucifixion, self-crucifixion, yielding your life to the Lord, rather than to yourself. Through your loss of life, you will ultimately gain your true life.

The joyful thing about this is that when you lose yourself in sacrificial service, wonderful miracles result. One miracle is that your life becomes holy like your ontology/personhood. Other miracles are all around you as people's lives and ontologies become holy too. Many have gained their lives out of that sacrifice by Jesus.

The same thing happens to us. We are seeds of wheat. The seed dies, but then will come the harvest out of that one seed. The harvest cannot come unless the seed dies first. It is the same principle for us Christians. It is the sowing of our lives to the greater harvest.

Please understand that you are not just morbidly putting yourself down in sacrifice just for the sake of being sacrificial. That is not what we are talking about here. We are talking about working to obtain a return on investment. You are putting your life into the people so that there will be a return (a profit, if you will) to accrue to the Lord's Glory. Plus, your eschatological return (rewards in heaven) will be multiplied.

We do not want those in whom we have invested our sacrifices to be self centered and

self indulgent as attested by their saying, "Oh, boy, we are saved. Now what can we have? Lord, here is my checklist. Give me this and this and this. Give me what is on my list." That is self-indulgence. That is opposite of the *kenosis*.

And we do not want the description of an upside down *kenosis* made of us either. What you want is to be duplicated in the lives of your people to whom you are ministering. You are going to invest your life in them. You want them walking their paths and duplicating exactly the Lord's definition of discipleship as defined by the principles displayed in your own life. You want them to invest their lives in sacrifice to and for others.

The discipleship model goes on and on and on. Hebrews is the book of discipleship. Get your people in that deep water. Get your people learning how to obey through the suffering.

2. It need never be repeated. Hebrews 10: 11-18. He sat down on the right Hand of God.
 - a. Bringing the enemies into submission. Hebrews 10:13.

Hebrews

10:11 And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins.

10:12 But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God;

10:13 From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool.

10:14 For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.

Note this word, perfected. That word means that He is causing everybody who is in the process of sanctification to get to the end point. Once you get past the entrance gate, you are guaranteed to be perfected. That is what the Lord is doing for us who are on the path of sanctification. At the end point, every

⁴ Matthew 16:24.

tongue, even the tongues of His enemies are going to confess that Jesus is Lord.

Hebrews

10:15 [Whereof] the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us: for after that he had said before,

10:16 This [is] the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them;

10:17 And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.

10:18 Now where remission of these [is, there is] no more offering for sin.

b. Perfecting those being sanctified.
Hebrews 10:14.

In the doctrine of salvation we have the fact that when we are on our paths of sanctification, there is no more offering for sins. It says in verse 18, “Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin.”

Dear friend, if you are on your path of sanctification, and everybody in this room (reading this book) are supposed to be on that path, there is no more offering for sin.

Oscar: I wanted to ask a question about that. When you are on your sanctification walk, and you sin after knowing the truth, there is no additional blood to cover that sin.

V: That is right. There is no more offering for sins.

Oscar: So, how do we deal with it?

V: We are going to look further in here with what we are going to do with that issue. There is some serious stuff right here. Once you get on your sanctification path (chart 5.4), there is no more offering for sin. Before you are justified, all of those black sins you were doing are offered up and paid for in full by the Lord’s blood. That takes those sins away. But once you are in your path of sanctification and you sin, there is no more offering for sin.

Linda: Oomp!

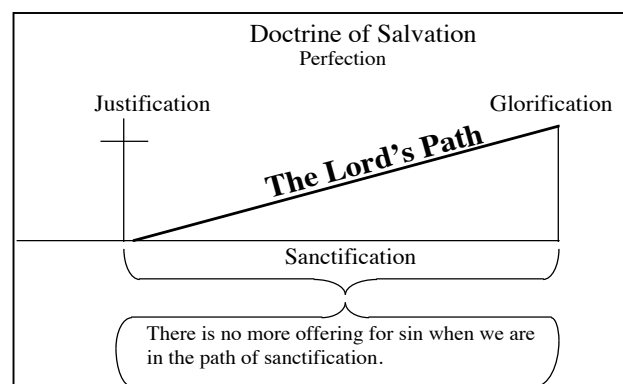


Chart 5.4

V: Man! That is scary, is it not? We are going to be looking deeply at that statement in order to understand it.

We will need to look at the various ways of interpreting that statement. I want you to ponder and wrestle with these issues because what can, and does, happen here is that some people can see this kind of statement and say, “Okay, then you lose your salvation.” But at the same time what did it say right here in this passage? It says that once you start on the Lord’s path of sanctification, it is guaranteed that you will be taken to perfection.

There are other people who say, “That threat is only dealing with the lost, and as saved people, it does not apply to us.”

Or there is another group that says, “Oh, we can just sin all over the place because there is always grace to cover everything. God’s grace is sufficient, so why not live like we want to? The law of grace is going to take care of us.”

Let’s hold the question a little longer.

3. It opens the way to God. Hebrews 10:19-39.
 - a. Explanation. Hebrews 10:19-21. The veil here is His body.

Hebrews

10:19 Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus,

10:20 By a new and living way, which he

hath consecrated for us, through the veil,
that is to say, his flesh;

10:21 And [having] an high priest over
the house of God;

b. What is the invitation in Chapter 10?
Hebrews 10:22-25

Hebrews

10:22 Let us draw near with a true heart
in full assurance of faith, having our
hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience,
and our bodies washed with pure water.

(1) Draw near. Hebrews 10:22.

This is an invitation for us to draw near.
If you are preaching this, drawing near should
be presented to two sets of people. Those
who have not gone through the gate of justifi-
cation are one set. The second set is those in
the sanctification process who may be wob-
bling around off the path that they are sup-
posed to be on.

There is an invitation for every one of us
to draw near to God. I want to do this. I want
to draw near to God. This is serious to me. I
want to draw near. This, then, is an invitation
to me and to you, to draw near to God.

Will you draw near? As for me, and my
family, we want to draw near. I want all of
you also to draw near. That is the first
invitation. If you want to draw near to God,
please pray with me.

*“Lord Jesus, I want to draw near to You. I
want to have my “yes” to this invitation that
is written here in Your Word to be recorded in
heaven for all to know. Yes, You may spend
me however You want. I am Yours. I give
You myself, my family, my money, my time,
my resources. I give You everything. Please
sign and seal this commitment and hold it in
Your Strong Hand forever. When I begin to
wander off path, please do whatever is
necessary to bring me to my senses because I
am as serious in this vow as I can be. Please
use everything at Your disposal to make me
whatever You want me to be. I love You Jesus*

*and want to praise and glorify Your Name.
Amen.”*

If you prayed this prayer and mean it with
all your heart, say “amen” out loud right now.

Hebrews

10:23 Let us hold fast the profession of
[our] faith without wavering; (for he [is]
faithful that promised;)

(2) Hold fast. (Make your commit-
ment real by holding on to the do-
ing of your walk. Obey Jesus!)
Hebrews 10:23.

The invitation so far is to draw near; the
Lord is saying for me to draw near. I am
going to find out where He is walking in this
world, and I am going to draw near to the
Lord. Since I am in my sanctification pro-
cess, what I want to do is to flat out make sure
I am on the path that God has for me. I am
putting all my fears and all my “wants” aside
because I am committed to draw near. I am
committed to go down. All of you should be
headed in a similar sacrificial direction.

Now there needs to be an actuating of
your commitment to follow your prayer.
What are you going to commit to? What is
the direction of your commitment? Can you
hear God’s call? If you cannot, then there is
some purging that needs to be done in your
life. We saw purging in Isaiah 6. After purg-
ing, Isaiah could hear God’s call. Dear friend,
have your conscience purged so that you can
hear and serve God.

There may be some purging needed by all
of us and also your people in order to hear.
When you hear the call, commit. Just jump in
it. This is the deep-water part of commit-
ment. What is the call on your life? Commit
to it! In one passage of Scripture, the apostle
says to Timothy, “Give your life to it. Just
throw yourself into it. Meditate upon it,
practice it, do it, and with selfless abandon-
ment throw yourself into it.” Every one of us

in this room (or reading this book) has a call from God. It is a growing call.

You remember when He called the apostles he said, "Follow me!" They took off. One left his tax booth and headed off with Him. Many of them had no idea what all that call meant, but there they go with Him. He goes that way; they go with Him. He turns; they turn. He says, "Now I want to send you out on some missionary journeys." They say, "Okay." They start packing for the trip, and He says, "No, do not take any money, do not take a change of clothes, just head on out." Hmmm, that is a strange way to do a journey, but they are committed. So they go on their journey just like He instructed. All this stuff starts happening, and they come back. "Lord, you should have seen it. The devils had to obey us. Miracles happened, and all this good stuff happened."

He pulled them aside for special fellowship and reflective rest, and they still do not know yet what is going to happen. Some of them are going to be executed. Some of them are going to be scattered when the chief Shepherd is executed. They are going to lose hope. They are going to go fishing after the loss of their dream, and they are going to be wondering: "what are we going to do? They killed Him. How are we going to have a Messiah if the Messiah is dead?" They were pondering these kinds of things.

They see Him resurrected, and Peter jumps into the water and swims to shore, drawing near. Later the Lord commissions him and says, "Feed my sheep." Peter says, "Well what about John?" The Lord said, "You do not worry about him. I am telling *you* to feed my sheep." Now Peter heard that command, or he would not have been trying to put the heat off onto somebody else. That is exactly what you do. The Lord says to you, "This is what I want." You respond not with obedience but by saying, "What about this and that and him and her, the pastor, the

missionaries, etc." You lack the will to deny yourself.

But there is a commitment now registered in heaven for you. When you hear the call, commit. Go ahead and commit! Your promissory prayer was either for your obedience or for the Lord's discipline.

For others of you, there is a purging that may be necessary in your life in order to hear the call. You lack the will to agree that discipleship requires self-denial. Thus you are not willing to purge the things that you like.

Please understand that there is a purchase that you are making right now. You may spend your eternal rewards and pleasures in order to gain temporal self-indulgence, or you may spend your temporal pleasures in order to gain an eternity of wonderful rewards. Open your eyes and know that you are making the transaction right now. The wise man will sacrifice his earthly life for an eternity of wonderful rewards.

(3) Consider and provoke one another.

Hebrews

10:24 And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:

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.

Consider one another! This is part of what I am trying to demonstrate here in this class, and I want you to take what you see and what you are hearing here to your churches, to your family, to your friends, and get them to do the same thing. You duplicate what I am doing. I keep saying, "Get in the deep water." I am provoking you. I am considering you and provoking you unto love. If you love, it will be manifested in self-sacrifice. *Agape* love is unilateral sacrifice for the welfare of another. It is unilateral, not reciprocal. Unilateral sacrifice makes it *agape* love.

To provoke to love means that I want to provoke you to take the downward, *kenotic*-approach kind of *agape* love which is the sacrificial ministry for the welfare of the other. To provoke you to good works means that I get you to do profitable ministry. Ministry is not profitable unless it brings a handsome profit to the Lord. The Lord is expecting a return on His investment in you.

Take this example: you are going to provoke your people to love. You are going to tell your people about the *kenosis*. You are going to provoke them into unilateral, self-sacrifice for the welfare of others. The next thing you are going to do is provoke them into the deep water. Sometimes, I think we need cattle prods where you zap them to get them to jump in. If they start coming out, zap them again and make them turn around and go back in. This is a crude example of the provoking idea. The idea is to provoke the other into deep water. Your call is to do these two things: to provoke into love and into good works.

What is my call? to do the same thing. That is why I am teaching this course, and I want you to teach this course too. And if you will, then you have responded to these two invitations here: provoking into love and good works. The invitation, now, is three-fold: draw near to the Lord, make your commitment, and provoke the others.

c. What are the exhortations/warnings of Chapter 10?

- (1) Willful sin receives judgment not sacrifice. Hebrews 10:26-27
- (2) God will take vengeance on His people. Hebrews 10:30.
- (3) Remember your past afflictions and hold onto your confidence which brought you through them. Hebrews 10:32-35.

(4) You need to be tested. Hebrews 10:36.

(5) The just shall live by faith. Hebrews 10:38.

Hebrews

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

10:28 He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses:

10:29 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?

10:30 For we know him that hath said, Vengeance [belongeth] unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people.

10:31 [It is] a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

10:32 But call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions;

10:33 Partly, whilst ye were made a gazingstock both by reproaches and afflictions; and partly, whilst ye became companions of them that were so used.

10:34 For ye had compassion of me in my bonds, and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance.

10:35 Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward.

10:36 For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise.

10:37 For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry.

10:38 Now the just shall live by faith: but if [any man] draw back, my soul shall

have no pleasure in him.

10:39 But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.

Okay, we have here a serious admonishment, a warning that we are not to trifle with God. If we have gone through justification to enter into the path of sanctification, there is a great obligation for us to run the distance, to run the course, to stay with God, to be the sacrifice, stay with Him, carry our crosses, having our goods spoiled. These are descriptions of the downward path. If there is a yielding of our wills to ourselves or to some outside group or person or tradition or whatever to the exclusion, wholly or partially, of yielding our wills to God, then that means that we are getting out of deep water and coming up into the shallows.

You are not going back to the other side of justification with God, i.e. you are not going back to Egypt. Even the people who provoked God did not go back to Egypt. That is not what the Scripture is saying. It is not saying that you are going to lose your salvation. But to be sure, there is a vengeance in God, and it will come first upon His people because to “whom much is given, much is required.”⁵ And judgment begins with the people of God.⁶ When we have tasted the good gifts of God, He expects us to remember those gifts and to live accordingly as we walk along the sanctification path.

However, there is this warning beginning in verse 6: “If we” (the writer of Hebrews and you and me and the Hebrew people) “if we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins.” There it is. We should be aware that there is for us a certain fearful looking for of judgment, and we are talking about a fiery indignation.

In our self-centered and self-indulgent lifestyles, we want to think, and this is human nature, that God looks at us and just swoons. He just looks down and it does not matter what we do. He looks at us, and He thinks, “Oh my, there has never been a people as good as these saints right here.” That is what we want to think, and when God looks upon our persons, He sees His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, who is perfectly holy. He sees our personhoods (ontology) as being perfectly holy, absolutely without sin.

However, He is going to look next at our behavior, at our character, at our works. That is where the rub comes. Our behavior (our walk in the process of sanctification) is supposed to be according to the Lord’s Will. What do we do? It says here in verse 26 that if we sin, if we are going to behave like these Hebrews, He is going to express a fiery indignation about our behavior. God is talking about you and me in particular because of who we are? We are the ones who have been given all of these gifts. God has great plans and expectations for our lives. But we tend to throw our lives away in seeking the good life, the American dream, in living for ourselves and thereby sinning willfully the sin of omission, a terrible thing, because it is to fly in the face of God, and there are going to be serious consequences for it.

This sin of omission will not be one of these deals where you float along, doing everything you want to do, having all your cake and eating it too, one of those deals where you come down to the end, and He says, “Wow, what a wonderful saint. You can actually breath in and out without getting mixed up, you can tie your own shoes, and everything.” No, dear friend, you will be facing a fiery indignation.

That kind of sanctification, which I have described as being so popular today, is to fly in the face of God, and there are going to be

⁵ Luke 12:48.

⁶ Hebrews 10:30; 1 Peter 4:17.

terrible consequences for it. Getting all mixed up on that breathing thing is a far better consequence than getting mixed up on our paths of sanctification. The mix up in breathing may cause you to breathe in, and then in again. In this case, you will get all swollen. Others may breathe out and then out again, and get all shrunk and shriveled. These are simple consequences for going against God's breathing plans. But to go against God's sanctification plans, the consequences are far more severe for God's own people. If there is no more sacrifice for sin, what happens to your sins?

Julie: A loss of rewards.

V: You are partially correct, but there is more than rewards to be lost! If you are coming along the path laid out by God, and you willfully sin, i.e. you start wobbling off your path, this is willful sin. The verb in Scripture is present-tense active, which is a linear process, an ongoing kind of process. If you sin willfully, that part of your sanctification is guaranteed to be lost forever. There is no more sacrifice to restore that which is lost. Do not mess with God! If you want to throw your life away, just go on and do it. Just throw it away. But please be warned that there is no further sacrifice that will restore it. It will be gone forever and ever and ever and ever. There is never a time when it will come back. It is forever gone. All your abundant life is gone, all the blessings that you would have been to others are gone, and more people will go to hell. There is no more sacrifice for sins.

Now prior to justification, the blood of the lamb can wash away all of your past, present, and future sins. His washing away the past sins is also a washing away of their consequences on your rewards. Not only does He wash them away, He gives you a gift and says that if you will just get on your line (path), He will give you rewards and crowns in heaven. He will share His inheritance with you. He

will give you all of the great gifts, but if you get off of your path of sanctification by sinning willfully, there is no more sacrifice to restore the path and your rewards. They are forever lost. They are forever gone.

When you get out of the river and you stand on the bank, the river keeps on flowing, and it just goes right on, leaving you behind. And when you finally come to repentance, it is not guaranteed that God will let you get back into the deep water. But let us say He does, He says, "Okay, get back in the deep water," and you get back in the deep water. All of the Christians you were with in the deep water are way down the river, way ahead of you. You are just now getting back on your path and resuming your journey. It is critical, critical, critical for you to teach your people what is at stake here. There is a ton at stake. There are going to be people in heaven who will be naked. There are going to be people in heaven with less than they had on earth. Mark that one down. This is scary stuff.

Tom: Within that doctrine of salvation, walking the walk of sanctification, when a person zigs and zags, willfully sinning, could they be in a state of reprobate mind because they think they are right and do not know they are really wrong?

V: They are deceived. I am going to go through the process of apostasy toward reprobation in the Romans course. I don't think that it is a completed reprobation in your example, but I do think that willful sin starts the process of reprobation. The process, however, can be broken by repentance or completed by continuance. Class, you are either spiraling up or spiraling down. Up increases your sensibilities, and down dulls your sensibilities and even your rational capabilities.

James: How would you go about explaining to someone this concept of rewards in heaven? You hear people say that they have

heaven whipped. I have heard it, and you have probably heard it too. In one of my other classes just recently, I was saying that just to get into heaven is not enough.

V: You are so right!

James: Just being pardoned is not enough. To think so is like saying, "Just to marry your wife is enough." That commitment you were talking about is needed as well. How do you get someone to understand that?

V: It takes a long time. One of the things that I have encountered in my preaching, and it has been pointed out by my closest friends, is that I tend to give too much instruction too early. If I go into a church and preach, I drop the whole thing on them. They are reeling from the shock, and say: "We don't want to hear any more of that." However with you in this class, it is different. I have you for a much longer term, you see. This classroom and its long-term instruction for you guys are God's grace to me because I am kind of abrupt in these serious matters. But in this environment, we have a chance to warm up to this heavy stuff. So by the time we get to this hard part here, all of you already love me, and you are saying, "He is not as bad as they said." (Laughter all around the room.)

So in your churches, you need to kind of ease into it. There is a benefit that I enjoy with you that you do not have in your places. Sometimes in a Sunday school teacher situation, you have a good continuing relationship with your people, and you can begin to set an agenda for discipleship and begin to teach one lesson at a time. Maybe you can do the *kenosis*, maybe you need to do some things before the *kenosis*, but begin to lay out a ground plan, step through it, and get your people kind of warming up and tiptoeing in the shallows, and then ease out there a little at a time. They might not even realize that they are getting into the deeper water.

Linda: Many times these kinds of people discover that their family members are lost because of their lack of commitment. The members of their family may not become justified but live a very ungodly life because they see the saved family member living an ungodly life. I think if you can find an example of this kind of occurrence to show somebody, you may be able to get him to get into the deep water. Because some saints are not living sanctified lives, there are people out there who are not receiving the Word of God.

V: Yes. There is loss, not only to yourself, but there is loss for many of those all around you. Willful sin by the majority of saints is sending many people to hell.

Julie: They may see their children actually go into the lake of fire or their brother or sister or neighbor or whatever.

Sally: I have heard in a church where judgment is connected with Christians. Would the word accountable be accurate, or is that just kind of a weakened judgment? Does accountable uphold the idea that God is actually judging Christians by holding us accountable for the things that we have done?

V: I think the word accountable is accurate. However we have introduced this horizontal accountability (saint to saint) to the point now where there is no vertical accountability (saint to God). I think that we need to use this strong stuff like spoken of here. If we sin willfully, the fiery indignation of God will come on us. God will judge our works. Bad works and lack of good works will receive His fiery indignation. I like the way the Bible does it. We can mask our works in horizontal accountability, but nothing is hidden in vertical accountability.

Mary: Is a willful sinning premeditated?

V: Willful sinning is taking your will away from God and giving it either to yourself or giving it to another.

Mary: So you think about it before you do it?

V: Yes, it is a natural kind of decision which can occur in a spontaneous way, or it can occur after long contemplation, or it can occur when you are tempted into believing an error, i.e. rejecting the idea that sacrifice is an essential for discipleship.

Wanda: I would assume that all of us who are in the sanctification process will occasionally sin. But the more we sin, the more we move away from the rewards, and it just goes down and down and down.

V: Yes, and whether it is sinning that is chosen knowingly or sinning from ignorance or any other thing, it will bring you down here below your path. The difference between willful sinning like it is described in verse 26 and the stumbling of sin from ignorance or whatever is the difference between process and event, linear and punctiliar. It is the difference between a lifestyle and a stumble. That is the significant difference. Even the stumble, though, reduces your rewards. The process, or lifestyle, of sinning brings fiery indignation and vengeance.

Paul: That would be where God says to you while you are in heaven, "Sit down over here and stay there."

V: Yes, that is what He did in the wilderness provocation. He said, "I do not even want you to carry my banner. Just get over here in the desert and walk around in circles. I will feed you manna and make your shoes last, and I will take care of you, but you will not do another thing for me."

Sam: How do you reconcile what you have just voiced to us with the scripture that deals with the person who sins in ignorance⁷ and the scripture that says, "Happy is the man

that God has not imputed or charged with sin."⁸

V: Well, that happiness from not having our sins imputed to us is because we have imputed to us the Lord's righteousness instead. That is our wonderful imputation from God to our ontologies, our personhoods, not our works. We call that imputation justification, and it is what makes us very happy. We are happy and joyful because sin is not imputed to us. Our sins were paid for, and we received an imputed righteousness from God.⁹ Our personhoods went from sin to perfect righteousness via imputation's reversal. When that reversal happens, it is permanent, and that makes us happy. We are going to heaven. We are happy because the reversal is permanent, and the imputation of God's righteousness to you is a completed and permanent deal.

Hebrews is speaking of works. Sins of ignorance are forgiven, and the personhood remains righteous, but the rewards are lost. The principle of loss may be illustrated this way: consider a sin in which the commission of it causes you to lose all your possessions or an eye or a limb. You can be forgiven for the sin, but your possessions or limb or eye do not get restored.

You who have been justified are going to perfection because it is promised to you by God. You are going to be perfected. Now the trip to perfection is up to you, and that is your walk on the path. The walk of sanctification is to learn obedience through suffering, and that suffering requires you to take possession of your will and give it to the Lord (self-denial). Many people will confuse those results of suffering. "I don't want to suffer," is their attitude, and they conclude that they should not give their will to anyone, especially Jesus, who leads them into

⁷ Leviticus 4:2.

⁸ Romans 4:8 Blessed [is] the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.

⁹ Romans 4:22-24.

suffering. Thus they give their wills to someone else, their idealized projection of a Jesus who wills only that you enjoy life without any suffering, you see, and that is wrong. To give your will to a tradition or give it to a theology that you have conjured up in your own system of self-indulgent avoidance of suffering is always sin.

Willful sin occurs in both stumbling and in a lifestyle. But the fiery indignation comes upon willful sin in the present tense, i.e. the linear sin as a process or lifestyle. Beware! The hardening of sin occurs through a sin process, and I am going to show you that process now.

The Process of Apostasy

What are the nine steps of apostasy? If the Lord is present with you right here on His chosen path of sanctification for you, and you are walking right behind Him, you are dead center in His will. You are following right behind Him. But if He takes a step, and you do not want to go with Him, and you remain still or step aside, that is *apostasy* (*apostasis*). *Stasis* is stand and *apo* is from. The very first step off path, in this case, is “of apostasy” rather than “toward apostasy.”

1. To get out on the bank. Hebrews 2:1

Hebrews

2:1 Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let [them] slip.

When you step out on the bank, you have taken a step of apostasy, and ***the will of God for you slips by***. All of your ministry opportunities slip by when you are on the bank.

2. To neglect your great salvation. Hebrews 2:3.

Hebrews

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 of your path will bring you to a terrible accounting to the Lord. There will be no escape from your accounting. We all will be judged on our works. Some will suffer loss, and some will receive rewards. Whether you receive loss or rewards will depend on whether or not you neglected any of your sanctification portion of salvation.

3. To harden. Hebrews 3:8.

Hebrews

3:8 Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness:

Your time of apostasy will have an effect on your heart. Time on the bank will harden you to stay on the bank because you will begin to think that it is normal to be on the bank. Entering the Holy Land for the Hebrews is the same as entering the deep water in the river. Being afraid to enter the promised land, or the river in our case, provokes God. Israel went beyond God's limits and were made to wander in circles in the wilderness until they died. Class, watch out! Do not harden your hearts.

4. An evil heart of unbelief. Hebrews 3:12, 15.

Hebrews

3:12 Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.

3:15 While it is said, To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation.

Unbelief causes a hardening in your refusal to obey the Lord Jesus. Unbelief is a malignant refusal to believe and obey Jesus. Lip-service belief without the corresponding obedience is dead faith. Unbelief is not only a dead faith but also a malignant and evil belief that grows into a hardened heart that provokes God.

Unbelief is malignant because it is an intentional rejection of truth. Deception is an unintentional belief of a lie. But unbelief is an intentional belief of a lie. It will harden into an evil heart. Brethren, please understand that this is referring to Christians.

5. Lack of fear. Hebrews 4:1.

Hebrews

4:1 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.

So, you must fear. Sanctification is not a game; it is to be in yoke with Jesus. The requirement to go into the dangerous deep is the real McCoy, and the Lord's fiery indignation for failure to do so is something to be afraid of. Even His precious best-disciples should fear God.

6. No rest. Hebrews 4:1-3.

Hebrews

4:3 For we which have believed do enter into rest, as he said, As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest: although the works were finished from the foundation of the world.

There is going to be no rest for the person failing to follow Jesus on His chosen path. The thing about Christianity is that when you are up on the bank, you are going to replace this passive yielding of your will unto obedience to the Lord with some kind of labor intensive work. You are going to replace the being in deep water with some kind of religious labors. There is no rest on the bank. It is going to appear like it is rest because you will not be in the deep facing monsters. You may have all manner of temporal blessings and rest, but that is not the spiritual rest that God is speaking of. There is going to be that agony in the soul because you are going to know deep down that you are not on your path.

How will you know that you are not on your path? If there is no self-denying, cross-bearing fellowship of Jesus into the valley of the shadow of temporal death, then you are not even a disciple. Especially all of you in this class will know it both by this rational understanding of the minimal cost of discipleship and also by confirmation in your spirit by the Holy Spirit. If you move to the shallows, you are going to know it. My friend, if you are already in the shallows, wake up and repent before more of the river of God's plan for you slips by.

7. You will become dull. Hebrews 5:11

Hebrews

5:11 Of whom we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing.

This verse speaks to my need to find a gradually increasing way to get these hard teachings to the people. Right now, you are kind of like a captive audience. This works to my benefit; it works to yours as well. Since you need the course to graduate from the seminary, you are a captive audience. So I do not have to gradually increase these teachings. I can be much steeper in my progress with you because you will not run away the first time you get uncomfortable. But in a voluntary situation, like in a Sunday school class, it gets a little tighter. Maybe by making the teaching a slow but progressive process will increase our likelihood of getting our people to receive it.

The current problem is that we already have people who have become dull of hearing. The teachings that we have for them are hard to be uttered seeing that they are dull of hearing. We have to gently begin our teachings to them, but continue to build upon what we have laid down. We keep on building progressively upon that small foundation.

We must help the people to come to an understanding at least of the *kenosis* and of the true definition of discipleship, and give

them a hermeneutic so that they can begin to interpret for themselves. They need a hermeneutic that looks through the lens of the *kenosis* rather than this hoopla which expects God to give us all temporal blessings now so that we will never have to suffer. In this hoopla we never have to practice patience by learning obedience through suffering. That is where many saints are. They are dull of hearing, and it is very difficult to teach them (see Chart 5.5).

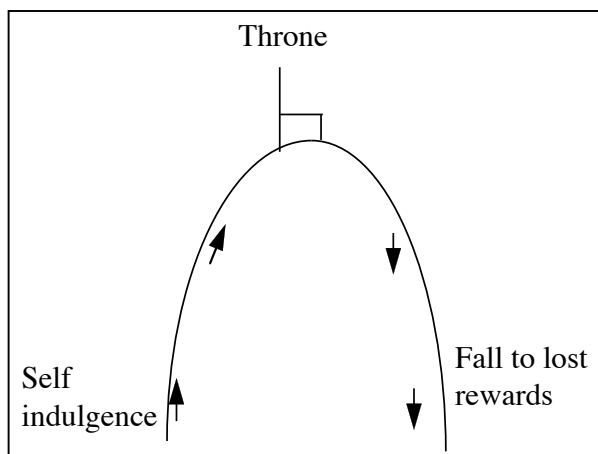


Chart 5.5

8. Fall aside or fall along side. Hebrews 6:6

This saint is pretty far-gone. The “along side” (“fall away” in the Scriptures) means that they are no longer following the Lord. They are following a tradition of some kind which has all the appearance of following the Lord.

That fall does not mean that they have fallen completely outside of the doctrine of salvation. They have fallen along side it. They are on a path that somebody else has brought in and said, “This would make a nice path for you.” They say, “Oh, yeah, it has high pay, good advancement, good benefits. This path sounds good. The Lord wants to bless me, and this path provides His blessings. Certainly, I must conclude that this path is God’s chosen path for me.”

That scenario described above is a falling aside. It is hard for that person to hear that

the *kenosis* describes God’s path for every saint. He has already become dull of thought and hearing. Try to talk to someone like that, and you will see how hard it is to get him back on path. It is hard to talk to him. It is hard to utter what he needs to hear because he is hard of hearing, dull, and hardened of the heart.

Hebrews

6:6 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.

This person has known the Lord, he has walked with the Lord, he has received gifts from the Holy Spirit, he has experienced the gifts, he has launched on his path of discipleship, but now he has taken a new path. It is detrimental to his eternity. When you encounter someone like this, I guarantee you that chart 5.5 is the model that he is on. It is hard to talk to somebody that is on this model.

Ted: They are not in sanctification?

V: Yes, they are in the sanctification portion of salvation, but they are off on a parallel path.

Ted: Can they be renewed?

V: They can be renewed if God will allow it. It is the same principle as coming out of the river. You can get back in upon repentance if God allows it. The Hebrews who provoked God in the wilderness ended up walking in circles the rest of their lives even though they repented of their decision within twenty-four hours of that decision. After being provoked by them, God said, “That’s it. I’ve had it with you.”

Steve: They were wobbling off of their path. I think that there are wobbling people though that can get back into the river. I heard you say that the first time they came into the river upon invitation, but this time the re-entry is following apostasy. I want to get it straight because I believe that I heard one

time that people that are wobbling can get back into the river. But then, if you are out there in the deep and consciously or willfully sin, i.e. go up onto the bank, re-entry is not allowed. I guess my question is: are those persons who are allowed to get back into the deep people who are wobbling unconsciously or knowing what they really were doing?

V: No, re-entry for everyone is completely left up to God's decision. His forgiveness, however, is always readily given. But His allowing you to re-enter the river should never be presumed upon. Even those who knew what they were doing may be allowed back into the deep. But on the other hand, they may be excluded from re-entry. We do not know in advance because there is risk here of provoking God. However, what we are talking about here is a falling along side. It is possible for those falling along side to be redeemed, but it is like

Paul: No rewards?

V: Yes, no rewards. But redemption is so difficult because it would be like a camel going through the eye of a needle. This accomplishment is a human impossibility. What do you tell them, when they are convinced they are already on the promised path? How can you improve on that ingrained misconception? What do you tell somebody like that?

I have experienced people like this. They remained in their error even after I told them everything I knew. They are still "along side" to this day. I do not know what further to do for them.

John: I think what Steve is saying is that verse 26 of chapter 10 says "willfully." There is no more sacrifice for sin. I think that is the thing he is mixing up.

Steve: That is it.

Paul: There are no more rewards, and there is no more sacrifice for willingly sinning.

V: Yes, after willful sin followed by sincere repentance, there is forgiveness. However, there may be the inability to get back onto God's original path for you. If your willful sin provokes God, there is the definite possibility of becoming useless to God, just like the Israelites who spent their lives walking in circles in the wilderness. Also even when God lets you get back into the deep water, there is great loss. Whenever I say great loss now, it does not mean that you lose your salvation, it does not mean that you do not go to the end, but it does mean that you cannot make up the ground that has been lost. There is no more sacrifice for the sin of being on the bank. There is no sacrifice that can put you in a motorboat and zoom you down the river and put you out where you were supposed to be. That river current which has flowed by you is *forever gone*.

I have had to deal with Christians who have wasted their lives. They have wetted my desk with their tears and snot. But there was nothing that I could do for them about what was wasted. My counsel was that they should redeem the time that they had left. Amazingly, instead of redeeming their remaining time, most of those people spent it grieving in self-pity.

Steve: Would you tell me something else? *Telos*, does that have to do with Jesus or does it just have to do with the end itself.

V: The end itself.

Steve: It is our end or is it Christ's end?

V: It is Christ's end for you. Christ was perfected by being taken to God's end for Him. You are being taken to your end, and your end is different from my end. I am being taken to my end. We are supposed to get down to this end right here (glorification on chart 5.4). That glorification may be different

for you. Your path may look entirely different from mine because your gifts are different, and your call is different. All the opportunities that God is giving you during your life by putting them in your path are different from the ones that he is putting in my path. Only you, not the others of us in here, can meet God's assignments for you . . . just you. Your end is already mapped out. I am encouraging you to make sure that you run your path all the way to its end.

9. Willfully sinning. Hebrews 10:26

Here is a process being mapped out about discipleship, and it has been all contained within the book of Hebrews. The book of Hebrews is about discipleship. If you want to teach discipleship in your church, here is your book. Why would the devil want to get all of this turned around to appear that it is talking only to lost people?

Wanda: So that Christians would take their chairs and sit down.

V: YES! Then there would be no discipleship.

Satan's other trick is to think: "If I could just plant this idea in Christians that this loss is of salvation, then this becomes a book for confusing the saints into thinking that they can lose their salvation."

In the case of our Baptist theology of once saved always saved, then we can exempt ourselves from these hard passages about losing salvation by claiming that they are merely warning the lost people. Then there would be no threat to the saints. After all, aren't we the chosen ones of God? The lying whisper comes in to say, "You are going to be nothing but blessed. You are going to have all of the rewards—mansions and crowns. Your rewards are not behavior dependent. Behavior has nothing to with salvation. Your rewards accumulate to you because of who you are. Because God is actually a respecter of persons, he will reward you because of

who you are. Just because you are who you are, He is going to dump every good thing on you, and give you great rewards, both now and after death."

Do we not sing our songs about how we have all manner of crowns, mansions, and rewards coming? People who are actually involved, perhaps even immersed, in sin, i.e. they are willfully sinning, will sit in church and sing their hearts out while swooning with ecstasy and goose bumps. They sing, "I'm being blessed now with riches and privilege. And also on that great day in which they enter heaven, they will receive eternal riches, rewards, and eternal blessing that are unspeakably great and wonderful." Many of us do not even know that there is a fiery indignation coming. We need to know that judgment starts at the house of God.¹⁰

The Carnal Christian

Wanda: What would you call a Christian who is in that state of mind in which he thinks that he is blessed while he is not in the deep water?

V: This is the carnal Christian on the upside down *kenosis*. The problem here is that every one of us has to fight against this stuff all the time. The temptations and the deceptions to exit the deep are going to dog your heels constantly. I will be frank with you. I do not know anybody who can get on his path and fight constantly and victoriously against this problem of being "along side" his path. Neither I nor anyone I know has kept it right just like the Lord did, even though we are all enabled to stay on path.

The Fight of Afflictions

The scenario is such that when we start on our path, here comes the carrot and stick. Satan first tempts you with the carrot and then hits you with the stick, or vice versa, to get

¹⁰ Hebrews 10:27.

you off path. Please know that if you go down God's path, you are going to pay with pain. Satan will start beating on you if you are on God's path because your path is the same painful path the Lord was on. You know you are supposed to be on this path of sanctification (chart 5.4). Just when you are feeling the pain intensely, some ignorant saint will say, "Well, you must be out of God's will." And you will start to think, "All this pain cannot be God's will for me. It must be because the Lord is whipping me because I am off path." Then Satan says, "Aha! I've got him thinking and doubting." That is when Satan will come up with a carrot to entice you off path. Satan says, "Look at this carrot. God does not want you to suffer. His path is one of joy and happiness. Since you are suffering pain, you are off God's path. You need to be reaping these wonderful riches and status because you are a child of the living God. You are the apple of God's eye."¹¹ You say, "Oh, I must be off God's good path for sure." At that exact point, somebody then says, "God wants all of His children to have the good life." Satan, then, entices us over to this model (chart 5.6) using the stick and the carrot, and we just fall right in line on Satan's path "along side."

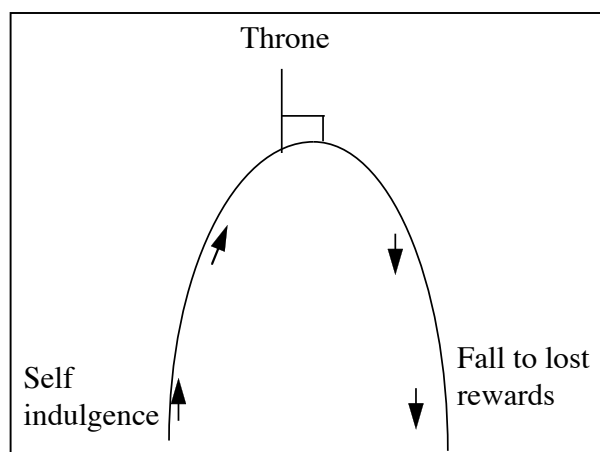


Chart 5.6

¹¹ Zechariah 2:8.

Then when we come into this class or when we are dialoguing with other saints who are still on path, one of the saints will say something that reminds you of the *kenosis*, and you will say, "Oh, no. I am on the wrong path." Then you must repent out of your fear and love of the Lord and ask Him to allow you to get back on your path again. However, your problem is not over even when the Lord restores you on your pilgrimage. Yet again, Satan will come with the carrot and the stick. There is going to be resistance to you every step of the way. It goes on here to say in verse 32,

Hebrews

10:32 But call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions;

Those afflictions are the stick. When you are following the Lord, there will be a great fight of afflictions. If you follow close to Him, the afflictions will be to the death because the world will not put up with your radical discipleship.

Please recall this lesson when the afflictions occur. Remember that you are a gazing stock, people look at you and say, "How weird! Why would he give up everything? What is wrong with him? Doesn't he want to take care of his children and give them nice things?" Some of you know exactly what I am talking about. Sometimes you have to look at the tears of your children. The tears start coming down your own cheeks as well, and you tell them, "Baby, this is our offering to Jesus, and you are part of it. Be proud that there is pain there. Do not go around self-centered and thinking with self-pity, 'Well, why can't I have the nice clothes all my friends have?' That is to turn your thoughts inward to self. What we have to do is point to Jesus, how Jesus had only one cloak, no place to lay His head, and He is God, the King of the universe. As our Lord, that is what He had during His

lifetime. We have more than what He had, and we are not kings of the universe. We are His slaves, and we already get better things than our King. He got our sin; we got His righteousness.”

Hebrews

10:33 Partly, whilst ye were made a gazingstock . . .

This gazing stock idea is of the Christians who are going to be fed to the lions. Before they were fed to the lions, they were put out for public display, and the people paying money to come into the arena would get to go by and look at the Christians awaiting execution. The Christians were the gazing stock. The viewers would gaze upon them with giddy anticipation of seeing the morbid slow torturous tearing of flesh and the panicked but futile struggles for life. The viewers would gawk at the gazing stock who were about to be fed to the lions, and they would taunt them with talk like: “What are you going to do when the lions begin to eat you alive?” The Christians would give a testimony to Jesus because they did not recant their faith in Christ even when facing torturous death.

That refusal to recant is why the early Christians got fed to the lions. But please see that there is going to come a time when you are going to be a gazing stock for the beheading execution by the world’s government because it is certainly coming. The book of Revelation says that those who do not worship or take the mark of the beast will be beheaded, and those could very well be you, folks. You are the gazing stock. They are going to come by and look at you. They will say, “You are in the line to get your head chopped off.” The line moves up, the line moves up, you are walking along, and people will look at you and ask you why, and you are going to testify to your faith in Christ.

Hebrews

10:35 Cast not away therefore your confidence . . .

Do not lose your confidence then and do not lose it now. Whenever you are the gazing stock, and the persecution is upon you, do not lose your confidence. Hang onto your confidence because there is great reward following these afflictions.

Hebrews

10:36 For ye have need of patience,

Remember what patience means. You stand under that giant burden, the burden of your confession that Jesus is Lord, your Lord! You stand under it. It does not matter how heavy the burden is, even if it mashes you to a pulp, you stand under it, and keep on confessing that Jesus is Lord. Jesus is Lord! The rulers may say, “We will burn you if you do not recant your faith.” You just remember that Jesus is Lord. Base everything on this fact: JESUS IS LORD!

Hebrews

10:38 Now the just shall live by faith . . .

This path that God has for you (chart 5.7) is a faith walk; it is not a sight walk. The just, whoever is on the sanctification path, will walk the path by faith, not by sight (2 Corinthians 5:7).

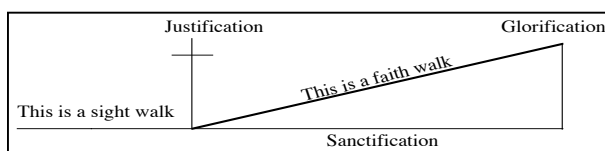


Chart 5.7

Hebrews

10:38 Now the just shall live by faith: but if [any man] draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.

Foreshadows of Old Covenant Sacrifices

In what ways was the sacrificial system of the Old Covenant typical, or the shadow of Jesus’ sacrifice?

1. Sanctuary: The tabernacle was a shadow of heaven. Hebrews 9:1.

2. Sacrifice: The blood of animals foreshadowed the blood of Christ. Hebrews 9:12-18.
 3. Priest: The High Priest foreshadowed Christ. Hebrews 9:11
 4. Covenant: The Law foreshadowed grace. Hebrews 10:1.
 5. Efficacy: The covering foreshadowed removal. Hebrews 10:1-10
 6. Ritual: Repetition foreshadowed “once for all.” Hebrews 10:10-11
 7. Access: The veil foreshadowed Jesus’ body. Hebrews 10:19-20
 8. Judgment: Death foreshadows vengeance. Hebrews 10:26-31
- Ted: I have a question. Since the High Priest foreshadowed Christ, did the other priests foreshadow Christians?
- V: Yes, they sure did, and basically everything that points to Christ points *indirectly* to us also because we are in Christ.

Chapter Questions

1. Describe the first tabernacle and the process.
2. Describe the second tabernacle and the process.
3. What are the characteristics of Christ’s sacrifice?
4. What are the exhortations/warnings of Chapter 10?
5. What are the nine steps of apostasy?
6. In what ways was the sacrificial system of the Old Covenant typical, or the shadow of Jesus’ sacrifice?

Chapter 6

TRIUMPH OF FAITH, DISCIPLINE, AND EXHORTATION FOR GOD'S CHILDREN

HEBREWS CHAPTER 11

Hebrews

11:1 Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

Faith is the substance (*hupostasis*) of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.¹ Substance in Greek is *hupostasis*, which means to stand under. Now look at the English word, substance. “Sub” is under; “stance” has to do with standing. You can see, then, that substance is a proper translation of the word, *hupostasis*.

However, it is hard to pick up the original meaning in the word substance today because substance now has more of a material connotation. But in order to receive the true meaning of the word substance, standing under, then I want you to see that faith is pictured as the *hupostasis* in chart 6.1. In

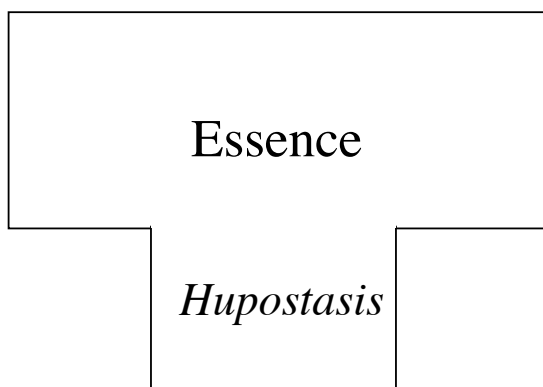


Chart 6.1

chart 6.1, you can see the *hupostasis* as the evidence on earth of unseen things (essence) in heaven. But if you tipped chart 6.1 over on

a timeline, then we have the second diagram (chart 6.2). In this chart, *hupostasis* would be the substance of things hoped for in heaven's eternity. Thus, *hupostasis* is the time and space extensions of something in the future back into time and from heaven back into earth.

These two models follow the primary model for the Trinity (chart 6.3). In the Trinity, you have the Godhead with Jesus and the other two Persons standing beneath as *hupostases* (plural). Jesus is of the same essence as the Godhead. He is the *hupostasis* or person standing under the Godhead

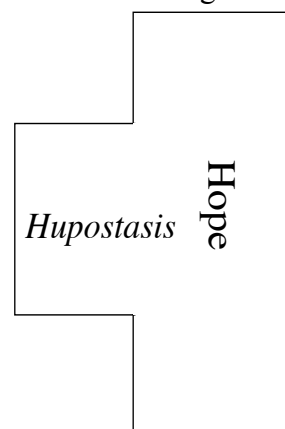


Chart 6.2

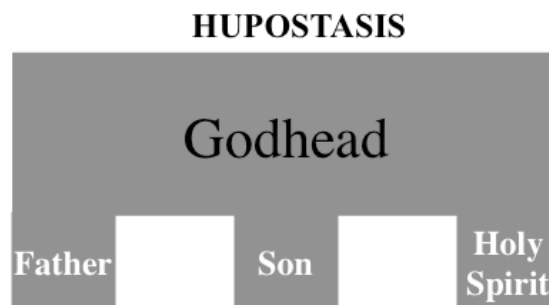


Chart 6.3

The *hupostasis* of hope will become the reality in the present via faith. The future hope then becomes the present reality. Faith extends that future reality back into time. Not only does it extend the reality of our eschatology into the now, you can live now

¹ Hebrews 11:1.

by faith as if your eschatology is signed, sealed, and delivered into the present.

You cannot have the reality of your eschatology by sight. You can only have it by faith. Faith is what brings the realities of the eschaton and of heaven into the here and now on earth. The “evidence of things not seen” is faith, and the “substance of things hoped for” is faith. Faith connects the natural world with the supernatural world.

Even though we cannot see the angels, you know that they are here. It is by faith that you know they are here. It is by faith that you know that God exists and is here. It is by faith that you even pray to someone whom you cannot see.

So it is by evidence and substance that you bring your “not yet” into the now, and you bring heaven to earth. You do it by faith. Can you hear what I am saying?

By faith you can bring heaven to earth and the “not yet” into the now. You can live a victorious life even when they are cutting your head off because by faith you can bring into the now the “not yet” of your resurrection and victory. That is how our martyrs were able to take the hits that they took. When they were facing a martyr's death, their commitments were through looking beyond the now. Looking beyond the now into the eschaton is how you can have the victory in the now.

God is the I AM in our timeline (see chart 6.4). Suppose that we are present in 2035. God is back in 1035. When is He back in 1035? Right now. He is in 1535. When is He in 1535? Right now. He is in 1935. When is He in 1935? Right now. He is in 2035. When is He in 2035? Right now. He is I AM. Because God is concurrently present in all of time, there is the capability of your having hope for the now. God is in His

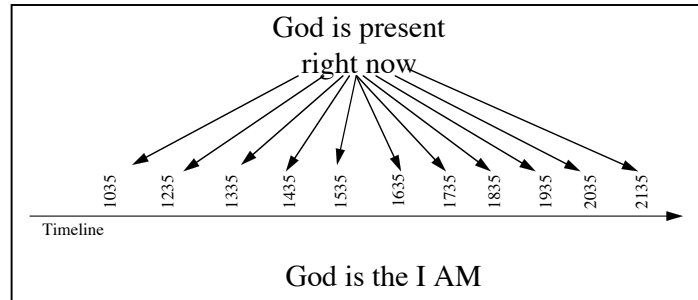


Chart 6.4

eschatological throne, but He is still able to penetrate the now for everyone.

Wherever you are in your pilgrimage, it is neither too late for God nor is it too early for God. God is on time, and you can bring His reality of our “not yet” into the now by faith.

You can actually begin to see with the eyes of faith that which is invisible. You can have a conversation with somebody that you cannot see, and you do it all the time. That is what faith is. Faith brings heaven and earth together. Jesus Christ is the faith of God, and He is the paradigm (pattern) for faith. Jesus Christ, in His person, is the paradigm for faith because He is the God-Man. In His being, He brought God and man, heaven and earth, present and future all together. Jesus is our model of our substance of hope and evidence of the unseen. Jesus Christ, you see, in His being is the paradigm, bringing deity and humanity, heaven and earth, the eschaton and the now together because He is the risen Lord. Jesus is the creator at the beginning of time, and He is the Lord of the universe in the future, and He is the I AM for right now, for the past, and for the future.

Is faith not somewhat of a wonderful thing? This Jesus paradigm ought to be able to help you connect what evidence and substance are. This first verse here containing those two words is very crucial for us. Faith is the substance which both stands under the things of heaven and also provides the evi-

dence of things not seen. That evidence is the conviction that unseen things are present.

You can know by faith that the angels are in this room. You can know by faith that you are going to have a glorious resurrection, and you can live by faith in the power of the “not yet.” You see, that is how the Lord lived. He walked on earth, and He faced the giant trials. He did not want to go through those terrible trials, but He did. He is a person who has lived as a human being before us and demonstrated how we are to face those monster trials.

But He was able to go through those trials because He could see beyond the now. He could see the “not yet,” and for the joy of the things that were set before Him, you see, He endured the cross and the shame of His death. He endured those terrible trials because He could see into the eschaton. It ought to be the same thing for us because our faith will take us through these same kinds of trials and tribulations and enable us to live a victorious life, a life that is empowered not by our power, but by the invisible power of God. Faith is marvelous. You can bring the invisible I AM into your now by faith.

All of chapter 11 concerns faith. After defining and describing faith, God illustrates great human accomplishments via faith by the saints of history.

11:2 For by it the elders obtained a good report.

That is the only way anybody is going to get a good report—through faith.

Hebrews

11:3 Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.

11:4 By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh.

Abel and Cain both brought offerings to God: Abel brought the firstlings and the fat. He brought the very best that he had. Not only were the firstlings the best that Abel had to sacrifice, but also they were nearly all that Abel had until he gained other increases. Here is Abel who brought the best of his firstlings. Then Cain brings a very handsome offering, but it is not the excellent offering that Abel has brought. There is also implicit in this story that a blood offering is required, and if that is the case, Cain rejected it by turning his back on it altogether. Cain should have purchased his sacrifice from his brother, but he decided that his offering from his crop harvest should be good enough.

By application to us, God is looking for your best, not just something to pacify Him or something you would like to give. He wants your best. Your best is yourself. ***He wants you.*** Will you give yourself to Him by denying yourself, picking up your cross, and following Him. If you will, please tell Him right now. Stop reading and tell Him!

*****Pause*****

Hebrews

11:5 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.

11:6 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.

Enoch walked with God. Noah also walked with God.

Hebrews

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.

Here is Noah building an ark out in the middle of dry land. There is no water around at all. He did this because he believed God. God said, "This is what I am going to do and what I want you to do," and Noah believed God. Basically believing God is what counts for righteousness.

Hebrews

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.

11:9 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:

11:10 For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker [is] God.

11:11 Through faith also Sara herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised.

11:12 Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, [so many] as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable.

11:13 These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of [them], and embraced [them], and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.

11:14 For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country.

11:15 And truly, if they had been mindful of that [country] from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned.

11:16 But now they desire a better [country], that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city.

11:17 By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten [son],

11:18 Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called:

11:19 Accounting that God [was] able to raise [him] up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure.

Look back at verse 13. Please look deeply at what is said there because this concept is very important to how we are to live. "These all died in faith not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off." Can you see how these saints looked through the eyes of faith. The fulfillment of the promises for which they hoped was a long way off.

The promises were out in the eschaton. Those to whom the promises were given had great hope of receiving the fulfillment of the promises. They lived and walked and struggled and fought and died. They died without ever getting to the fulfillments of the promises. They see the promises from afar; in other words, they observed the substance of things hoped for. Those saints were "persuaded of them, and embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth," but they never received the fulfillments during their lifetimes.

Verse 13 is your model. This is the *kenosis*. This verse is a certain and sure sign that you are not going to get your glory before glorification. You will do the exact same thing as these Old Testament saints. In your pilgrimage, you will be walking along towards the fulfillment of the promises of God, and you are going to live your whole life in the *kenotic* model and waiting and hoping to get there to the fulfillment of those promises. Class, you are not going to get them in this life. You must hear this! This is tough stuff, and there are very few people who can understand the discipleship model. But those Old Testament saints embraced the promises unreservedly to the point of confessing that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.

The fulfillments are out at the end of sanctification. They are called glorification. The saints of old believed that God was going to fulfill those promises. They believed God. They embraced the promises, but their walk is confessedly as a stranger and a pilgrim on the earth because of those promises.

They explained their pilgrimages in this way because they were going to follow God no matter what. Following God put them at cross-purposes with the world. But they knew that to be friends with the world (political correctness) is to be an enemy of God.

Dear friend the lesson for you here is that you cannot be friends with the world whose god is Satan. Do not confuse the promises of God with temporal glorification. Your glorification comes after death. You are missionaries to the world. You are pilgrims in this world and strangers, and the people of the world are going to look at you and think, "What is wrong with that guy; where did he come from?" They are going to say, "We don't want his kind of trouble around here. Get rid of that troublemaker."

Paul: They were looking for the Messiah, who was yet 2000 years in the future. It is a terrible indictment on us that they could see Him clearer in the future than we can by looking back into the historical past.

V: YES, it is a shame! Their faith is an indictment on us. Our indictment is that we have turned around our understanding of promises. Our understanding is for the temporal reception of our fulfilled promises in the form of worldly happiness and blessings. Our misguided concept of the faithful man is that he will receive his glory here and now while he is still engaged in his walk of sanctification. He wants everybody to say on the basis of his temporal glory, "Oh, yeah, he has great faith."

No, my friend, temporal glory is not the evidence of great faith. Temporal glory is the

opposite of the *kenosis*. Great faith is in the company of little sight. Great faith waits patiently for the fulfillment of God's promises to occur in the eschaton. Great faith is to stay the course on your path even though all the visual evidence points in the other direction.

Steve: We need to walk like it talks about in Acts. It says those who are turning the world upside down have now come here too.²

V: Yes. The *kenotic* Christians will turn this place upside down as well. The church establishment will want to get them out of here. This verse 13 should be underlined, memorized, and applied.

Hebrews

11:20 By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come.

11:21 By faith Jacob, when he was a dying, blessed both the sons of Joseph; and worshipped, [leaning] upon the top of his staff.

These two verses describe a chain reaction. On the one hand, you have one passing on the blessing to another who passes it on again. It is like a chain here, and it just keeps on going on. However, please notice that none of these received the promise. They all embraced the promise, they all walked toward the fulfillment of the promise, they all believed the Word of God, and they all advanced it and passed it on to the next one in the lineage.

That ancient promise is still being passed on to the next generation. The promise is the Word of God. We are passing the Word on to the next generation.

Do you know what the Word is? It is the substance of God if you have faith. Can you hear what I am saying? Substance, standing under, is *hupostasis*, the Word of God. If you believe the Word of God, it becomes effectual in your life. It becomes God's substance that

² Acts 17:6 . . . , These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also;

resides in your heart when you believe it. You can hand it on to the next person. If you do not believe it, it does not reside in you, and you will not hand it on to the next person because there is nothing there; there is no substance. If you believe it, it is a substance for you, and you will say, "Hey, here is the Word," and you will hand it to the next person. The next person will hand it on, and that is how evangelism works.

We have the blessing passed on and on and on, and even Joseph's faith gave substance to the promise. . . .

Hebrews

11:22 By faith Joseph, when he died, made mention of the departing of the children of Israel; and gave commandment concerning his bones.

Joseph, you see, believes. He is dying, and he will be buried in Egypt. He knows that he is going to be buried in Egypt. He gives commandment: "Now when you leave and go to the Promised Land, be sure to dig me up and take me to that Promised Land and re-bury me there."

Now if a person like you dies, and you were escorted to hell, you could walk into hell with your head up, chest out, and say, "I am only passing through here, because I have the Word of God that says that I am going to heaven. I am on tour down here checking this joint out."

That is analogous to what Joseph did. He said, "I am dying here, but I am supposed to be in the Promised Land. I am supposed to make it to the Promised Land. So when you leave take me with you because I am putting all my faith in God's Word." And so they took Joseph's body with them.

And now consider Moses' account.

Hebrews

11:23 By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents, because they saw [he was] a proper child;

and they were not afraid of the king's commandment.

11:24 By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter;

11:25 Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season;

Can you see the *kenosis* in that choice by Moses? He chose to go down in suffering rather than up in pleasures and privilege.

Hebrews

11:26 Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward.

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

11:28 Through faith he kept the passover, and the sprinkling of blood, lest he that destroyed the firstborn should touch them.

11:29 By faith they passed through the Red sea as by dry [land]: which the Egyptians assaying to do were drowned.

11:30 By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days.

11:31 By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she had received the spies with peace.

You see, these are historical people who are ordinary to the degree to what they had as their birthright. They became extraordinary by faith, and you have the same capabilities! Your opportunity is by faith, believing God, embracing His Word and moving in its light in such a way that you are not settling for becoming an heir of the world or a proper citizen of the world, but you are embracing, as a pilgrim in the world, the promises that are in the eschaton. All the way out here to the end of your path at glorification is where you are going to run your race. You will run all the way out here to glorification in order to receive the glory of the fulfilled promises. You are *not* going to get to glorification and

the receipt of God's rewards for you *during* your life on earth. You are going to die first. It is after your death and resurrection that you will get there.

You get there the same way as the pilgrim fathers, our forefathers. They set the proper model. That is our model. Jesus Himself followed that same model. We are going to follow that model. What I am asking you to do is embrace the model. Do the same thing that these people did, become pilgrims and strangers in *this* world.

I can tell you one thing: if you can become a pilgrim and a stranger in this world, you will have some of the loveliest, sweetest brothers and sisters who are pilgrims right with you. You will have good but *rare* company going on this trip. Embrace it. Take it for all its worth. You will experience some temporary pain and suffering, but you *will be* eternally glad if you do. Will you do it? If you will, please pray with me: *"Lord Jesus, I want to forego the earthly and temporal glory for the express purpose of receiving the great blessings that You have for me in the eschaton. Please give me the wisdom to become a pilgrim and a stranger in this land. I want to please You rather than the world. I love You, my Lord Jesus. Amen."* If you prayed this prayer, say "amen" out loud right now.

Heroes

Now let's look at two kinds of heroes.

The Heroes Winning Temporal Victories

Hebrews

11:32 And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of Gideon, and [of] Barak, and [of] Samson, and [of] Jephthae; [of] David also, and Samuel, and [of] the prophets:

11:33 Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions,

11:34 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.

11:35 Women received their dead raised to life again: . . .

These verses above describe one kind of hero. These heroes of the faith are the heroes who exercised the power of God in temporal successes and victories. The victory won by this kind of hero is a victory in conquest and stopping the lions and all this kind of thing. The world can readily see this kind of victory. This is an easy to see and understand victory, and this is what you, as a normal Christian of today, will usually point to when you think of the advantages of faith. You see, stopping the mouths of lions, walking through the fire, military conquests are what we have been brainwashed to think of in terms of victories of faith. We usually name all that stuff as victories because they are easy to see and recognize as victorious by the world.

Now we will look at the kinds of victories that are hard to see.

Heroes Winning Spiritual Victories Which Appear Like Defeats

Hebrews

11:35 . . . and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection:

What does that mean? It means the heat is on. We have talked about patience with that burden of dedication up there on your shoulders pressing you down, heavy on you. You are struggling, thinking, "Can I stay with it, can I stay under it?" But you deny yourself by *not* accepting deliverance. When somebody comes along to add to your torment by saying, "Why don't you throw that burden off?", you should say: "No!" In response to your antagonist's question of "Why?" you

will say: "That I might obtain a better resurrection."

What is a better resurrection? I will depict it in this next scene. If you throw the burden of God off, you can walk around having it nice today, but what about when you reach the end of your time to be walking on your path? God says, "Well, what did you do with my burden?" "Well, I threw it down back there." "What? You should not have thrown it down! But since you did, why did you not go back and get it?"

But, you see in contrast, if you carry the burden until the Lord takes it off, you will have a better resurrection. If you accept deliverance by throwing the burden (your cross) down, your resurrection will be reduced (Chart 6.5). However, if you are not delivered by God and your trial takes you to the death, your resurrection will be even better.

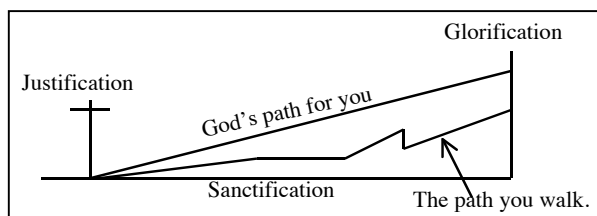


Chart 6.5

When you take my church history course, we will deal a lot with staying under the burden. There is much in that course about who did stay under the burden and who did not stay under the burden by accepting deliverance. When you have your life being threatened, and the emperor says, "Recant the name of Jesus or die," we have wonderful victorious examples from our forefathers. We have wonderful stories, hundreds upon hundreds of these guys who said, "I cannot recant. Here I stand, so help me, God." They would not receive deliverance of their flesh because they wanted the better resurrection. I want you to hear this principle about the better resurrection. This needs to come down

into your soul to reside there for the rest of your life.

Here is the very first illustration of that other kind of Christian hero who was victorious not by conquering his enemies in war or stopping the mouths of the lions but by being tortured. It is hard to see the victory here because it has the appearance of defeat. We look at these apparent defeats, and we think, "Man, they got tortured and everything. They got wiped out in total defeat." No! These guys actually got the victory!

Hebrews

11:35 . . . and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection:

11:36 And others had trial of [cruel] mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment:

11:37 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;

11:38 (Of whom the world was not worthy:) . . .

Oh, my! This is a high statement of these warriors going down to supposed defeat: the world was not worthy of them.

Hebrews

11:38 . . . they wandered in deserts, and [in] mountains, and [in] dens and caves of the earth.

11:39 And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise:

They did not get what was promised! They went through all of that, and they could have had deliverance, and they were mocked and despised and stoned and lived without food and were cold and miserable. They did not give in! Why? Because they had hope, and their hope gave substance to their receiving the promises at the end. They knew that God gave them the promise, and their hope is in the receiving of what God

promised. Yet they go all the way through all this suffering without receiving the promise.

Dear saint, you are not going to get all that was promised in this lifetime. To be certain, however, you can bring the substance of it into the now; you can bring the spiritual dimension of the promised fulfillment into the now with your faith. Please hear this!

Please see that here in the Scriptures are these saints who are working and struggling and fighting and being persecuted and living under a terrible strain. Why are they doing it? Because they can taste the promise, they can touch it, they have such a faith, i.e. belief, in the promise of God that they can see themselves resurrected, they can see themselves walking over and talking to the Lord in heaven. They can see it because they have actually brought it into the now.

When Stephen was stoned he looked up, and he saw Jesus with the eyes of faith; faith brought heaven down and made it visible. He could see Jesus, and you can, too, with faith. You can see the invisible and the future all with faith. But I am going to tell you again that you will not have the glory now. If you do, you have changed paths; you are on the false *kenosis*. You have gotten out of the water and up on the bank.

What is the description of faith?

1. It is the ***substance*** of things hoped for. Hebrews 11:1.
2. It is the ***evidence*** of things not seen. Hebrews 11:1.
3. It is the ***instrument*** of a good report. Hebrews 11:2.
4. It is the ***instrument*** of understanding creation by the Word of God. Hebrews 11:3.

HEBREWS CHAPTER 12

Chapter 12 starts with one of those significant “wherefore’s.” It is a typical construction which points to a coming exhorta-

tion on the basis of a theology expressed before this point. The exhortation of Hebrews is coming at this point. It is based on the foregoing information about faith.

The Relay Race

God is going to change discipleship analogies here at this point of the book. He has been using the river analogy throughout the entire book, but now we are moving into a new analogy, and it comes at this point right here.

The new analogy builds upon the faith as a substance-of-hope principle. It is a sequential passing on of a substance, i.e. a blessing, that has substance to it because faith provides it with temporal substance. I say temporal here because it is already factually substantial in the eschaton. Read this paragraph again and meditate on its meaning. I want the substance-of-hope definition of faith to saturate your attitude of life so that God can use you in His great plans for mankind.

Hebrews

12:1 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,

12:2 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.

12:3 For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.

Let me talk a minute about this race. The setting here is that there is a great cloud of witnesses. It is like a grandstand full of witnesses, and all of these witnesses are watching you run your race.

The race that is being run is a relay race that continues to be run ever since Abraham. Abraham started the race, and he passed the baton of blessing on to the next runner. That runner passed it on to the next runner who passed it on to the next runner. That race has been run all down through history.

The baton is faith in the promises to be fulfilled at the end of the race, something that you can almost feel. It has substance because of faith putting temporal substance, or some actual being to the promise. That promise is the baton being passed on.

Not one of these runners sees the temporal end of the race. They run their lap and hand the baton off. They can see the eschatological end of the race with the eyes of faith. They can embrace the end of the race, they can run like they are winning the race, and they can pass the baton on in this scenario.

It is by faith that you receive the baton, run your lap, and then hand the baton to the next runner. That runner takes off, while the previous runner dies without seeing the end of the race. However, with the eyes of faith, each runner does get to see the finish of the race while he is still running the race.

Each runner dies, his successor runs, and with faith he has the baton. The baton started way back there with Abraham. It has been passed on and on and on, and you have the baton now. It is a real baton which is made temporally real by God's promise in which you believe. Now you are running the race and carrying an invisible baton. You need to pass that baton to the next generation. If you have faith, then you actually believe that the baton has substance and is there in your hand.

Imagine if you will this great track with a great cloud of witnesses in the stands. The race has been running for centuries upon centuries, and the runners have died agonizing deaths to get that baton to the next runner. Then all that running comes down through

history, and the stands are breathless and looking to see how this race is going to be run while anticipating the wonderful finish.

Now it is our turn to run. The faithful generation before us has handed the baton to you and me. You say, "What is this thing?" The prior runner says: "Run because God has told us to run faithfully on His race!" You say, "Okay," and begin to run. However, You do not stay on the track but begin to take a shortcut which has no suffering or sacrifice in it. It becomes likely then when you encounter a friend who is running the race that you might say, "Hey, this way is easier and faster." Because you are in error, you might easily persuade him to get off his path. You see, you can mess up this race for a lot of folks.

Everybody in the stands and those in the next generation are depending on you to run your leg of the race. All the saints before you have run their leg, and they have handed the baton to you, and you now have it for your turn to run. If you believe in the finish and the promises that reside there, you will run as hard as you can all the way around the track knowing that you are not going to get to the finish. But you are going to run your leg and then hand the baton off. Eventually because of Jesus' faith in us, we get to join in on His finish if we cross the finish line with the baton in hand.

You know why there is going to be a finish? It is guaranteed because it has already been reached by the captain of the team. The Lord said, "It is finished." The race has already been run, and you are the opportune person to participate with the Lord in His Great Race. You get to carry the baton that has already crossed the finish line and won the victory. By the Lord's faith the baton in your hand has already crossed the finish line, and you run your temporal leg of the race carrying the winning baton, and you bring

glory to the One that took it to the victorious end.

Do not be like the runner who gets the baton and says, "What is this thing?" Then you take off running. But soon fatigue sets in and you say, "Oh, I am running, but I do not know why. I think I am going to sit down and rest." You cannot hear the great cloud of witnesses except by faith, but they are cheering: "Run! Run!" A lot depends upon how you run that race. Then traditional wisdom catches up to you, and you sit down and rest because God does not want you to be tired. Is that not what we hear—"God does not want me to be tired. God does not want me to be hungry. God never wants His child to be afflicted. I cannot and should not do this running any longer. This is out of God's will. If it were in God's will there would be blessing for me in place of all this fatigue and suffering." The runner sits down, and you can hear the crowd say, "Ohhhh. Nooooo!"

My friend, there is a great cloud of witnesses. You are running your race in the spotlight of history, and many people are depending upon your being faithful. However, the one thing that you cannot do with your lack of faith is to jeopardize the "winning of the race," but you can jeopardize all of the runners who ran before you and are supposed to run after you. All of the runners that are sitting there in the stands are waiting and depending on you to run your leg so that they will not have run in vain. Also those in the next generation who are waiting for you to hand them the baton are depending on you to run your leg of the race. If you do not hand them the baton, they do not get their chance to run. They will not even know there is a race. They will not even know there is a baton. They will not know anything. They are going to come to the end of the race only to be judged losers because you did not run your leg.

The overall race is going to be won because it is already won. The Lord won the race. Now it is up to you to run your part, your leg of it, and pass the baton on. If you have faith, that baton will take substance in your hand. If you do not have faith, if you do not believe that there is a race and that there is something to pass on, that baton in your hand goes poof into thin air. Its substance was lost by your lack of faith.

Lay Aside the Hindrances

This relay race is the new analogy you have here. He says further about this race, "Let us run in a certain way," and that is by "laying aside every weight." So what is going to impede your running of the race? What are the weights in your life? Lay them aside.

The weight is described as the sin that so easily besets us. Lay that aside. Do not let the sin beset you. Be defensive of your ability to run this race. Run with patience. That means that when you run and your eyes are stinging and your mouth is dry and your bones are hurting and your muscles are quivering and you seem to think, "I cannot go on any further," you must keep on going. You just keep on going. You run. You do not stop even though that burden on your shoulders is pressing you down. You do not stop, you run and run and **run**. Run with patience, endurance, and focus on your race.

Which race is it? The race that is set before us. We don't define our race course. God defines it, builds it, and sets it before us. Each of us has a different race course with different obstacles and hardships, but they are all similar with the same baton and finish line. God sets your course, nobody else.

Now let us go back to the river analogy to merge it in with this analogy. I am going to explain this analogy in race and river terms. God sets the race, and He establishes the track and the path, and we are supposed to run on that path. But you remember how in the river

analogy when we came up on the bank? We did not like all that deep water out there, so we came up here on the bank. However, we wanted to be considered to be in the water so we dug us a little trench. We have been splashing around in our trench; it is only about an inch deep. Some of us get down on our stomach and try to swim by making swimming motions. Another says, "That is not the way that works. Let me show you how to do it." He shows you how to crawl instead of swim because the water is so shallow. You see, that trench is not the race that is set before us. That is not the river that God wants us to be in. We are trying to make our own easy river, make it after our own desires, after our own plans.

Like the river set before us, we also have a race set before us, but many of us do not want that race, we want somebody else's race: "He's got a good race. I think that I need to run that race." We want to get on his track, run his model, let someone else run in our path and on our model. The other guy's racetrack seems to have a little more glory. So, that makes us want his model. We rationalize that because it has more glory, then it must be God's choice for us. We want to get all that glory right now. We want to live in the opposite of the *kenosis*. We want the attaboy's, and we do not want to sweat or be denied the good life while we are getting them. We rationalize our taking it easy with the idea that God does not want His children to sweat or even want for anything.

This "wherefore" has introduced a new analogy, and He says, "Let us run our race." However, we are not going to get to the end of the race unless we are the last generation. If it is like what is described here, we are going to run and collapse and die at the end of our lap, you see, and our vision of the end is going to be a faith vision. We will see the substance and evidence of the end without getting there until after death at glorification.

Describe the exhortation to run the race

1. There is a great cloud of witnesses. Hebrews 12:1.
2. Lay aside all weights and besetting sins. Hebrews 12:1.

A sneaky besetting sin that you need to be alert to is when the sin is a good thing. There are good things that are sinful because they are enemies of the best thing. When God has the best thing for you, and Satan comes along and dangles a carrot, a good thing, many times we have to choose between two good things. One is a best, and one is a good. That is sneaky. A sneaky besetting sin is when you lose your wisdom enough to choose the good over the best. That will be a besetting sin. It will weigh you down and put you way behind in your leg of the race.

A good thing can be a sin when it is the enemy of the best thing, i.e. when it is a diversion. We have to be alert to those carrots that zoom over here into our eyesight where we are running. The next thing you know we are chasing the carrot and do not even know it. The diversion gets up there in your mind and captures you before you even know it.

3. Run with endurance/patience. Hebrews 12:1.

Patience you remember is standing under the big burden on top of you. Patience means you do not throw it off to get comfort. To run your race with patience means you run and you do not stop to get comfort. You just keep on running even when you are hurting all over.

4. Run the race that is given to you. Hebrews 12:1.

Wanda: That is a hard one.

5. Look at Jesus' example. Hebrews 12:2. He is the architect of the race.
 - a. He did it for "future" joy.
 - b. He endured both the cross and also shame.

- c. He was exalted later, after death.
6. Consider how Christ endured opposition. This consideration will help to prevent weariness and fainting. Hebrews 12:3.

What does lay aside every weight mean? It means every hindrance such as lack of faith, rebellion, an attachment to this world, ambition, leisure, etc. must be laid aside (summary of Hebrews 12:1-3). Also good things, which are enemies of the best, must be cast aside. It is difficult to lay these things aside because we have been brainwashed into seeking the good life at all costs.

God's Discipline Will Keep Us Focused

Pay attention to running the race, i.e. God's burden that you are carrying, the laying aside all other weights, the baton that has substance, and all of these elements in this analogy. You must focus on the race with understanding, and that understanding is that you are a child of God, and you are under the discipline of God because He loves you.

Some of us start wandering off the racecourse, and He comes along and gives us a disciplinary whack because he loves His children and wants the very best for them. If you understand this principle, you are more likely to get back on the track with a good attitude. You will say, "Yes, Sir. I know that You love me and that my eschatological blessing outweighs my temporal blessing."

Hebrews

12:4 Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin.

12:5 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:

12:6 For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.

12:7 If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?

12:8 But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons.

12:9 Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected [us], and we gave [them] reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?

12:10 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.

12:11 Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.

Another scenario is: here you are running, and you think you are running great. He says, "You can run better than that; get on up there and run." You are striding it on out. Here you are, just striding on out, and you are passing a lot of folks. You say, "Look at me passing those folks." Then you hear the Lord say, "You are still lollygagging along, let's get on with it."

The Lord is going to keep on pressing you to achieve the very best because He loves you. He wants you to have the best for eternity. He is not going to let you sit by idly or run half-heartedly while you look towards the end and say, "Well, I think I would like to sell my birthright. I think I will just lay back here because the Lord surely doesn't want me to run all the time. Besides, I am passing everybody already."

Our birthright is to be a victor down at the end *after* the point of glorification, and to live through eternity as a king. However, we get trapped into thinking that we would rather live as much like a king as possible right now during the rest of our lives. The cost, however, for implementing this kind of thinking is to live for eternity as a pauper. The Lord says, "No, no, I will not buy that thinking from you. Think like I did when I was living

My Life as a mortal. Have the same mind as I had. Now get on up there and run!"

Here in this description of discipline is the "wherefore." If you have been seeking comfort, applause, or status, then you have already received some disciplinary words from this passage. You were not running good, and the Lord gave you some discipline.

This next "wherefore" is of an exhortation coming up based upon this business about your being children under the Father's chastening. After the spanking, He wants your attitude to straighten out.

Hebrews

12:12 Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees;

12:13 And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed.

12:14 Follow peace with all [men], and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord:

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;

Here in this scenario, the discipline comes upon you because you are not running like you are supposed to run. You are running better than your neighbors, but that is not what we are measured by. We are measured by what the Lord expects of us. He is saying, "Run your race for Me! You are out there lollygagging along, taking it easy and not doing a good job of running. Get focused and deny yourself so that you can run your best for Me."

The Oxen Illustration

My grandfather used to be a pulpwooder. He had a team of oxen to pull logs out of the forest. He would cut down the trees, hook the chains onto the logs, and then he would hook that chain to his yoke of oxen. Then the oxen would pull those logs out of the forest over to

a loading place. There they would load them on trucks.

He said those oxen were smart, wily beasts. He said the oxen would get in there with their loads, and they would hunker down and just strain and strain, but they could not pull the logs out. He said he could just see the wheels turning in those oxen's minds. They would hunker down. He would hit them with that whip, and they would hunker down, and they would strain and strain but could not budge the logs an inch.

He caught on to what they were doing when he saw a gap between the yoke and their necks. He said that he could put his hand between their neck and the yoke. There was so much slack in there he could run his hand all around that neck. Those oxen would just hunker down and be straining hard, but all the while there was daylight between the yoke and their necks. All they were doing was pretending to be working.

The oxen story reminds me of a modern day Christian. God really has to get after him in order to get him to take on the Lord's yoke. Without some pressure by God, he will not start pulling God's Mission on through history. That modern day Christian is us, folks! We get all hunkered down and say, "Lord, look at me; I am really getting after pulling Your burden. However, there is nothing but slack in that yoke around our necks." Chastisement comes to us at that point because we are doing that same trick of pretending that we are really getting after it. Yet, we really are not. So here comes the chastening of God because He loves you.

Root of Bitterness

After that chastening from God comes the tendency for you to be standing there with your hands hanging down, all whipped down, crying and carrying on, "The Lord doesn't love me anymore. I pray and pray, but He doesn't give me any relief. He just wants to

beat on me for no good reason. I am already running. I attend church and Sunday school every week. I am like all the other church members and better than most. I wanted some weights because everybody else has weights. Why shouldn't I have some weights? He says in the Scripture for me to throw my weights down. I did, and now I don't have anything respectable to carry like the other highly respected Christians."

Class, God exhorts us after the chastening by saying, "Lift up your hands, stand up, put your feet straight, get into My chosen path for you, and run straight on your path." There is exhortation after the chastening.

Think of your children. Sometimes you just have to discipline them a little bit. They will be crying and carrying on afterwards, and you will say, "Now get over there on the chore that I gave you to do and do it right." After some whining and grumbling, they go over and do it right. They will do it right for a while, then they will see that you are not looking very carefully, and the next thing you know they will be doing the oxen trick, and you have to give them another dose of chastening followed by an exhortation. They really get after it then.

Sometimes, you will see, a root of bitterness begin to spring up in us. We sit there and just tremble and carry on, and our hands are hanging down, our knees are limp, and we are just hanging there. "I can't do anything right! God doesn't like anything I do; I'll just quit! I won't be a minister, I'll just go over here and I'll get another job. I'll get me some weights and everything so that I will be respectable by my peers." I have heard it from so many people—the same words and attitude. You think I am just making this stuff up? Look at yourself!

The chastened person may get out of the race and become embittered. A root of bitterness oftentimes wells up in him, and he becomes antagonistic. Hopefully while he

goes to church and is sitting there, he will meet a man who is running his proper race and who will give him a wakeup call through example. The embittered saint could see the error in his life, repent, and begin to run once again, or he could do just the opposite and say to the man, "How come you are running that race? You ought not to run that race. God does not want you to have any suffering."

Perhaps when the preacher gets up to preach, the embittered saint could hear the Holy Spirit and receive a wakeup call in the sermon, or he could think, "That preacher doesn't know what he is talking about. He is nothing but critical of people like me who have been whipped down." If the embittered saint maintains his root of bitterness, he will defile many. One person with a root of bitterness can defile a whole church and ruin the whole race for many.

What is the answer? Get your hands up, stand up, be a man, get your feet straight, there is the path, run your race. That is what God says in Hebrews 12:12 and 13. He says if you do not do that, there will be a root of bitterness springing up to trouble you, and thereby many will be defiled (Hebrews 12:15).

And then here is another warning:

Hebrews

12:16 Lest there [be] any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright.

Here is the important thing. We are to lay aside the weights that will hinder us from running our best race. You lay those things aside and run your race!

Imagine this scene. We start off running. We get about 100 yards down the track, and then we look back and see our pile of religious weights down there laying on the track and think, "I can't go the rest of my life without all those respectable weights of tradition. I think I'll go back and drag them

up here closer to me so that I can get them a little easier if I should need them in the future.” You retreat and pick up your weights, run forward a hundred yards to the point you had reached before you retreated, and drop them down on the track again. After all this running, retreating, carrying the weights forward to where you were, you will be exhausted and in need of rest for carrying all those weights. After a little rest you say, “God, I think I am going to do you a favor and run some more.” You take off running again. You proudly think that you are striding very fast though in fact you are barely moving, but you are really demonstrating good form in your slow run. You start around a curve, and you think, “What about those weights back there? I need to bring them up here. I am not supposed to run with the weights because the Bible says don’t run with the weights, but I want my weights close at hand in case I need to impress the other Christians. So I’ll get those weights and bring them up here. Maybe some of my classmates will help me carry the weights up here.”

You move the weights with the help of others, but everybody has to rest afterwards because of carrying them so far. “Lord, if you will give me some additional help in carrying these weights, I’ll run some more for You.” Have you ever heard any prayers like that? You just put them in different words: “Lord, just give me this weight (temporal blessing), and that weight (a bigger church), then I’ll be able to run a better race for You.” God is saying to you, “Don’t do like Esau who fell out of the race.” Esau was supposed to run a leg of the race and hand the baton off, but he sold his baton. Why did he sell it? He was hungry. All he wanted was a bowl of stew. For the sake of a bowl of stew, he sold his chance to run for the Lord.

Are you selling your leg of the race for comfort or for food or for status or for money or for temporal glory? Stop it! Do not be a

fool! Do not sell your leg of the race for ANYTHING!!!!

How is the race God’s way of chastening you to perfection?

For one thing, you have not been perfected because perfection comes only at the end of the race. Perfection only occurs with struggle, and as long as you are alive you will encounter struggle. No one runs the race by sitting down in an easy chair and relaxing. Thus you must struggle while remembering:

1. You have not yet been killed. Hebrews 12:4: because you are alive you are still in the race. It is time to get your hands up, strengthen your knees, point your feet in the right direction.
2. You may have forgotten that chastening comes to sons. Hebrews 12:5-11.
3. We are to get tough and get on our paths. Hebrews 12:12-14.
4. Watch out for bitterness. Hebrews 12:15.

Verse 17 goes back to our understanding about the river.

Hebrews
12:17 For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.

Once you come out of the river, once you stop the race, once you drop the baton, there is no make up. Do not get out of the river, do not quit running the race, do not drop the baton, do not pick up the weights because there is no way to make up the lost time and distance in the race or the river. Whatever has been lost is lost forever even though we seek it with great tears of repentance and sorrow.

Hebrews
12:18 For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and

darkness, and tempest,

12:19 And the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which [voice] they that heard intreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more:

12:20 (For they could not endure that which was commanded, And if so much as a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned, or thrust through with a dart:

12:21 And so terrible was the sight, [that] Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake:)

12:22 But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels,

12:23 To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect,

12:24 And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than [that of] Abel.

12:25 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:

12:26 Whose voice then shook the earth: but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven.

12:27 And this [word], Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain.

12:28 Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear:

12:29 For our God [is] a consuming fire.

Man! This is some terrifying “wherefore” stuff here, and it is all warnings.

What are the warnings for this final race?

When I say final race, I am talking about your leg of the race! I am not talking about

the leg of the race that comes after your leg. I am talking about the race of God's Mission and your part in it.

1. You can sell your final glory like Esau did. Hebrews 12:16-17

2. Your access to God brings great responsibility. Hebrews 12:18-24

Access to God in the Old Testament, where God was on the mountain, and you had the thunders and the cloud and the lightning, was described as prohibitive to His people. Only Moses could go into the mountain, and even Moses was afraid. Access, you see, to God was very limited. Now you have great access. You can go to God, you can go to Mt. Zion, and you can approach God. That privilege brings great responsibility.

3. There is no escape from having your race judged. Hebrews 12:25-27

I want to ask you some logical questions right here. Would it not be better, and is it not good for you and me to know number 3, that there is no escape from having our race judged? Now is it not good that you know something about this race, and the expectations of this race, and how dangerous it is for picking up those weights or stepping out of the race or for not even believing in the race, not even having substance to the baton? All of these things can easily escape us. The awareness of them cannot escape you now, and the fact that there is no escape from judgment of your race, means that you are going to have an advantage. Just by this lesson, your advantage is that you know that your race is going to be judged, and you know the pitfalls. You can run your race, and I guarantee you that unless you have a total faith breakdown, your race is going to be run better because of God's book of Hebrews. God has given you something wonderful here in this book in the Bible. ***Hebrews is the book of discipleship!*** It is the book of how to

maximize your glory in heaven, and the way you do it is to glorify Jesus in your race.

When you deny yourself and run with the pain in your face, when you run and run and run, the Lord says, "Man, look at that! He is running for Me!" I tell you that when you get to the end, He is going to grab you and hug you and say, "Well done," and you are going to melt. You are just going to stand there like a hound dog with your tail wagging. You have been blessed by Hebrews.

Think of the people who do not know this material. They do not even know that there is even a race, and I am talking about Christian people. They do not even know about the river, and they do not know there is going to be a judgment, and they are just still taking this chastisement of which we spoke. They are all limp, the root of bitterness is growing

up in them, they do not know what to do. They certainly do not understand you. How come you are running, throwing your weights down and running? Everybody else wants his weights and more: "Give me some of your weights." But you have been blessed. God has blessed us tonight with this.

4. Serve God with reverence and fear for He is a consuming fire. Hebrews 12:28-29

It is a wise man who fears God and serves Him. Our time on earth is so very short when examined in the context of eternity. For this reason, any investment in true *kenotic* discipleship will return infinite rewards. Even small rewards become infinite when they are extended for eternity.

Chapter Questions

1. What is the description of faith?
2. Describe the exhortation to run the race.
3. What does lay aside every weight mean?
4. How is the race God's way of chastening you to perfection?
5. What are the warnings for this final race?

Chapter 7

EXHORTATIONS

HEBREWS CHAPTER 13

What are the eight exhortations in Chapter 13?

Hebrews

13:1 Let brotherly love continue.

13:2 Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.

13:3 Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; [and] them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body.

13:4 Marriage [is] honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.

1. Continue in brotherly love. Hebrews 13:1-4

- a. With strangers, vs. 1
- b. With prisoners, vs. 3
- c. With sufferers, vs. 3
- d. In marriage, vs. 4.

We have talked about the various kinds of love in these classes, e.g. *eros*, *phileo*, *agape*, and then beyond these three to the spiritual dimension of friendship. *Phileo* is brotherly love, and it has two vectors in it. The first vector originates from one party and goes to the other party. It is a good-intentioned act, intending to do something good for the other

party. The other party responds in kind back to the originator of this transaction. Thus *Phileo* has both vectors and it completes the cycle. First, there is the person-to-person interaction of good will. I say howdy to Larry, and he says howdy back; that transaction is an expression of friendship or *phileo* (brotherly love). If I say howdy to Larry and he just turns his back on me and does not respond by saying anything, then that is not an expression of *phileo* because there was no reciprocating response back to me.

When God is talking about friendship (brotherly love) here, He is giving commands to the entire church for us to relate to one another on that reciprocating basis. I should initiate a good action toward you, and you should reciprocate with a good action back towards me. It should go back and forth like that. That is continuing in *philadelphia* or brotherly love.

If I used my wife for my benefit, by shaping my action so that I, instead of my wife, am the recipient of its benefit, then that is *eros*. *Eros* is when I use the other person for my own benefit. It does not have to be limited to sex. If I direct some good action toward another person, but the purpose or the object of that good action is for me myself, then that action would be *eros*. See Chart 7.2 on the next page. Thus I would use the other person to better myself.

By itself, *eros* is not good, but *eros* is a good love when it is used properly between knowing people instead of unknowingly between people. Proper use of *eros* provides mutual participation in the good things of life. *Eros* between people can be good if it is used equally and knowingly on both sides.

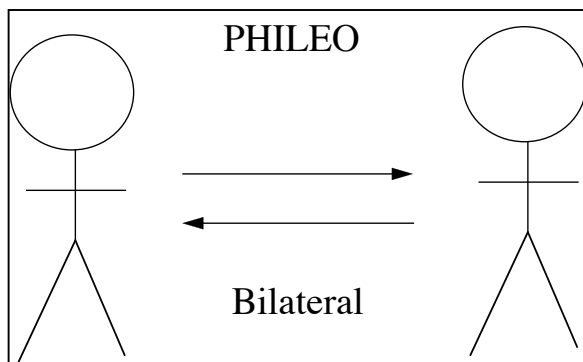


Chart 7.1

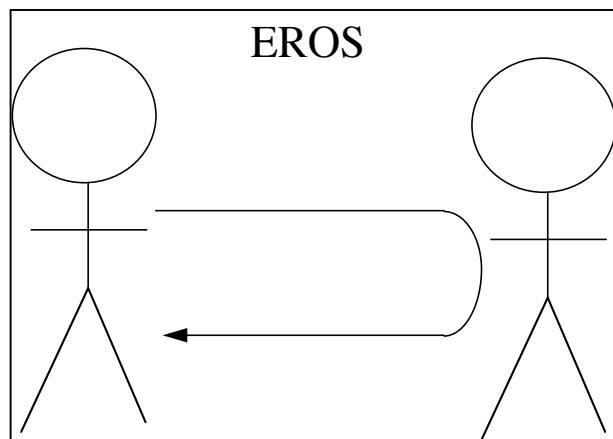


Chart 7.2

I can use my wife for my self-gain with the full understanding that she can use me for hers. That is a perfectly legitimate expression of *eros*. What is not a good expression of *eros* is for me to use my wife for my self-gain at her expense. If I manipulate her and just gain and climb, then I am pushing her down and I am stepping on her to climb up. That is not good.

Going back to *philadelphia*, if I said howdy to Larry and Larry did not respond to me, then I have only one loving recourse left as a Christian. That recourse is to express *agape* love to Larry. *Agape* love is unilateral. Only one direction is required. To express *agape* means, then, that no matter what he does to me, I love him anyway. That is what Jesus did, you see, for you. He died for us

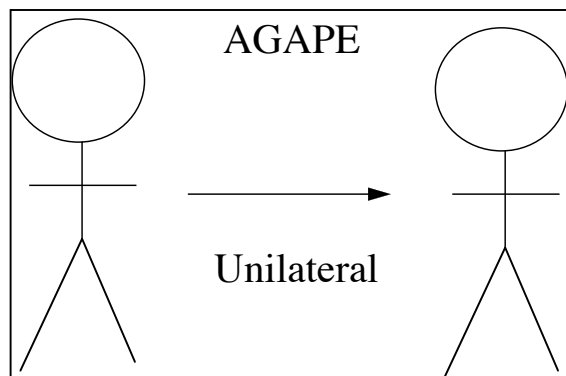


Chart 7.3

while we were yet at enmity with Him.¹ That is an expression of unilateral, self-sacrificial love.

Now here is the exhortation. The first exhortation is to express *philadelphia* or friendship love with one another, and we are to do this with strangers, prisoners, fellow sufferers, and also with spouses. Do you remember back around chapter 6 where the writer was encouraging the Hebrews to receive the admonishment, or chastisement, that God had brought to them? One of the things He said to them was that their ministry to one another, to the saints on the inside, was a good thing that He had recognized among them.

This is a group of Hebrews who were ministering to one another. But what about the strangers, how were the Hebrews ministering to them? It is amazing to me that God picks the strangers to be the very first group of people to whom brotherly love is to be shown. He also puts a little leverage on the incentive for us on this exhortation by saying that you never know when that stranger is an angel.

Let us also get after the implementation of this exhortation. You cannot turn your back on anybody. That very stranger to whom you turn your back may be an angel to test your *philadelphia*.

Then God goes on to exhort *philadelphia* for the prisoners. There is a propensity for the human race to turn our backs on people who are in trouble. When you get in trouble with the law, you will go to jail. Most everybody will tend to turn their backs on you and disassociate him/herself from you: "He is a jail bird; we are not going to mess with him." God is saying, "No, you are to extend *philadelphia*, that friendship love, even to them."

¹ Romans 5:8.

² *Missio Dei*, Luke 19:10 For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.

³ Luke 19:10.

⁴ James 4:17

⁵ James 2:20.

⁶ Mark 10:42-43.

⁷ Every member of this class had to read the book of

We are to extend *philadelphia* also to fellow sufferers. There are people who are suffering afflictions of all kinds, and we are to express *philadelphia* to those people as well. We are to express *phileo* to those kinds of folks on the outside. The exhortation is appropriate for the Hebrews because they had majored on the “internal” fellowship but not the external.

Lastly, God comes to deal with the marriage. There are many marriages that do not have *phildelphia* in them between the partners. But there should be! There should be the desire to do good to your partner, and that partner do good back, and repeat that cycle over and over again. As a matter of fact it should be a way of life that you practice that kind of love.

And then, there is not only to be *phildelphia*, but also there ought to be the *eros* kind of love within the marriage relationship.

Finally, there ought also to be the *agape* kind of love within the marriage relationship. *Agape* love means, then, that you should be willing to sacrifice your life for your marital partner, to give yourself totally for and to your partner.

He lists those four categories, and I had not noticed that marriage had been a problem area elsewhere in here, but I suspect now that there was some kind of problem in the marital relationships with these Hebrew Christians. The reason I say that is because the very first three of this group addresses weaknesses that he has already addressed in their opposites by addressing their strengths. Their strengths were found within the internal things, but their marriages were not included in those strengths.

2. There is to be no covetousness. Hebrews 13:5-6

Hebrews

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.

13:6 So that we may boldly say, The Lord [is] my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.

This may just be my suspicious nature, but I look at this idea of covetousness and its associated meanings as being not content with the things that you have, and then I think that covetousness is also indicative of a withdrawing into isolation. It indicates an unwillingness for exposing yourself to other people, especially to outsiders. I think, again, that fearing what man will do to you if given the chance is symptomatic of covetousness.

Relationships with material things are connected to relationships with outsiders. If you cannot love the outsider, then you become a recluse, a withdrawn insider, and you only relate to the insiders. You only relate at the safe level. To remain at the safe level, you are not exposing yourself to risk in the outside world.

The second part of this exhortation of covetousness is about not fearing what men can do unto us. That means, then, that if I am fearful of being exposed and hurt out there on the outside, I will become reclusive. My material goods shall not be exposed, or put at risk, out there. I will be back here in reclusion with my material goods. There will be a state of covetousness within my mind, and I will be fearful of what man can do to me. And so, I run to the safety group, the inside group, and if I am going to share, then I share with those who will share back.

Covetousness is the failure to follow those kinds of examples in other parts of the Scripture where somebody asks for your cloak, and you give them your coat too. This is what I think. You do not have to believe what I think. You have the right to be wrong and all like that. (Much laughter around the room)

Being content and not fearing are the two meanings opposing that word covetousness,

and I think they both connect with this business of being an insider-type group.

3. Remember your past leaders. Hebrews 13:7-9.

Hebrews

13:7 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.

13:8 Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.

13:9 Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines. For [it is] a good thing that the heart be established with grace; not with meats, which have not profited them that have been occupied therein.

In this exhortation is the idea that you are to imitate those very productive leaders that you have remembered in the past. I also think that this remembrance would include those of the present time.

Now when you remember them, you need to remember the word that they spoke, and you need to remember the ends, or the results, of their lives and ministry. So while considering those two things, the word that they spoke and also the results that they had in ministry, you should imitate their faith. It is not that you should follow them, but rather you should imitate their faith.

Who do you follow? You follow Jesus! You are to imitate the faith of a faithful leader, but you are not to follow that leader because that leader is on his path, and you are supposed to be on your path. If you are following him on his path, who is going to do your path?

There is a common misconception here. Many . . . many times, we think that in order to be spiritual we must follow somebody on his path, but that is wrong because then your path goes undone.

Paul: When you said that, it struck me. There are probably 50,000 little Rick Warrens around the United States.

V: Uh huh, there are. Yet, imitating his faith is legitimate, but it does not mean that you get behind this leader and you follow him. That is not the idea. You get behind Jesus and follow Him closely in a faith that was modeled by those faithful ministers who were remembered.

James: One of our kids got that concept this week from camp. He is fifteen years old, a friend of one of my sons, and we feel like God is putting a call on his life. Although he has not publicly confessed up to the call, he is privately going that way. He said, himself, that he learned this week that he does not need to try to be like anybody else, but only that he needs to be what God wants him to be, to follow God in what He wants him to do. He is fifteen! It was really neat to hear him, you know, grasp this concept that so many other people, grown-ups, do not understand.

V: Imitating a good faith is a good thing. So you look at your leaders and determine to imitate their faith. Do not imitate them. That is not legitimate. Imitate their faith. That is legitimate. Look at the Apostle Paul and imitate his faith, but do not imitate him and run out there and do missionary journey #1, missionary journey #2 & #3, you know, and then the prison trip, and then getting snake bitten, then getting your head whacked off. Imitate the faith that brought on those actions.

4. Go to the "outside" altar. Hebrews 13:10-14.

Hebrews

13:10 We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle.

13:11 For the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned without the camp.

13:12 Wherefore Jesus also, that he might

sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate.

13:13 Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach.

13:14 For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come.

These exhortations are hitting on the weak point of the Hebrews. The Hebrews were an internalized group. They were coming together almost like a monastic kind of group. They make us look like a bunch of pikers in their assembling together in their worship. They were really getting after it.

They were also ministering effectively to each other on the inside. In their fellowship they were doing a good job of ministry, but they had a terrible weakness, and that weakness was that they were not effective on the outside. They needed to get outside of the enclave and get with the people because the *Missio Dei* is the model and the command that all Christians are under.

That command to go to the outside altar means then that you must leave your security and go and find those who are lost. Your job is just like the job of the Lord Who said, "I came to seek and to save that which was lost."² He left His position of safety, comfort, and status that He had because He was on a mission. That mission was to go out into the world to seek and to save that which is lost. You cannot do that if you stay huddled up together just ministering to each other.

Here we go again: go to the outside, get through the gate. When you come together, it is for the purpose of worship, fellowship, and equipping the saints for ministry. But ministry is two-fold: inside and outside. The Hebrews were doing a good job on the inside. They worshiped and worshiped and fellowshiped and fellowshiped and equipped and equipped and ministered and ministered. Do you know what His evaluation of them was

after they had done such a good job of worshiping, equipping, fellowshiping and ministering, a better job than we are doing? He said, "You are dull of hearing; you are on milk, do not lay the foundation over and over again. Build something on that foundation."

So you see, He is coming down hard on these Hebrews, and, of course, we could perceive ourselves to be innocent. We could just step over here in juxtaposition to the Hebrews. Our self-perception is that we are the wonderful bride of Christ and are perfect children of the King, and we know all of this Scripture and theology. We have our Bibles, our seminaries, and all our education, and we can look at those Hebrews and say, "Those poor people did not know anything. We wish that they could have been more like us." Let me tell you something. These people were hitting it, and hitting it good on the internal.

Linda: How much of an effect do you think that their problem is as a result of their heritage, in the way that they were brought up? You know, they were God's chosen people, they were set apart from the pagans around them, but yet Christ came on the scene, and yes, they believed, but . . . Do you think they fully grasped the idea that they were supposed to go out and evangelize the world?

V: The Jews did not grasp that, but the Jewish Christians did. Look at Paul, look at the apostles. They went out, and they started winning the world, and we are riding on the tidal wave that they started.

Mary: Paul is a really good example because he was at first a Jew. He was totally engulfed in his religion. But he also ministered to the Jews when he went out as a Christian into the world. He went into the Jewish communities and taught them first.

V: But here we have in Judaistic Christianity, as it had developed into its perverted form, an introverted religion just like you

² *Missio Dei*, Luke 19:10 For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.

were talking about Linda, but it was not meant to be that way.

What we have here in Hebrews is a book that is two-fold in purpose: one purpose is that it was trying to correct this Judaistic perversion of introversion that was creeping back into Christianity. This perversion is of the same nature as Judaism, and that is why we had to deal with all this Mosaic stuff in the book. But then on the other side of the coin, the book purposes to overcome a natural tendency which is common to all Christians. You yourselves have this tendency here of wanting to minister to the inside only.

There is a prevailing internalization in which you get a focus on the fellowship, fun, and meeting our own needs by ministering inwardly. We all come together to do our thing in this classroom or at church, and then we go home feeling so wonderful. We come back and get all covered up with goose bumps, and we go home again, and we come back to get some more. We want to hear the good music, and when we hear it, we just swoon in our emotions because of the music's effect on our flesh, and then we go home, and then we come back . . . "Oh, we are going to have a wonderful teacher here in our church." Then when he comes and teaches, we think, "Oh, it cannot get any better than this!" Then we go home, and then we come back, and then we anticipate the next great evangelist coming to our church. After we hear him, some of us get saved again (sarcasm). Then we go home, and then we come back. Am I right?

Ted: We are expecting to come instead of going out to evangelize.

V: Right. This is where the Hebrews were. You just can hardly do it any better on the inside than what they were doing. I mean that if you get God's commendation, which they got in chapter 6, then they were doing good on the inside. God commended them. He said, "You are doing good on your ministry to the saints, to each other." How many

churches have you seen God commend? not very many. Only two of the seven churches of Revelation, i.e. Smyrna and Philadelphia, besides this church of the Hebrews, were commended by God.

First, God commends this church of the Hebrews. But now He is coming down on them, and He is saying, "Look, folks, you could do this for all of eternity, all this gathering together and having this great fellowship, great emotional and sentimental stuff here, and not one more person will be saved. I came to seek and to save that which was lost."³ I want you to do the same.

Class, you may do all of that inward ministry like the Hebrews did, but you must understand that you will have perverted what the Lord Himself is all about if you do not minister to the outside. But, of course, you should not throw out that internal ministry because that internal part is where the worshiping, fellowshiping, and equipping take place. So, let us take this new model in which we come together, listen to the Word, and receive the training and exhortation to take that Word out. Then go to the outside, go out of the camp and take the reproach of Christ with you because He was executed outside of the gate. Take that reproach with you.

Paul: That part right there is the exact part that is missing, not just in my church but everybody that I talk to that goes to any other church. I do not care what denomination it is, hardly anybody does visitation anymore. You may have a church that may go out and see people who have come to see you for the last year and a half. The visitors from that church may finally ask the prospects, "When are you going to sign up?" It is easy to see those kinds of inward motivations. Adding members benefits the church, right? But hardly anybody goes out into the community just for the community's sake . . . to prisoners for the

³ Luke 19:10.

prisoners' sake . . . to fellow sufferers for the fellow sufferers' sake.

V: Our focus needs to be to the outside. Jesus left His first estate and came to earth as a man to minister to us. We need to do the same thing. All five kinds of ministry need to be activated, and if you take my evangelism class, I will teach all five to you. When you put all five together, the *Missio Dei* is fully scoped and fleshed out, and then the church will be participating with the Lord in the full *Missio Dei*.

I will tell you right now, this approach of a fully scoped *Missio Dei* would revolutionize the church, and the people would become excited because they would be participating with the Lord in His great adventure. The members in this scenario will come not just to get goose bumps, but they come in fear and trembling. They will come and say, "I wonder what God is going to have me do now?" God may say, "Guess what you are going to do now. You are going to" "Oh, no, I cannot do that. I am scared to death. But I must because I want to be part of the *Missio Dei*."

When you get into the *Missio Dei*, you see, it is fun! It is exciting! There needs to be, then, the willingness of the leaders of the church to not only equip the saints with the Word so that they can do their ministry with the full knowledge and understanding of what they are supposed to do, but also to provide the training to apply the learned skills into a ministry that goes with that theological foundation and uses their spiritual gifts.

Do you know what training is? It is not just a bunch of words because we have a bunch of big-headed Christians now who have too much knowledge. That knowledge is killing them. Many of the saints with knowledge are under sin's judgment because

to know the truth and not do it, to him it is sin.⁴

What we need now is the next step, which is the training part. Training is like what occurs with the exhortations and help of the Paraclete. It is for the trainer to link arms with that scared saint or that unskilled saint and help him get into ministry. The typical saint is loaded up with knowledge but he has never actually put his hand to the plow. He does not know how to do the "gee" and "haw" business. You who have the experience should link arms with that person and help them. You get in there, and you watch and help and get that person to actually apply their knowledge. It is a slow process, but when you use multiplication rather than addition, that process works great, and your results grow fast.

If you train one in a year, then, you will have two trainers for the next year. If those two trainers train only one in a year, then you will have four trainers in the next year. If you do that for eight years, you will have more trainers than you have church people to train. I am telling you, it will grow magnificently because it will be exponential growth. It will get so big that you will wonder why this process has not been used by us before.

That process of multiplication was the Lord's process. He grew eleven, tried to grow twelve, but He grew eleven. Look what has become of those eleven seeds. All of you are saved because He decided to teach, train, and invest Himself in just eleven people. You can do this, too. Just **apply** God's Word to the *Missio Dei*.

If you train in order to build yourself an empire or gain power over somebody or gain anything for self, that will be a perversion, and it is going to mess up. But your job is to get your trainee's hand into the Lord's hand and turn him loose and get out of *their* way.

⁴ James 4:17

Training and equipping for ministry is the same as discipling, and here is the model. I am the trainer. I equip and train the saint. Then I get this trainee's hand and join it with the Lord's hand. Then I get out of the way. When that happens that guy is under the Lord's direction. He will be following the Lord. He will be a true disciple!

That same model which was just described is how you get folks saved. That same model is how you get them on fire. That same model is how you get them up on their feet and productive. That same model is how you get them into the war. That same model is how you get them into that deep water. That same model is how you get them to run their leg of the relay race.

Now we will look at the inner and outer gates. This part deals with the Jewish concept in which the sacrifice is brought to the high priest who takes the body and the blood of the sacrifice into the tabernacle. But this writer tells us that since Jesus was executed outside the gate, you too shall take the reproach of Christ and go out to that altar, outside. That is where your sacrifice of self is going to occur, on the outside.

You must get your people to get out there because we could be the last generation. In disobedience to God's Word, we could be all internalized, focused on ourselves, and have more goose bumps than you can count. It would be terrible for us to be the last generation and also be **ineffective** for Christ.

5. Offer sacrifices. Hebrews 13:15-16

- a. These shall include words of praise out of your mouth. Offer those sacrifices, but do not stop there. You must put your actions beside your words. Do not be hypocritical by making your words be one thing and your actions something different.
- b. Your actions should be of doing good and sharing. The doing of ministry is

the fruit of faith. Faith without works is dead.⁵ These good works of sacrificial ministry are the sanctification part of salvation.

Hebrews

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.

13:16 But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.

So God wants us to do both, not just to do praising, but to do the actions that go with it. Praising, you see, can become cheap. It can be a lip service. Any time we praise God for His ministry to us, but without taking the responsibilities that come with those blessings, we are lip serving. Remember that a disciple must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow Jesus in His *Missio Dei*.

6. Obey and submit to leaders. Hebrews 13:17

Hebrews

13:17 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.

God is not saying that church pastors, church ministers, and deacons are to be obeyed unquestioningly. The people who have the rule over us are the authoritative figures, such as government officials, policemen, parents, husbands, and Christian leaders. None of these rule like Jesus rules. No one is to be allowed to insert him/herself between you and the Lord. Jesus says to each one of us that we are to deny ourselves, pick up our crosses, and "follow **Him**."

You cannot substitute a ruler for Jesus. However, you are to submit to the rulers in

⁵ James 2:20.

the areas in which they have true authority. Spiritual authority over you is only from Jesus. Even angels do not have authority over you. They convey what God is saying to you because only God has spiritual authority. Please do not make the mistake that so many others have made down through history. That mistake is to assign spiritual authority to sinful men who are in ministerial positions.

The exhortation in this series here certainly includes the pastor or minister or leaders or elders or whatever they are. If they are experiencing the Word of God and proclaim “**it**,” then you are to obey “**it**.” When the Word says here to obey them, you should obey them in their areas of authority.

A pastor’s authority is not to rule over the saints.⁶ He is to watch over the saints and teach them and encourage them. He is not the boss of the saints; that position is held by the Lord Jesus Christ alone. However, the pastor has authority in the earthly institution which the local church has become. If he says that when you are teaching your class, you should use a particular room, then you should obey that command because he has authority in that realm.

However, outside of his churchly area of authority, the pastor becomes a leader in spiritual things as one who only “persuades” the saints. Since the pastor does not rule over the saints in spiritual things, how does he exercise his responsibility with the saints? This Scripture encourages the saints to obey in the sense of having the inclination of being teachable and persuadable by them in spiritual things. Even when they are not expressing the Word of God, if they are dealing with areas that God does not expressly deal with, and these leaders are proven leaders, you are to be persuadable by them, not contentious and stiff-necked. Do not resist everything that is being said simply because they cannot

prove it with the Word of God. Contentious resistance is not profitable for you, and it will grieve your leaders.

Your church leaders need to be able to express themselves and have the benefit of the doubt, and they should be winsome to you on the basis of their track record. When they are truthfully expressing the Word of God to you, you have nothing to refute or argue about. You just do it because when they tell you the Word of God, it is the same thing as God saying it. When their sermon or words are not expressing the Word of God, you should be persuadable by them. Certainly, I am not saying that you should be persuadable to do something that the Lord does not want you to do.

Obedience and being teachable and persuadable partially explains the word, obey, but the explanation also goes further than that. It says that you should submit to them. Let us just say that you have a leader with a proven track record to his credit, and here you stand. He says, “I think we need to go on the south side of town and do our witnessing.” You say, “No, I think we need to go on the north side of town to do our witnessing.” Here is a deadlock. Who is the leader? He is. Is that north side versus south side location for witnessing expressed in the Word of God? No, it is not. Be persuadable by him. Listen to him. In a deadlock situation like that, yield to him. Submit to him, and go on the south side of town. Do not make it grievous for him or for yourself.

Some pastors and some of your elders spend their whole lives trying to get the group to do something together as a unified team, to try to get some kind of harmony in the church. It is so grievous to them that they get worn slam out. Then they come into a class like this, and I tell them that they must get their members and train them one by one, link arms with them, and help them into ministry. Those poor pastors are so worn out that they

⁶ Mark 10:42-43.

have difficulty standing up. They say, “Get one? I must do that while I am fighting over here, and I am fighting over there over every little thing with every one of my church members? Nobody wants to do anything right, and I am just dying here in the middle of all this. I must do one at a time and do all this, too?” You see, it is very grievous in the sapping of your energy. If you want your leaders to be refreshed, be persuadable by them, and submit to them.

It will not hurt you not to get your own way. Besides to get into the deep water requires you to sacrifice your own way, to deny yourself. I have experienced having these worn out pastors in class over and over and over.

Yes, the responsibility comes down on the leader. But I am hitting hard on the non-leader at this point in the way that I am talking, but now let us look at the other side of the coin. Let us say that the leader wants to go on the south side of town, and this member wants to go on the north side. The leader could be thinking to himself, “There is more money on the south side of town.” The member may be thinking, “There is more spiritual need on the north side of town,” and yet the member yields to the leader who has a mercenary motivation. The member submits, and they go to the south side of town. They may get some wealthy tithers and the benefits of more resources for the church. The leader may get a pay raise, etc. But listen, you leaders! You are going to give an account for that decision. This is a big step, and the leader is going to give an account.

The leader is not to be sitting up here on his throne thinking, “Man, they are going to submit to me and I am going to issue my orders to them, and we are going to get all these profitable returns for our church.” You see, it does not work like that either—this is a two-way street here. This member is to submit to a righteous leader because of who he is

and what his track record is, but the leader is going to give an account. There is double jeopardy here. Beware! No matter who you are, the judge will get you. Everybody, including the leaders and pastors, is going to get into the deep water before this course is over with.

7. Pray for leaders. Hebrews 13:18-19.

Hebrews

13:18 Pray for us: for we trust we have a good conscience, in all things willing to live honestly.

13:19 But I beseech [you] the rather to do this, that I may be restored to you the sooner.

And so the seventh exhortation is to pray for us, “Pray for all your leaders.” Please do not overlook any who exercise rule over you including government leaders, parents, and husbands. Every one, including your bosses at work, has rightful areas of authority over you. You should obey them and pray for them and hope that any who are under your authority will obey you and pray for you.

Verses 20 and 21 are not exhortations, but we will look at them.

Hebrews

13:20 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,

13:21 Make you perfect . . .

We know what perfect means. It means to get all the way to the end.

Hebrews

13:21 . . . in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom [be] glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Let us re-visit the Doctrine of Salvation with its path of sanctification which goes all the way to glorification/perfection. To be on the true path is to do the Lord’s Will, not to do other peoples’ wills, *missio hetero*, the

wills of people who are intruding into the Lord's spiritual authority. You are not to do even your own will, but you are to do the Lord's Will. The Lord's Will is going to get you out there in that deepest water, and it is going to be one of sacrifice. It is a pattern of *kenosis* that we are going to follow.

8. Suffer the Word of exhortation. Hebrews 13:22

Hebrews

13:22 And I beseech you, brethren, suffer the word of exhortation: for I have written a letter unto you in few words.

The exhortation in this verse refers to the whole book of Hebrews. Suffer this exhortation means to follow the pattern of discipleship which is found in the whole book of Hebrews. The word, beseech, is the verb *paracaleo* from which the noun *Paraclete* is used of the Holy Spirit. This word beseech means exhortation and is the strongest word that we have for encouraging somebody to do something. God is using the strongest word to encourage us to obey the discipleship book. He is saying to you and to me, I beseech you to suffer this exhortation.

To suffer has a prefix that indicates over and over again. So God is saying that He wants us to hear this exhortation and suffer it over and over again. When you get through with this class, you ought to be able to hear and suffer the exhortation of this book over and over again. I want you to be able to hear someone exhorting you to get into the deep water over and over again.

Do not rebel because you now know the truth from this class. You have memorized practically all of this stuff, and you know more about it than anybody in the whole country around here. So therefore when you hear a preacher/teacher say, "Get into the deep water," you listen to that exhortation and heed it over and over again. Do not rebel against that exhortation regardless of who issues the exhortation. You need to get into

the deep water, you need to deny yourself, as in the *kenosis*, and you need to be willing to hear and heed that exhortation over and over again. Do not stop hearing and obeying that exhortation. It does not matter who you are. Please be willing to hear and obey this command from God over and over again.

Why should you be willing to hear and obey? God is saying it right here: "I beseech you to suffer." That word, suffer, has "ana" in front of it, and it means to do this hearing and suffering repeatedly. God is using the strongest word we have, and He is using repetition to put it on us that we need to suffer this exhortation over and over again.

I have a great advantage. I get to teach this book over and over again. When I teach it I come under the judgment of this book over and over again. By this repetition, I find the flaws in my life and correct them each time I come under this teaching over and over again. I repent and get these impediments out of my life and get a new grasp on the *kenosis* and get back into the deep water, if I should happen to be out of the deep water. My doing this introspection over and over again is an advantage.

You teachers who get to do this kind of teaching also have an advantage, but with the advantage comes the responsibility. That responsibility is for you to get the other people into the deep water, and when they get out of the deep and start climbing up on the bank, get them back in the deep over and over again.

I want to encourage you. We have been through the most wonderful book on discipleship, and it will light your fire and charge your batteries and do all of that. Now, I want to see some results in your lives and in the lives of your people, in your families and your friends, and those that you have in your network, those you can influence and touch.

There needs to be some change in all these folks, and at the very least there ought to be accountability out there. You ought, then, to convey to them the requirement for the *kenosis*, sanctification, discipleship, getting to the end, getting in the deep water, running the race, passing the baton, running till you fall down, get up, and run some more. Convey to them that they are not to drag their religious baggage all around the track. Teach them all of these requirements. There is a lot of responsibility on us now because we know this stuff.

STUDENT TESTIMONIALS

V: I want you to consider what has transpired this semester in your reading of the book of Hebrews over and over again, and your time of meditation with the Lord, and what has happened to you because of the new learnings from God and the exhortations from God that have come through this book of the Bible.⁷ This is a moment for a few of you to share with the class what has happened to you because of the book of Hebrews. We are not here to glorify me or some other human; please do not do that. We are here to talk about the book of Hebrews and what God is doing in your life through His Word.

Paul: What this book has done for me, and what it has shown me is just how merciful God has been to me personally and how merciful and gracious that He is to us. The book of Hebrews is a book of discipleship, and it really emphasizes to me the importance of a faithful Christian walk. It does not just affect the people we come into contact with by whether or not they receive salvation or whether or not they walk correctly, but it affects our walk. We should walk so as to give a leader's good example. Many times

we think, "Boy, I had better be careful because if that person needs to hear about salvation from me, I need to back up my words with my walk." But I really need to be careful at all times to obey God's mandate not only to tell them the Gospel but also to show them a true walk exemplifying a salvation that is true.

Sara: Our discipleship also affects us and our eternal rewards. Hebrews makes it clear to me that there is a judgment for every believer's works, and we need to be very serious about our works and the judgment because the Christian walk is not a game. We sometimes want to play at Christianity like it is a game, but it is not. God is very serious about what He expects out of us.

Terry: Personally, it has shown that even at a time in my life when I stepped away from God, He could have chosen to leave me where I was, but He did not. It is not up to us that when we decide that we want to get back into the deep water, we can because God bows to our wishes. It is God who decides to call us and to woo us back, and it is only because of His mercy and His graciousness that He continued to woo me and to draw me back. It is only that mercy by which I was allowed to come back, and by which He said, "I have a plan for you. I am going to show mercy to you, and I am going to be gracious to you because I have a plan for you. I want you to come back; I want you to get back into deep water, and now I am going to show you how important it is for you to stay out there and to tell others."

Larry: It really motivates me to tell other people, about reading the end of the story at the back of the book, and not just going, "God is love, ooh, isn't that great!" But God is just and righteous also, and He will have His justice, and we will be judged.

Curtis: It really affirms to me the importance of telling other people in our churches that you cannot just live your life

⁷ Every member of this class had to read the book of Hebrews 7 times and meditate on it for 7 hours. They also had to write a paper on the personal relevance that the book of Hebrews had for their lives.

acting like you have your salvation in your pocket and like you know every where you need to go and everything you need to do. You have to live your life in fear and reverence to God and thankfulness for what He has done for us by giving us that salvation and the enablement and opportunity for living out that process of sanctification. He was merciful. He decided to call me back, and He allowed me to come back into the deep water, and I am very thankful.

J.W.: I just want to thank God for being here, and I thank Reverend Garza for inviting me here. I thank Brother Vinson for enlightening me to the book of Hebrews, which I needed. It has been a challenge, and it has been very instructive to hear this book and all the brothers and sisters that are here to tell me that I need to get into the deep water, to get off the bank and help other Christians that are on the bank and to pull them off myself. I have grown because of what I have heard in this course. It has enlightened me much to know these exhortations. It is enhancing my life. Yes, I do have weaknesses because I, too, was like the Hebrews—dull of hearing. However, this book has also awakened me.

Pete: I am glad that we had to do a paper on the relevance of Hebrews for our lives because it gave me a chance to think about what I learned in here. I have to say for myself that there were many nights that I felt like I was the only one sitting in this class, and that Dr. Vinson was speaking directly to me. It was like he totally got my attention. I feel that I cannot make any slip ups now, and that I have been warned. There are no excuses left for me. I know what I am supposed to do. So I feel that for me, it was a calling to personal accountability as a Christian to my own salvation and how I must share that with others.

Lillian: What I learned is that on this journey there are going to be times of testing. Everyone is going to be tested. I thought it

was just me who was going to be tested by going through times of suffering. I really do not like the idea of suffering, but in going through those times I am going to learn how to be obedient. That is real important for me. It is through those times that I am going to have to deny myself and submit totally to God's will.

Max: It is funny that I am taking this class now because this is exactly what I am going through in my life. I was fighting the move here. I have only been six months in this area, and the night that Dr. Vinson said that we must submit to places and things that we do not necessarily like, changed my whole attitude in being here, and it has gotten a lot easier because I now accept it. That will always remain with me, to submit. I believe that in doing all these things, and getting through these times that I will develop the keys to spiritual maturity and discipleship.

Tim: Giving all praises to the Lord, I give a salute to all of you, my brothers and sisters in Christ. You know, this class has really been beneficial for me because of the fact that it told us about the need for us to get out and do something. Sometimes we get complacent and comfortable in our salvation. We tend not to want to share outwardly. I need to share this call to discipleship with my people.

Tim cont'd: There was another thing, a question that I had a long time ago, that we addressed in here. The answer to that question was beneficial to me because now I have some clarity when I read: *"10:26 For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins."* For a long time, I was unclear about the meaning of that passage. I had asked some questions of other pastors, but this class clarified that meaning for me. I should be aware and mindful of the fact that . . . you know I just cannot continue to do things that are wrong after having the

knowledge that the Lord has revealed to me. I know that every time that I willfully sin, I am decreasing my mark where I am going to land in glory. This is clear to me now because sometimes we get complacent with the idea that we have a relationship with the Lord and that we can do whatever we want to do, and it is going to be all right. I am thankful for this class because that was cleared up for me. I will be a much better servant for the Lord now. I intend to take the evangelism course.

Sam: I am going to come up here next because the previous testimony is what I wanted to say. Brother Tim, I want to tell you that the Scripture that you just talked about worked me over and worked me over, and beat me up so bad that I wanted out of this class and out of this book.

Sam cont'd: The other Scripture that worked me over was about whether or not God would give us permission to get back into the deep water. It makes me sure enough not to want to get out, give up, or even slack off. Dr. Vinson showed us what happened to the Hebrew children. Once they quit, they walked in a circle for 40 years. God never did give them permission to get back into the river. That startled me. That very Scripture that you just brought up, brother, startled me.

Sam cont'd: Of course there are a lot of other heavy things in this great book on discipleship. Like Dr. Vinson said tonight, if the Word is being preached, hear it above all. Do not follow somebody, but hear that Word and follow that Word. That was good for me tonight. I commit to hear God's Word and follow it.

Todd: We have all had our testimonies taken by Brother Tim because that particular Scripture has bothered me for a long time too. I was really hopeful for this course before the class started, and once we got going, I was truly excited about it because unlike the other classes that I have taken, this class did not dwell on background settings, textual criticism, and other externals. This class got into the spiritual content of the book, and that was what really excited me once I found out that this was what was happening. You could not have held me back once I knew that we were focusing on the spiritual content.

Ronald: That same Scripture has bothered me too. I do not know if *bothered me* is the right terminology. However, in exhorting people in my congregation, I encounter many who feel like Jesus kind of died to give them an excuse to go on doing the things they want to do. They usually responded to me by saying, "Everybody is human, and God understands, and He knows I am human, and He knows I have my faults." I have been telling them, "Now wait a minute, if we sin willfully after we have come into the knowledge of the truth, there remains no more sacrifice for sin."

Sully: That Scripture, Dr. Vinson, also really opened my eyes of understanding. It reaffirmed the message that I have been trying to preach. This was a good class in the fact that it was much more than I had anticipated it to be after having some experiences in the other kinds of seminary classes. In the normal classes around here, we just talk about the background, etc. But this is where it is, down to the meat of the matter. I really appreciate that, Dr. Vinson.

Chapter Question

What are the eight exhortations in Chapter 13?

CONCLUSION

Well, what does God's book on discipleship mean to you now? You have a choice to make. Will you take God's exhortations seriously enough to apply them? Some will apply the book of Hebrews, and some will not. Those who are going to church and participating in the churchly things are the most apt to reject the exhortations of Hebrews. Why do I say that? I say it because many of these people tend to be lukewarm and are quite satisfied with their show of religion. They are completely affirmed because they offer their nickels and noses to the church.

What does the typical church desire? Nickels and noses! Thus the typical lukewarm Christian who is deep into the church thing will be affirmed by the institution, satisfied with their own Christian walk which costs them nothing more than attendance and offerings, and completely aware that they are far more religious than their unchurched neighbors. They may even have a five-year perfect attendance pin. Therefore, I suppose that many will reject this book of Hebrews and continue living life as they always have.

There are others who will be more apt to accept God's book of Hebrews because they are either cold or hot. The hot will accept this book because they have already accepted many of the principles contained therein. Thus they will become hotter by exhorting others to enter into the deep water. They will see that they must bring forth as much profit for the Lord from their lives as they possibly can. Thus they will apply the principles to their lives and then do their best to teach the principles to others. Then they will "beseech" the other Christians to apply those same principles to their own lives.

The cold Christian is even apt to apply this book to his life. The cold Christian can

more readily discern his lack of sanctification. The path in the area of sanctification, which God has mapped out for us, is the part of life which reaches from the point of justification all the way to the end of life, or glorification. The cold Christian can discern readily that he is not on that path. Thus the cold Christian, with only minimal discernment, is more apt to grab hold of the principles of discipleship than the lukewarm Christian.

Okay, which one are you? Are you the hot Christian? If so, then I would think that you are already ministering inside the church and outside the church, i.e. in the world. You are following Jesus, not the institutional church. You recognize that the church is composed of God's children who worship Him regardless of "where" they are. You are loyal to the Lord, and thus to His children. Therefore, bringing profit to the Kingdom of God is far more important to you than bringing profit to your institutional church. Growing the individual Christians is far more important than growing your institutional church because you know that the individual Christians are God's church whether or not the institutional church should even exist. You are a soul-winner who is always witnessing and tracting whenever you are in the market place. Your ministry inside the circle of Christians and outside the circle to the world will not be impeded by anything. You are a doer of the Word, and you have the mind of Christ, i.e. you are living the *kenosis*.

So, what remains for you to be hotter? You must be God's agent for bringing reform to the members of the church. You must light a fire under other Christians to get them hot too. You must multiply your hotness. Hot Christians beget hot Christians. Hotter Chris-

tians beget hotter Christians. Thus your begetting must be expanded.

Okay, let us turn our attention now to the cold Christian. Are you the cold Christian? If so, I would think that your God-consciousness is in the darkest recesses of your mind. You probably do not read the Scriptures with delight and anticipation. In fact, when you do read them, you have a hard time understanding them. Theology is not for you because you are too busy earning a living, taking care of your family, eating, sleeping, exercising, and recreating. There is no time left for study, especially studying things that are hard to understand. You got saved a long time ago, and you are content with going to heaven. You do not know enough to know whether or not there will be distinctions in heaven. However if it turns out that there will be distinctions in heaven, you have bragged that all you want is to just get inside the gate. You seem to forget to thank God for your food when you sit down to eat. You are faithful to go to church, especially on Easter Sunday. But your main celebration of Easter is the Easter Egg Hunt and the harmless Easter Bunny. Christmas is a celebration of Santa Claus, gifts, parties, and drinking.

So, what do you need to do in answer to this book? If you think that I am going to tell you to move up to lukewarm, you are badly mistaken. If you think that I am going to tell you that you must move up to be a hot Christian, you are still badly mistaken. I am going to tell you exactly what God is telling you in the book of Hebrews. **REPENT AND DO IT ALL, JUST LIKE JESUS.** You must minister inside and outside the church. Outside the church you must witness, tract, and help other people no matter who they are or what their needs are. Inside the church, you must be God's agent of bringing reform to the members of the church. You must light a fire under other Christians to get them hot too. You must multiply your hotness. Yes, by now you know that hot Christians beget hot

Christians, and hotter Christians beget hotter Christians. However, you must also know that cold Christians beget cold Christians. Thus your begetting also needs to be improved and expanded.

Okay, we finally get to you, the lukewarm Christian. You are the churchy guy. You are in church every time the doors open. Your presence in church services is considered the supreme thing in your relationship with Jesus. You swoon over the music. You really like to be seen in your pew. You minister by singing in the choir, taking up the offering, by deaconing, by teaching Sunday School or Church Training or the RA's or GA's or Mission Friends, or perhaps by working in the nursery. You may serve on the church council, the nominating committee, or the pastor search committee. You have worked your way up, and you enjoy the limelight. The other church members recognize you as a honcho with a position which is certainly higher than that of the majority of members.

You do not buttonhole people in your evangelistic approach. You invite people to church, but you do not invite them to salvation because you do not have the gift of evangelism. In fact, you have never led anyone to the saving knowledge, repentance, and faith in Jesus for salvation. You consider tracts to be a waste of money. You consider the distribution of offering envelopes to be more important than the distribution of Gospel Tracts. You really enjoy Halloween and the accompanying devil and witch costumes and trick-or-treat as great fun for the kids.

You are very proud of your institutional church. You speak with great pride about your wonderful church. You speak more glowing words about your church than you do about Jesus, but that is all right in your mind because doing it for the church is the same as doing it for the Lord. For you, serving the institutional church is the same thing as serv-

ing the Lord. Certainly, you reject the idea that the church is your idol.

You love to play at Disney Land so much that when the Christian boycott of Disney over homosexuality was implemented, it did not stop you. The compartmentalization of your life secures for you the ability to enjoy carnality without soiling your spirituality. You can do all manner of bad things during the week and then go to church without any guilt. You have no sin in your life to repent of. Your theology is nothing more than clichés that you repeat in rote. You are so superior to the other Christians that it even surprises you. You readily read your Bible out loud in Sunday school because you have a Bible with the book tabs and you can easily find the books. The offering envelopes give you a sense of pride because you get credit for how much offering you give to the church and how many spiritual duty items are checked off on it. Playing the lottery is okay for you because you will tithe your winnings if you ever hit it big. You no longer smoke while you stand around outside the church building and discuss football with other smoking deacons and teachers. You wish that all other Christians could be like you.

Well, it is to the lukewarm saints in the ancient church that the book of Hebrews was addressed. However, their lukewarmness was of a much better stripe than yours. Their lukewarmness was bred out of ignorance of what was expected of the saints during the sanctification process. Your lukewarmness is in the rejection of scriptural discipleship which begins with self-denial. Instead you have the more modern brand of discipleship which involves self-indulgence and idolatry. What God says to the people of your stripe is to buy gold which has been tried in the fire, white raiment, and eye salve. (Revelation 3: 14-19.)

Stepping out into true discipleship which has self-denial to the point of pain, deprivation, and tears from suffering is how you buy gold which is tried in the fire. Good works of ministry is how you buy white raiment. Obedience of God's Word is the only way to anoint your eyes with eye salve. Being able to see means that light has been brought into your situation to give you understanding of the doctrine of salvation, *kenosis*, and the hard scriptures of Romans, Revelation, and Hebrews.

So now what are you going to do about your idolatry? Allegiance to the *institutional* church will rob you of discipleship. Repent of that now! When the Lord issues the command to deny yourself, pick up your cross and follow Him, that command is a call to *personal* Christianity. You cannot serve God and something else. You will either serve the institution and reject God, or you will serve God and reject the institution. Whichever one you serve is the one to which you are a slave (Matthew 6:24; Luke 16:13).

It is time for you to choose what you are going to do. There are only two choices available: go on living like you have been or adopt all of the exhortations of Hebrews.

Knowing this stuff is not good enough. Which type person are you: hot, cold, or lukewarm? You must decide which person you are and then decide what you are going to do. Tell God about yourself right now in prayer. Then you tell Him what you are going to do with Hebrews. Then you ask for His permission and help to enable you to apply Hebrews to your life. Lastly, you ask God and then give Him complete permission to make you into the kind of person that He wants you to become. Can you pray this? If you can, then do it, now.

ANSWERS TO CHAPTER QUESTIONS

Chapter 1

1. What four facts support the contention that Paul is the author of Hebrews?
 - a. 2 Peter 3:15. Peter mentions that Paul had written to the Jews as he was doing. Hebrews is the only epistle that could be that letter.
 - b. Hebrews mentions in 13:23 that Timothy is coming to this author. Paul and Timothy are closely linked.
 - c. This book is Pauline in its form with doctrine first, followed by an exhortation following. That is a form that Paul typically uses in his writings. Paul will lay out the doctrine and teach and teach and teach; he then says, "Now because of all this that has gone before, I want you to do it."
 - d. This book was written prior to the destruction of the temple; that means it had to have been written prior to AD 70. That date would be well within Paul's lifetime.
2. What are the three offices of Christ?
 - a. Prophet
 - b. Priest
 - c. King
3. All Christians have the functions of prophet, priest and king. Describe those functions in terms of orientation and practice.
 - a. Prophet: A prophet faces the people with his back to God. He speaks to the people for God.
 - b. Priest: A priest faces God with his back to the people. He speaks to God for the people.
 - c. King: A king exercises rule over that which he controls. God has given His gifts and material goods to the Christian who must in turn use those gifts and goods for God.
4. Describe the Hupostasis. Draw the *Hupostasis*.
 The *Hupostasis* is the persons of the Godhead that consists of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. There are three persons, but they are of the same essence. There is no difference in being or in character between any of the three, but they are still distinct.
 Draw the Hupostasis. See Chart 1.2.
5. Why has Hebrews generally been considered one of the epistles of the New Testament?
 - a. Because of its epistolary conclusion. Hebrews 13:18-25.
 - b. Because of its internal evidence. It is all about Jesus and salvation.
 - c. Because of its Pauline connection which played a part in its admission to the canon.
6. How is Christ better than the prophets?
 - a. The Son is heir to all. Hebrews 1:2
 - b. The Son is the creator. Hebrews 1:2
 - c. The Son is the brightness of God's glory. Hebrews 1:3
 - d. The Son is the image (character) of God's person (*hupostasis*). Hebrews 1:3
 - e. He upholds all things through power. Hebrews 1:3
 - f. He purged our sins. Hebrews 1:3
 - g. He sat down on God's right hand. Hebrews 1:3
7. How is Christ better than the angels?
 - a. In name: He is better in name. Hebrews 1:4
 - b. In relation to God: Hebrews 1:5 (He is Son)
 - c. In worship: The angels are to worship Him. Hebrews 1:6
 - d. In God's description: Hebrews 1:7-8. He says angels are ministers, but Jesus is King.
 - e. In status: He is above all His fellow companions (saints). Hebrews 1:9
 - f. In work: He is the creator of the universe. Hebrews 1:10
 - g. Concerning creation: Hebrews 1:11-12. Creation is dependent and temporal. Jesus is independent and eternal.
 - h. In end position: Hebrews 1:13. There is where he says, He sits at the right hand.

- i. In relation to the saints: Hebrews 1:14. Jesus is the bequestor to the saints, and angels are ministers to the saints.
8. Describe the result of a Christian staying out of the “deep water” of the river of ministry? The Christian who stays on the bank of the “river” or in the shallows of the river without allowing himself to flow with the current is missing the opportunities to do the will of God. Those opportunities will never be attainable again. That means, then, that the Christian has not and cannot reach his complete potential, and he will miss out on all or some of the rewards he would have received in heaven. That Christian does not lose his salvation; he loses out on the excitement, the thrill and the anticipation and all the rewards that those who do flow with the Lord in the deep water will get.
9. How do you stay in the “deep water” of the river?
To be a “willing” slave of the Lord, you must ***deny yourself, pick up your cross, and follow Jesus.***
10. Give the Scripture reference for the *kenosis*. Philippians 2:5-11
11. Using the descriptive words describe or draw the *kenosis*. See Chart 1.5 or 1.7.
12. Give the Scripture reference for the opposite of the *kenosis*. Isaiah 14:13
13. Describe or draw the opposite of the *kenosis*. See Chart 1.8.
14. What do we see when we see Jesus?
 - a. A man lower than the angels. Hebrews 2:7.
 - b. We see that the subjection of the world is not apparent. Hebrews 2:8.
 - c. We see the vicarious atonement (2:9), perfection through suffering (2:10), and one leading the church to God (2:11-13).
 - d. We see that He defeated the devil through death. Hebrews 2:14.
 - e. You will see a sympathetic High Priest. Hebrews 2:17-18

Chapter 2

1. List the three parts of salvation, and explain each or draw the chart that illustrates the parts of salvation. See Chart 2.1.
 - a. Justification: A punctiliar event in which a person becomes born again through forgiveness of sin and a choice to follow Jesus.
 - b. Sanctification: That time between justification and physical death. A Christian is supposed to walk with Jesus on the path given to him by God. It is a test of your flesh against your spirit.
 - c. Glorification: A punctiliar event when a Christian leaves life on earth, enters into eternal rest and receives the rewards earned during sanctification.
2. Describe the results of sanctification ignored by the children of Israel when they refused to enter Canaan at Kadesh-Barnea.
The children of Israel left captivity (Egypt), were baptized by passing through the Red Sea, followed Moses passively through the desert until they reached Kadesh-Barnea. Twelve Spies were sent into the Promised Land to bring back a report of what they could expect there. Ten of the spies reported that there was severe danger from the occupants of the land and recommended not entering. Two spies reported the lushness of the land and recommended entering at once. The people were afraid and refused to enter. This demonstrated a lack of faith. God was angry, and said that none of the people over 20 years of age would enter the Promised Land except Caleb and Joshua, the two spies who recommended entering the Promised Land. After a night of contemplation, the people changed their minds, but God said it was too late. As a result the nation walked in a circle in the desert until the last person over twenty years of age had died. They were denied the fulfillment of the promise God made. The Christian who refuses to walk God’s path will not enjoy all the rewards that God has for him. These Christians are unwilling to “deny themselves, take up their cross, and follow Jesus”

- (Matthew 16:24). They do not lose their eternal life, but they lose their rewards. Thus the Christian who provokes God may be forced to walk in circles for the rest of his life.
3. Illustrate the *hupostasis* with Christ and its opposite for the Christian. See Charts 2.3 and 2.4.
 4. Discuss the wilderness provocation as described in Hebrews 3:8-13.
 - a. The hardening of hearts. Hebrews 3:8
 - b. They got manna in place of rest. Hebrews 3:9
 - c. They grieved God and knew not His ways. Hebrews 3:10
 - d. God swore against their rest. Hebrews 3:11
 - e. It can happen to us. Hebrews 3:12
 - f. Exhort against deceitfulness. Hebrews 3:13
 - g. God's rest is stewardship or management.
 5. Define Gnosticism.
Gnosticism is when you put your faith in knowledge. Knowledge is condemning if you don't apply it.
 6. Why should we fear coming short of God's rest?
 - a. There is no profit/rest without faith. Hebrews 4:2
 - b. Some of God's people enter, but some do not because of unbelief. Hebrews 4:6
 - c. A new day, "today," is announced for entrance. Hebrews 4:7
 - d. The new day comes because Joshua's rest was not complete. Hebrews 4:8
 - e. There is a rest available for Christians. Hebrews 4:9
 - f. Let's cease our own works and enter God's rest. (A new kind of works built on faith in God.) Hebrews 4:10-11
 - g. We will be judged by the Word of God. Hebrews 4:12-13
 - h. No excuses are allowed because Jesus is our sympathetic High Priest in the Holy of Holies. Hebrews 4:14-16
 - i. No excuses because we can hold fast our confession. Hebrews 4:14
 - j. No excuses because we can come boldly to His throne. Hebrews 4:15-16
 7. Define *Missio Dei*.
Luke 19:10 For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.

Chapter 3

1. Describe the high priest taken from among men.
 - a. The high priest is taken from among men. Hebrews 5:1
 - b. He also has to have compassion for men. He has compassion on the lost, those who are ignorant, and Christians who are not on the path assigned by God. Hebrews 5:2
 - c. He needs to be able to sacrifice for his own sin. Hebrews 5:3
 - d. He is not self-appointed. Hebrews 5:4
2. How does Jesus qualify as high priest as compared to the qualifications set forth for me?
He is a man. He has compassion. He sacrifices for sin, not his own sin, but the sins of men. He is appointed by His Father.
3. What is the key to discipleship? The key to discipleship is the ability to submit yourself to the will of God, to put aside your agenda and say, Not my will, but Thine. The first step is to deny yourself.
4. Read Hebrews 5:11-14. What is the evaluation of the Hebrews?
 - a. Dull of hearing. Hebrews 5:11
 - b. Their growth is stunted. Hebrews 5:12
 - c. They are unskillful in the Word. Hebrews 5:13
 - d. Meat goes only to the mature who through practice have sharpened their skills, and their discernment. Hebrews 5:14
5. In reading Hebrews 5:11-14, explain what is meant by milk and meat.
Milk is "knowing" the Word; meat is "doing" the Word.
6. Describe those for whom it is impossible to renew unto repentance (Hebrews 6:4-6).
 - a. They were once enlightened.

- b. They have tasted the heavenly gift.
 - c. They are partakers of the Holy Spirit (partnership).
 - d. They have tasted the Word of God and the powers.
 - e. They have fallen alongside.
7. How did He encourage the Hebrew Christians? Hebrews 6:9-20
- a. He expressed optimism for their fruitfulness. Hebrews 6:9
 - b. He recognized or acknowledged their track record of ministry toward the saints. Hebrews 6:10
 - c. He desired their diligence to the end. Hebrews 6:11
 - d. He desired no slothfulness, but imitation of fruitful saints. Hebrews 6:12
 - e. He indicated that faith and patience are the road to blessing. Hebrews 6: 12
 - f. God thus confirms His heirs via the oath. Hebrews 6:17
 - g. He gives us encouragement to grab hold of hope as an anchor. Hebrews 6:18
 - h. Our forerunner is Jesus who has gone behind the veil. Hebrews 6:20

Chapter 4

1. What relationship did Melchisedec have to Abraham?
 - a. Abraham paid tithes to Melchisedec. Hebrews 7:2
 - b. The better blesses the lesser. Hebrews 7:7
 - c. Levi paid tithes in Abraham. Hebrews 7:9
2. What is the meaning of the name Melchisedec? God is my righteousness.
3. Why should another priestly order be called that is not after the order of Aaron?
 - a. The law did not bring perfection.
 - b. If Melchisedec was an eternal priest, then his was a higher order than Levi's.
 - c. We move to a better covenant because it is not dependent upon what we do; it is dependent upon what God has done.
 - d. It was an everlasting covenant.
 - e. Christ brought a permanent sacrifice, not a temporary sacrifice.
 - f. Melchisedec was basically a foreshadowing of Christ, which classifies the new High Priest as eternal.
4. Where is perfection? Perfection is at the end, the goal at glorification.
5. What is ontological salvation? It is the salvation of your personhood. This salvation is a perfecting salvation in which you are brought to your end goal. An ontologically saved person will go to heaven, and his works will be judged in order to receive rewards or loss. A salvation which is not ontological is an imperfecting salvation. It is a works oriented (legalistic) salvation which is really no salvation at all.
6. What are the better promises upon which the New Covenant is established?
 - a. The promise of grace. Hebrews 8:6-9
 - b. It is a promise of inner change. Hebrews 8:10
 - c. It is the promise of immediacy. Hebrews 8:11
 - d. The promise of sins forgiven. Hebrews 8:12
 - e. The promise of eternal blessing.
7. Compare mediated knowledge as over against immediate knowledge. Mediated knowledge is to know about God through someone or something but not to know God directly. Immediate knowledge is to know directly without a medium between. In the OT there was a priest who took your problems to God, and a prophet who told you what God wanted you to do. That was mediated knowledge. Now we can take our problems to God and talk directly with God without that medium, and that is immediacy.

Chapter 5

1. Describe the first tabernacle and the process.
 1. It is on earth. Hebrews 9:1. The process was a divine service but was held in a worldly sanctuary.
 2. It symbolized things to come. Hebrews 9:2-5. Those symbols included the tabernacle's arrangement and the furnishings which pointed to things in the future.
 3. It was inaccessible to the people. Hebrews 9:6-7. The priests and the high priests exclusively went into it.
 4. It was temporary. Hebrews 9:8. The Holy Spirit's entrance was not yet manifest.
 5. It was ineffective for changing hearts. Hebrews 9:9-10. External cleansing was accomplished.
2. Describe the second tabernacle and the process.
 1. It is heavenly and not made with human hands. Hebrews 9:11
 2. It is effective for changing lives. Hebrews 9:12-23
 - a. Jesus offered His own blood which is efficacious for purging your conscience so that you can serve God. Hebrews 9:12-14
 - b. Jesus mediates the New Testament through death. Hebrews 9:15-22.
 - c. Patterns and symbols were cleansed by lower blood, but heavenly things required divine blood. Hebrews 9:23
 3. Christ enters the true heaven rather than the earthly figure. Hebrews 9:24
 4. It is based on the completed sacrifice. Hebrews 9:25-28
3. What are the characteristics of Christ's sacrifice?
 1. It takes away sin. Hebrews 10:1-10
 - a. The Old Testament sacrifices did not take away sin. Hebrews 10:1-4
 - b. The Lord's sacrifice was effective for taking away sin. Hebrews 10: 5-10
 2. It need never be repeated. Hebrews 10:11-18. He sat down on the right Hand of God.
 - a. It is progressively bringing the enemies into submission. Hebrews 10:13
 - b. It is effectively perfecting those being sanctified. Hebrews 10:14
3. It opens the way to God. Hebrews 10:19-39
 - a. The way is explained in Hebrews 10:19-21. The veil here is His body.
 - b. What is the invitation in Chapter 10? Hebrews 10:22-25
 - (1) Draw near. Hebrews 10:22.
 - (2) Hold fast. (Make and keep your commitment.) Hebrews 10:23
 - (3) Consider one another. Hebrews 10: 24. Provoke one another.
4. What are the exhortations/warnings of Chapter 10?
 - a. Willful sin receives judgment not sacrifice. Hebrews 10:26-27
 - b. God will take vengeance on His people. Hebrews 10:30.
 - c. Remember your past afflictions and hold onto your confidence which brought you through them. Hebrews 10:32-35.
 - d. You must be tested. Hebrews 10: 36.
 - e. The just shall live by faith. Hebrews 10:38.
5. What are the nine steps of apostasy?
 1. Get on the bank. Hebrews 2:1
 2. Neglect your great salvation. Hebrews 2:3
 3. Harden. Hebrews 3:8
 4. Unbelief. Hebrews 3:12, 15
 5. Lack of fear. Hebrews 4:1
 6. No rest. Hebrews 4:3
 7. Become dull. Hebrew 5:11
 8. Fall aside or fall along side. Hebrews 6:6
 9. Willfully sinning. Hebrews 10:26
6. In what ways was the sacrificial system of the Old Covenant typical or the shadow of Jesus' sacrifice?
 1. Sanctuary: The tabernacle was a shadow of heaven. Hebrews 9:1.
 2. Sacrifice: The blood of animals foreshadowed the blood of Christ. Hebrews 9:12-18.

3. Priest: The High Priest foreshadowed Christ. Hebrews 9:11.
4. Covenant: Law foreshadowed grace. Hebrews 10:1.
5. Efficacy: Covering foreshadowed removal. Hebrews 10:1-10.
6. Ritual: Repetition foreshadowed “once for all.” Hebrews 10:10-11.
7. Access: Veil foreshadowed Jesus’ body. Hebrews 10:19-20.
8. Judgment: Death foreshadows vengeance. Hebrews 10:26-31.

Chapter 6

1. What is the description of faith?
 1. It is the substance of things hoped for. Hebrews 11:1.
 2. It is the evidence of things not seen. Hebrews 11:1.
 3. It is the instrument of a good report. Hebrews 11:2
 4. It is the instrument of understanding creation by the Word of God. Hebrews 11:3
2. Describe the exhortation to run the race.
 1. There is a great cloud of witnesses. Hebrews 12:1.
 2. Lay aside all weights and besetting sins. Hebrews 12:1.
 3. Run with endurance/patience. Hebrews 12:1.
 4. Run the race that is given to you. Hebrews 12:1.
 5. Look at Jesus’ example. Hebrews 12:2.
 - a. He did it for future joy.
 - b. He endured the cross and shame.
 - c. He was exalted later after death.
 6. Consider how Christ endured opposition. This consideration will help to prevent weariness and fainting. Hebrews 12:3.
3. What does lay aside every weight mean?

It means that every hindrance such as lack of faith, rebellion, and attachment to this world must be laid aside. Hebrews 12:1-3 (summary). Also good things, which are enemies of the best, must be laid aside. It is difficult to lay these things aside.
4. How is the race God’s way of chastening you to perfection?
 1. You have not yet been killed. Hebrews 12:4. You are alive, and you are still in the race. It is time to get your hands up, strengthen your knees, point your feet in the right direction.
 2. You may have forgotten that chastening comes to sons. Heb. 12:5-11
 3. We are to get tough and get on our paths. Hebrews 12:12-14
 4. Watch out for bitterness. Hebrews 12:15
5. What are the warnings for this final race?
 1. You can sell your final glory like Esau did. Hebrews 12:16-17
 2. Your access to God brings great responsibility. Hebrews 12:18-24
 3. There is no escape from having your race judged. Hebrews 12:25-27
 4. Serve God with reverence and fear for He is a consuming fire. Heb. 12: 28-29

Chapter 7

What are the eight exhortations in Chapter 13?

1. Continue in brotherly love. Hebrews 13: 1-4
 - a. With strangers, vs. 1
 - b. With prisoners, vs. 3
 - c. With sufferers, vs. 3
 - d. In marriage, vs. 4.
2. There is to be no covetousness. Heb. 13:5-6
3. Remember your past leaders. Hebrews 13:7-9.
4. Go to the “outside” altar. Hebrews 13:10-14.
5. Offer sacrifices. Hebrews 13:15-16
 - a. These should include words of praise that come out of your mouth.
 - b. Actions of doing good and sharing.
6. Obey and submit to leaders. Hebrews 13:17
7. Pray for leaders. Hebrews 13:18-19.
8. Suffer the Word of exhortation. Heb. 13: 22

GLOSSARY

Agape love: unilateral sacrifice for the welfare of another.

Allegory: the symbolic expression of a deeper meaning through a story or scene (Dictionary).

Analogy: a comparison between two things that are similar in some respects, often used to help explain something or make it easier to understand (Dictionary).

Angels: spiritual ministers to the saints.

Atonement: in Christian belief, the reconciliation between God and people brought about by the death of Jesus Christ (Dictionary).

Chrism: anointment. In the Old Testament the anointment came down upon the people; in the New Testament the anointment is within the people.

Churchianity: a Christianity that is shaped by the institutional church rather than by the Lord Himself.

Cliché: a phrase or word that has lost its original effectiveness or power from overuse (Dictionary).

Covenant: two-way agreement.

Dialogue: a discussion or negotiation between two or more people.

Discipleship: to deny yourself, pick up your cross, and follow Jesus (Bible).

Efficacious: has the power to accomplish something supernaturally in you.

Exile: unwilling absence from your own country or home, whether enforced by a government or court as a punishment, or imposed for political or religious reasons (Dictionary).

Glorification: The third part of salvation. Glorification follows after sanctification that in turn occurs after justification. Glorification is when the Christian leaves the temporal life on earth and enters heaven where God will glorify him proportionally to how he has walked his sanctification walk.

Gnosticism: putting your faith in knowledge which is deemed salvific in and of itself.

Hedonism: a self-indulgent devotion to pleasure and happiness as a way of life.

High Priest: The High Priest is the Priest that has direct access to God. Prior to the New Testament, the High Priest was of Aaronic (the

Levitical Tribe) descent. Jesus is now our permanent and eternal High Priest, and He is at the right hand of God the Father with total access to the Father.

Homosexuality: sexual attraction to, and sexual relations with, members of the same sex (Dictionary).

Hypostasis: the word for person in Greek. Christ and the Holy Spirit are the express image of God the Father and therefore each are a *hypostasis* of God (Hebrews 1:3). It literally means the person that stands under an essence.

Irenaeus: an early Christian whose theological picture of the atonement, goes like this: Jesus was standing there on earth as a human being, and Satan came at Him and said to Him, "I am going to kill you. I am going to bury you, I am going to come at you with all my power." Jesus looked at Satan and said to him, "You can come at me with all the power in the world. You can take all the demonic power of darkness and come at me, and I am going to defeat you. I am going to defeat you by doing nothing more than submitting my will to my Father. By giving my will to my Father (denying myself, taking up my cross, and following the Father) I am going to win."

Justification: The first part of salvation. The imputing of God's righteousness to an individual. It is the gateway into salvation.

Kenosis: Based on Philippians 2:5-11, it is the emptying of oneself which is required for the Christian to walk as a disciple. It is to walk as Jesus walked in his downward path, not up to temporal glory as described of Satan in Isaiah 14:12-14. It is a path of suffering and sacrifice in which the exaltation comes only after death.

King: downward orientation. That means, then, that he is ruling over things. A king is a steward, a ruler, he exercises dominion over things, and he does so in order to bring about glory to the Lord, or profit for His kingdom.

Law of the harvest: The law of the harvest is that the one who sows to the flesh will reap corruption or if you sow to the Spirit, you will reap life.

Miracle: An act of God that is contradictory to the laws of nature.

Ontological: has to do with the essence of being. In humans, it is dealing with your actual personhood.

Partakers: to share or take part in something (Dictionary).

Politically correct: To seek the praise of man by making no waves in the political culture of the government that says you should fit in with the mores of society so that you will be accepted as a good citizen.

Pornographic: sexually explicit and intended to cause sexual arousal (Dictionary).

Predicament: a difficult, unpleasant, or embarrassing situation from which there is no clear or easy way out (Dictionary).

Priest: A person who takes the people's concerns to God. He intercedes for the people. A priest's orientation is to face God with his back to the people.

Prophet: A person who speaks for God. A prophet's orientation is facing the people with his back to God, and he speaks for God. He gives the message that God has given him for the people.

Provocation: something that makes somebody angry or indignant (Dictionary). The provocation spoken of here is when God provoked Egyptian Pharaoh to release the Israelites from slavery to go to the Promised Land. Also, the Israelites provoked God when they refused to enter the Promised Land. God then sentenced them to wander in the wilderness for 40 years.

Provoke to love: to provoke you to downward, sacrificial ministry for someone's welfare.

Provoke to good works: to get someone to do God's ministry.

Rest: a change of operation. God's work of creation was done in six days, and then God's work changed. We call that change "rest," but that rest is the new economy of God for

His creation; it is the "managing of the creation under God's Laws."

Sanctification: The second part of salvation. The path walked by the Christian after justification. The walk should be a *kenotic* walk following Jesus. Jesus' path was downward to total sacrifice of self.

Scatter the sheep: to attract God's sheep (people) from doing the work of God to doing work of someone or something else such as "church" work. Church work should be God's work, but frequently it is work that simply enhances the organization for the organization's or someone else's gain.

Stewardship: taking care of God's business. A steward is somebody who manages the property, finances, or household of another (Dictionary).

Synthesis: the process of combining different ideas, influences, or objects into a new whole (Dictionary).

Testament: a one-way agreement made effectual by the death of the testator.

Theology: literally, it is the study of God. The study of the Scriptures for the purpose of discovering God's doctrines.

Tradition: a long established custom or belief that has been handed down from generation to generation.

Transgression: Literally to step over the boundary. The committing of acts that violate God's Law.

Upside-down *kenosis*: Based on Isaiah 14:12-14, it is the walk similar to Satan's which seeks temporal glory.

Vicarious: experienced through another person.

Yoke: a wooden frame for harnessing two workers together. In this light, taking God's yoke upon you means that the work is done by both, but since God has total power, the actual work is done by God, but the Christian must be along in the yoke with God.

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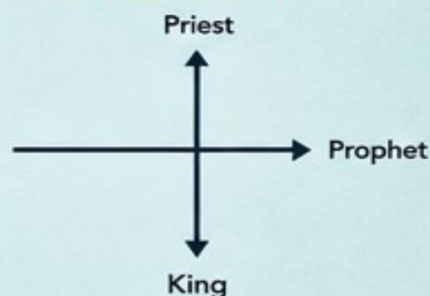
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