

**Twelve Lessons**

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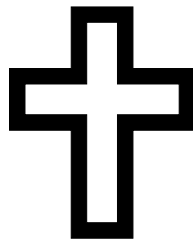
# **Hebrews**

**(Volume I – Chapters 1-8)**

*Compiled and Written*

*by*

*Andy Simpson, Th.D., D.D.*



**Macedonia Baptist College**

**9690 Highway 601**

**Midland, N.C. 28107**

**(704) 784-4200**

**\$6.00**

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

During many years of study and preparation of educational material, we at Macedonia Baptist College have developed the philosophy that one should glean from every source and experience available. The following lessons have been gleaned from many sources, many sermons, and many life experiences. We continually encourage the students of Macedonia Baptist College to purchase a variety of resource material on each subject they wish to study. This allows the student to be exposed to the varying opinions of each author.

We wish to acknowledge those authors from which the content of this lesson book was developed. The listing of any particular book or author does not necessarily reflect agreement on the part of Macedonia Baptist College with the content. These resources are recommended for an exhaustive study of this subject.

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## **CHRIST: A BETTER MESSENGER – LESSON 1**

### **Hebrews 1:1-3**

**Introduction:** The whole purpose of the Epistles to the Hebrews is to reveal the superiority of Christ in relation to all other revelations of God’s Word. Christ is “better”! In the first chapter, Paul establishes the Preeminence of Christ above all other forms of revelation. Our focus in this lesson will be on verses 1 through 3, keeping in mind the fact that Paul is showing the Jewish people how Christ is “better” than the prophets. These first verses are a comparison of the revelation of truth in the Old and New Testament.

### **Lesson Goals:**

1. Examine the manner in which God has revealed His divine will to mankind.
2. Magnify the Lord Jesus Christ by disclosing the characteristics which make Him superior to all others.

### **Definitions of Important Terms/Phrases:**

1. Inspiration – The infusion of ideas into the mind by the Holy Spirit; the conveying into the minds of men, ideas, notices or monitions by extraordinary or supernatural influence; or the communication of the divine will to the understanding by suggestions or impressions on the mind, which leave no room to doubt the reality of their supernatural origin.
2. Progressive Mention Principle – “that principle by which God makes the revelation of any given truth increasingly clear as the Word proceeds to its consummation.”
3. Effulgence – A flood of light; great luster or brightness; splendor; as the effulgence of divine glory. It is a word of superlative signification, and applied, with peculiar propriety, to the sun and to the Supreme Being.

## **I. THE PRINCIPLES OF GOD’S REVELATION** – vs. 1 – “*God... spake*”

### **A. God’s Revelation Is Inspired** – “*God*”

1. Revelation is a Gift from God
  - a. Make no mistake in this area. The only source of illumination in this world of darkness is a loving and giving God. Without the gift of God’s inspiration man would still be groping at the wall of spiritual blindness. How did we get the revelation of the Word? It was a gift!
  - b. How can we mention inspiration without quoting II Tim. 3:16 – “*All scripture is given by inspiration of God...*” The Spirit of God breathed into a select group of humanity the gift of God’s revelation.
2. Revelation is by the Grace of God
  - a. In no way was a Holy and Righteous God obligated to reveal Himself to rebellious, sinful humanity. His sovereign choice to establish relations with man was totally an unmerited favor.
  - b. In the darkness of Satan’s night, God spake, and there was light!
  - c. Andrew Murray – “Speaking is the vehicle of fellowship.” The problem facing humanity was the fact that God spoke a language that we could not understand. It was a foreign language. A language of another world. It was heavenly.
  - d. Illustrate – Why do men wish to speak in languages other than their native tongue? The answer: To understand and learn more about persons from foreign lands. Some hire a tutor to explain words they cannot understand. God knew this and when He had spoken His “foreign” language in the prophets and His Son, He provided the greatest tutor the world has ever seen, the Holy Ghost. John 14:26 – “*But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.*” Comforter = “paraklete” – “Someone called alongside to help”. Help with what? The celestial language!

### **B. God’s Revelation Is Incremental** – “*at sundry times and in divers manners*”

1. Sundry Times = “polumeros (pol-oo-mer'-oce)” – It means “in many portions, by many portions, by many times and in many ways.” In divers manners = “polutropos (pol-oot-rop'-oce)” – It is an adverb from the same compound as “polumeros” and is defined as “many ways, i.e. variously as to method or form”
2. Paul is including the thousands of illustrations, types, metaphors, similes, parables, symbols, and historical stories of the Old Testament that pointed to the full revelation of God which is Christ Jesus.
3. God has chosen to reveal Himself progressively in the Old Testament. In this verse of the Hebrews, the following cliché applies. “The Old Testament is the New Testament concealed.” The Old Testament prophets were given truth in fragments.
4. There is a principle in Hermeneutics called the Progressive Mention Principle. J. Edwin Hartill defines it

as “that principle by which God makes the revelation of any given truth increasingly clear as the Word proceeds to its consummation.” This principle is evident throughout the Word of God.

5. Examples of this progression from Dr. Oliver B. Green.
  - a. Gen. 3:15 – Christ would bruise the head of Satan and provide salvation to all who believe.
  - b. Gen. 12:3 – God reveals to Abraham that Christ will be the head of the nation of Abraham’s seed.
  - c. Gen. 49:10 – God reveals to Jacob which tribe the Messiah will come from - Judah.
  - d. Ps. 132:11 – David was shown that Christ would come through his lineage.
  - e. Micah 5:2 – Christ would be born in Bethlehem.
  - f. Mal. 3:1 – Christ would have forerunner before him to prepare the way.
6. So we see, God spoke in different times and also in different methods. He used visions, dreams, visible structures, and the events of men’s lives, with each adding more revealed truth concerning Christ.

### **C. God’s Revelation Is Introductory** – “*by the prophets*”

1. Progressive Mention leads to Full mention. In the same way that John the Baptist prepared the way for the Lord Jesus Christ, The prophets prepared the way for the First Advent of Christ. John stated “*I am a voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias.*” John 1:23. John recognized that he was only one voice among many!
2. God spake by the prophets that He might speak by His son. Both are vitally connected. The purpose of every type, shadow, and prophecy in the OT was for the preparation of the coming Christ.
3. The purpose of the OT prophets was to summon the hearer and Christ was revealed to satisfy the hearer!

### **D. God’s Revelation Is Infinite** – “*Hath... spoken unto us by his son*”

1. Here we have the Full Mention. The Revelation of Christ who is “*the fullness of the Godhead bodily*” according to Colossians 2:9.
2. There are only 2 events in the New Testament where God spake. (Excluding the prophecies of Revelation)
  - a. Baptism of Jesus – Matt. 17:5 – “*This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him*”
  - b. Transfiguration – “*This is my beloved Son: hear him*”The only command of God the Father found in the New Testament is “HEAR HIM”! This is because Christ is the perfect revelation of God.
3. It is significant that God spake the command “hear him” at Jesus’ Baptism and Transfiguration. These two events represent the areas in which infinite revelation of God is realized.
  - a. The Baptism – The revelation of God is infinite concerning the Redemption of Christ.
  - b. The Transfiguration – The revelation of God is infinite concerning the Reign of Christ.
4. Ephesians 3:10-11 – “*...might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God. According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord:*” The word manifold is “polupoikilos (pol-oo-poy'-kil-os)” and means the “much variegated, i.e. multifarious.” It simply means “the many-colored” wisdom of God. The wisdom of God is like adding one drop of tinting to 20,000 colors. One drop makes 40,000 and the colors double with every drop of tint. That is the revelation of Christ. When you think you know everything, God drops one drop of tinting and there is that much more to enjoy!
5. Though Christ also holds the office of a prophet He is not mentioned as such in this passage. Paul is emphasizing the contrast between Christ and the Prophets. The reason Christ is the fullness of the Godhead bodily is because He and the Father are one. Christ is not only an expression of holiness, His essence is holiness. He Is God!

## **II. THE PERFECTION OF GOD’S REVELATION** – vs. 2-3 – “*spoken... by his son*”

### **A. The Elect of God’s Possessions** – “*appointed heir of all things*”

1. The word “appointed” reveals the will of God in “placing” Christ to an exalted position. The use of this word is almost surprising since we know that Christ is in fact the heir to all God has. Why would God need to “appoint” Him to a position He already had. The use of the word denotes the importance God places on the declaration of His Son as being heir. The Word of God records the declaration.
2. The second important word we find in this verse is “heir”. It may be defined as “one who shares in possession; an inheritor.” Jesus Christ is the focal point of God’s plans and purposes in the world. The purpose of God for creation is that His Son might have an inheritance. This inheritance is for the magnification of Jesus Christ, as He will be praised and blessed by creation throughout eternity.

### **B. The Engineer of God’s Purpose** – “*he made the worlds*”

1. Christ as the “Elect of God’s Possessions” manifests the end of all God has planned in creation, but in the same verse we find that Christ is also the beginning.

2. The verb “made” is “poieo” and means Christ “constructed, formed, and produce” all that is in the created world.
3. The Apostle Paul wrote that “all things were created by him, and for him,” Colossians 1:16. This means Christ was the instrument God used to create the worlds, and also the worlds now operate by the authority of Christ. Christ created the world, and He also controls the world.
4. The term world is a key word in showing the magnitude of Christ’s power. The word is “aion” and basically means “an age.” The significance of the word is that it carries the idea of perpetuity. This means that everything in the world that carries over into eternity will also be controlled by Christ. He is the “appointed heir” forever.

**C. The Effulgence of God’s Presence** – *“the brightness of his glory”*

1. Jesus is better than the prophets because he is the “brightness” of God’s Glory. The word “brightness” is “apaugasma” and may be defined as “effulgence; shining forth; out-raying.”
2. The glory spoken of here is the Shekinah glory of God seen throughout the Old Testament. Here we see the substance of the shadow given to Israel. The shining forth represents the holiness of God and the many attributes that surround this essence of God. Jesus Christ is the Light of the World.

**D. The Expression of God’s Person** – *“the express image of his person”*

1. Here we are given a look at the “character” of God. Jesus was not merely a “likeness” of God, but he was the “express image” of God’s “person.” The phrase “expressed image” means that Christ was “an exact representation of God and all that God is.” Jesus Himself made the declaration that He was God Himself.
2. Some may question the divinity of Christ, but this verse clearly teaches otherwise. Jesus is the “substance” of God. I Tim. 3:16 states, *“God was manifest in the flesh...”*
3. The use “express image” reveals the “distinguishing” mark of Christ as a man. The distinguishing mark is that He was both God and man.

**E. The Embodiment of God’s Power** – *“upholding all things by the word of his power”*

1. In this statement, we are given great comfort concerning our future. Jesus “upholds all things.” This verb “upholding” is “phero” and means all things are resting upon the shoulders of Christ as He “bears” them.
2. Christ bears all things by the “word of his power.” The word power here is “dunamis (doo'-nam-is)”. It refers to “force; inherent power, power residing in a thing by virtue of its nature”. It includes all the power of heaven.
3. The fact that Christ upholds all things tells us that He not only was at the beginning of creation and will be at the end, but He is also in the middle.

**F. The Executer of God’s Plan** – *“he had by himself purged our sins”*

1. Christ personally executed the plan of God. He by Himself has “purged our sins.” Christ is superior because He did by Himself what no other could.
2. The word “purged” simply means Christ “cleansed, washed off, expiated” our sins. The Levitical priesthood had attempted to take away sins but failed because of the weakness of the priests. Christ offered Himself once and totally washed us from sin and the guilt associated with it.

**G. The Exception of God’s Priesthood** – *“sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high”*

1. Christ is the only priest of God that rested after He made His sacrifice. This act symbolized two very important things.
  - a. The work of Christ was finished. There is nothing to be added to salvation.
  - b. The words “sat down” mean that Christ “was appointed a seat.” Christ sat down because God the Father was pleased with the sacrifice He had made.
2. Christ has been seated at the right hand of God. The position is one of authority and majesty. Christ is the only High Priest that could attain such lofty heights. He was ordained by God. Acts 4:12 – *“Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.”*

## **CHRIST: A BETTER MINISTER – LESSON 2**

### **Hebrews 1:4-14**

**Introduction:** In verses 1 through 3, Paul introduces the fact that Christ is the perfect revelation of God. He is “better” than any other method God has used to reveal Himself. After declaring the preeminence of Christ, Paul begins to give 4 arguments supporting his statement. In chapter 1, Paul teaches that Christ is better than...

1. The Prophets – Christ is the fulfillment of every prophecy and law spoken by the prophets. See lesson 1.
2. The Angels – Christ has been given a more excellent name than the angels.

### **Lesson Goals:**

1. Introduce the fact that Christ is the perfect revelation of God.
2. Compare the ministry of angels with the ministry of Christ, showing His exalted position.
3. List the characteristics and qualities of Christ which declare His preeminence.

### **Things to consider:**

Paul’s use of the prophets and angels to show the superiority of Christ is very important in light of the fact that the recipients of his letter were Jewish. The Hebrews had great respect for both prophets and angels. They had been the sole source of God’s revelation to this point. However, Paul seeks to show how Christ far exceeds them. In the first lesson we illustrated how Christ is “better” than the prophets and in this lesson we will see how Christ’s ministry is “better” than that of angels. In verses 4-14, Paul quotes seven Old Testament passages to show the superiority of Christ. He uses the Old Testament exclusively because of the people to whom he was writing. Our study of this passage will be divided into two parts, angels and Christ, with the greater emphasis being placed upon Christ.

### **I. THE PURPOSE OF ANGELS** – Verse 7 is a quote from Psalms 104:4

#### **A. The Worship Of The Angels** – vs. 6-7 – “*Let all the angels... worship... his ministers a flame of fire*”

1. The word “ministers” here reveals their position before God. The Greek word is “leitourgos (li-toorg-os)” and means a “servant” but in the functionary sense a “worshipper of God”. Thus we see their purpose. It clearly spelled out for us in verse 6, “*Let all the angels of God worship him.*”
2. Revelation 5:11-12 – “*I heard the voice of many angels... saying... Worthy is the Lamb...*” Here we see the future worship of the angels concerning the Lord Jesus Christ and His kingdom.
3. The angels are the convoy of praise surrounding the Trinity. As soon as they were created they began the worship of God. In God’s answer to Job in Job 38:7 we see the angels or “stars shouted for joy.”
4. Angelic beings such as Lucifer were created for the sole purpose of God’s worship.
  - a. The cherubim are always connected with the throne of God and as seen in Revelation 4:8 we hear their cry “*Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.*” Their worship invoked the worship of all of heaven.
  - b. The seraphim are flaming angelic beings that have six wings which they use to cover their faces, to cover their feet, and to fly. These six wings are typical of their allegiance to the holiness of God.

#### **B. The Work Of The Angels** – vs. 14 – “*Are they not all ministering spirit, sent forth to minister?*”

1. Here the word “minister” is different than in verse 7. Here it is “diakonia” which refers to “service, ministering, especially of those who execute the commands of others.”
2. They are Employed to accomplish the Will of God
  - a. An angel pointed Hagar to a fountain.
  - b. An angel appeared before Joshua with a drawn sword.
  - c. Peter was released from prison by the power of an angel.
3. They Execute the Purposes of God
  - a. An angel blocked the pathway of Balaam’s ass in Numbers 22:22.
  - b. An angel of God was sent to kill Herod in Acts 12:23
  - c. God will use angels to harvest the tares of humanity and burn them in judgment. Matthew 13:37-43
4. They Enlighten the Believer – Philip was guided by an angel to meet the Ethiopian eunuch in Acts 8:26.
5. They Encourage the Believer
  - a. Daniel was protected by the angel of the Lord who stopped the mouth of the lions. Daniel 6:22
  - b. Christ was ministered to by the angels in Matthew 4:11 after the temptation of Satan.
  - c. Christ was also strengthened in the Garden of Gethsemane in Luke 22:43.
  - d. Elijah in a state of discouragement and depression was touched twice and fed by an angel.

## **II. THE PREEMINENCE OF CHRIST**

### **A. The Inheritance Of Christ** – vs. 4 – *“hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name”*

1. The phrase “hath by inheritance obtained” comes from one Greek word “kleronomeo” and means Christ has obtained a more excellent name by right of His inheritance. God allotted to Christ a more excellent name than the angels. Christ is entitled to His inheritance by reason of His legal right as Son.
2. Some have questioned the terminology of “being made” as if Christ did not have an excellent name before His redemptive work. Christ’s inheritance was given Him before the foundation of the world, but He could not be crowned with glory in the eyes of humanity until His work was completed. He didn’t need to obtain a more excellent name to prove His deity. Rather, He obtained a more excellent name to prove His love.
3. The Glorification of Christ as Saviour depended upon His fulfillment of the requirements of His work in the flesh. The life, death, burial, and resurrection of Christ justified God’s allotment of His inheritance to Christ and it also justified Christ’s claim to that inheritance.

### **B. The Identity Of Christ** – vs. 4 – *“obtained a more excellent name”*

1. Here we see a comparison of Christ with the Angels. In Scripture there are three prominent angels.
  - a. Michal – The Mighty Angel – He is associated with Warfare.
  - b. Gabriel – The Messenger Angel – He is associated with the Word.
  - c. Lucifer – The Musical Angel – He was to be associated with Worship.
2. Christ is better than the angels because He embodies every quality that any individual angel possesses.
  - a. Michal the Mighty Angel – Christ is the Lord of Host, Captain of Our Salvation
  - b. Gabriel the Messenger Angel – Christ is the Word made flesh.
  - c. Lucifer the Musical Angel – Christ has put a new song in our heart.
3. Hebrews 1:4-5 quotes two Old Testament Scriptures, Ps. 2:7 and II Sam. 7:14.
  - a. II Sam. 7:14 – *“I will be his father”* – This deals with Christ first coming. Christ has already proven His superiority to Gabriel. Gabriel was the Messenger, Christ is the Message.
  - b. Ps. 2:7 – *“This day have I begotten thee”* – This chapter primarily deals with the resurrection of Christ and testifies of His victory over sin. See the point on the Incarnation. In this chapter Christ was rejected and established. Christ has proven His superiority to Michal in that He overcame the grave and took the keys of death, hell and the grave. The battle has already been won.
  - c. Ps. 2:7 – *“I will declare the decree”* – This deals with Christ’s second coming. Christ will prove His superiority to Lucifer. Satan has been worshipped for 6,000 years, but Christ will cause him to bow and confess that Jesus is Lord.

### **C. The Incarnation Of Christ** – vs. 5 – *“Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee...”*

1. Christ has a “more excellent name” than the angels because He is God manifested in the flesh. The superiority of Christ to the angels is best illustrated in the nature of the salvation He won and this salvation is the whole purpose of the incarnation. The incarnation allowed Christ to taste death for every man.
2. The Incarnation is important in two aspects both which are seen in this passage.
  - a. His Entrance into Humanity – *“I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son”*
    - 1) This illustrates the son-relationship between Christ and the Father. This could never be revealed without the incarnation. This portion of the verse is a quote from II Sam. 7:14. It has reference to the kingship of Christ based upon His resurrection. If Christ had not passed the test of humanity He would have no right to inherit the kingdom from the Father.
    - 2) A contrast of II Sam.7:14 and Isaiah 53:3-7 will give us the key to the purpose of the incarnation.
      - a) Solomon is referenced in II Sam. 7:14. However, the passage is also prophetic concerning Christ and may be contrasted with Isa. 53:3-7. God states that if Solomon “commits iniquity” God will chastise him with the heathen.
      - b) Christ is referenced in Isa. 53:3-7. The key to the point of contrasting these two verses is to show that Christ was indeed God in the flesh. Christ who never committed iniquity, was beaten by the rod of men and suffered stripes. Yet, we see in verse 7 that *“he opened not his mouth.”* Only the Son of God incarnate in the flesh as the Son of Man could resist such temptation.
  - b. His Entrance into Office – *“Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee”*
    - 1) This portion of verse 5 is a quote from Psalms 2:7 and does not relate to the eternal generation of Christ but of Christ’s necessity of entering humanity to fulfill the office to which He has been ordained by God. That office is Priest-King.
    - 2) The sinless life of Christ, His baptism, sacrifice, death, and resurrection all are connected to the office of Christ as Priest and King. Christ justified His right to the Throne by perfectly completing

the commission given Him by the Father.

**D. The Infallibility Of Christ** – vs. 8 – “*O God*”

1. For years scholars of textual criticism have tried to change the meaning of verse 8. Many perversions of Scripture have read as follows: “*Thy throne is God*”. This of course is an attempt to discredit the claim that Christ is infallible and infinite. False teachers are trying to deny the Divinity of Christ. However, the Bible states “*Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever.*”
2. Verse 8-9 are quotes taken from Psalms 45:6-7. Psalms 45 is a chapter referring to Christ and the nation of Israel. It depicts the ascension of Christ to the throne. Here is how Christ is described.
  - a. vs. 3 – “*O most mighty*”
  - b. vs. 6 & 7 – “*God*”
  - c. vs. 11 – “*king and Lord*”
3. Scriptural Proof of Christ’s Deity
  - a. Christ identified Himself as God – John 8:58 – “*before Abraham was, I AM.*”
  - b. Jesus had creative power – John 1:1-3; Hebrews 1:3
  - c. Christ claimed Omnipotence – Matt. 28:18 – “*All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.*”
  - d. Christ claimed Omniscience – Mark 11:2-6 – Christ described the colt to be use in His entry.
  - e. Christ claimed Omnipresence – Matt. 18:20 – Christ promised to be where two or three gather.
4. The word God used in verse 8 is “theos” and means “a deity, especially the supreme Divinity”.

**E. The Inauguration Of Christ** – vs. 8&13 – “*Thy throne...is for ever and ever...*”

1. Verses 8 and 13 are closely linked together. They reveal the finished work of Christ in eternity.
2. There are six points in verses 8-13 that guarantee us Christ will reign on the throne of God.
  - a. “*Thy Throne*” – vs. 8 – The word throne here is “*thronos*” and means “a throne seat, a chair of state having a footstool.” It is a picture of kingly power and royalty. When used of Christ it portrays His partnership and assistance in divine administration.
  - b. “*Sceptre of righteousness*” – vs. 8 – The sceptre represents the authority Christ possesses as a result of His divine right to the throne. The sceptre is simply a rod or staff. It was used three ways.
    - 1) Shepherds used the rod to protect and guide their sheep. Christ as the Great Shepherd
    - 2) Sojourners like Abraham used the rod to lean upon as they journeyed. Christ as the Great Priest
    - 3) Kings used the rod to execute the severest and most rigorous rule. Christ as the Great KingChrist redeemed us with righteousness, intercedes by righteousness and will rule by righteousness.
  - c. “*God hath anointed thee*” – vs. 9 – This anointing speaks of the ascension of Christ to the throne. The practice of anointing was a rite of consecration to some sacred position. The anointing was for three offices in the OT. Prophet, Priest, and King. Christ has been anointed for all three.
  - d. “*Thou, Lord, in the beginning*” – vs. 10 – Christ has a legal right to His redemption and reign of creation. According to Revelation 5, Christ, the Lion of Judah and the Root of David, is alone worthy of opening and claiming the title deed to the earth and the heavens.
  - e. “*Thou art the same*” – vs. 12 – Christ is immutable. He will be inaugurated as King because He will always remain the same. The word same is “*autos*” and simply means “himself”. Our English word “automatic” is derived from this root. The immutability of Christ just comes natural. No wonder Hebrews 13:8 states “*Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.*”
  - f. “*Until I make thine enemies thy footstool*” – vs. 13 – Remember the Throne of God has a footstool at the bottom. The Greek word here is “*hupopodion*” and means “to make one a footstool of one’s feet, that is, to subject, to reduce under one’s power”. Metaphorically, it is taken from the practice of conquerors who placed their feet on the necks of their conquered enemies. I Cor. 15:25-27 – “*For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For he hath put all things under his feet...*”

**F. The Intercession Of Christ** – vs. 13 – “*Sit on my right hand...*”

1. His Excellent Position
  - a. As in Heb.1:3, we see again the fact that Christ is the only exception of the priesthood. All other priest had to minister daily without rest, but Christ so effected His ministry as high priest that He only needed to make one sacrifice.
  - b. The word “sit” is “*kathemai* (kath'-ay-mahee)” and means “to sit down; and in a figurative sense, to remain, reside, or dwell.” In the courtroom, the act of sitting represents the close of a case. All of the evidence has been presented and it is now time for a verdict. The verdict is “Guilty, but paid in full.”
2. His Excellent Purpose
  - a. To Cleanse the Believer – Ephesians 5:25 tells us that Christ is washing the Church in order to present her to the Father. Through His work as our High Priest He intercedes on our behalf.

## **A PARENTHETICAL WARNING: THE DANGER OF DRIFTING – LESSON 3**

### **Hebrews 2:1-4**

**Introduction:** In this passage, Paul inserts a warning to the church concerning the danger of not taking the things of God seriously. His choice of words describes the indifferent attitude of the church.

### **Lesson Goals:**

1. Apply the warning of Paul to Christians today.
2. Encourage students to seize every opportunity to serve God with sobriety and sincerity.

### **Definitions of Important Terms/Phrases:**

1. “*Slip*” – The word here is “pararrhueo” and carries the thought of “gliding by: flowing by; or being carried by.” It is best illustrated by a drifting boat that slowly moves by the landing, while those on board are unaware of impending danger such as a waterfall. This word is used to describe carelessness or forgetfulness.
2. “*Neglect*” – vs. 3 – The word here is “ameleo (am-el-eh'-o)” and means “to be careless of: to make light of, to disregard”.

### **Things to consider:**

1. The Problem of Paul – The key to understanding Paul’s message of warning is to realize the condition of the people to whom he is writing. These Jews, who had turned from the old covenant to embrace the teachings of Christ, were now experiencing tremendous persecution from the leaders of Judaism. Those most severely persecuted had begun to forsake the assembling of the Church. Their acceptance in Judaism seemed more attractive than their sufferings as followers of Christ. Here we see the underlying reason for all neglect and carelessness. These Jews were more interested in their own will than the will of God. The nature of man leans in the direction of the desires of his flesh. As Adam and Eve carelessly partook of the fruit forbidden by God’s commandment, so these Jews had turned from the teachings of the New Testament to the apostasy of Judaism. The nature of man always seeks the path of least resistance.
2. The Problem of Today – There is an attitude of carelessness and indifference among God’s people today. The allurements of the world have captured the attention of our flesh. Instead of giving ourselves to prayer and the study of the Word, we seek to fulfill the cravings of our sinful nature. We are not as serious about serving God as we would like everyone to think. Therefore, Paul’s warning is relevant for today.
3. The Danger of Drifting – Drifting is very easy. Before we realize, we may be moving beyond opportunities to serve God. Drifting is also costly. We can not afford to let the Word of God slip. The thought of drifting is associated with the current of the river. God has a “main current” for every believer’s life. If we are not flowing in the main current it is because of an undermining influence, an undercurrent that is causing us to drift.
4. Paul focuses his warning on three areas. We need to get serious in these areas.

## **I. THE SERIOUSNESS OF THE SCRIPTURES** – vs. 1

### **A. Hear The Scriptures** – “...*the things which we have heard*”

1. The word “heard” here refers to those things “reported to us which we have perceived and understood.” Romans 10:17 – “*Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.*” It is the “hearing” of God’s Word that produces faith.
2. The importance of hearing the truth is as follows: You must know the truth before you can detect error. The greatest problem in the church today is the lack of understanding God’s Word. Ignorance from the pulpit to the pew is damning our children, and hindering the power of God.
3. Illustration – A preacher asked his pastor friend, “Do you have a deaf ministry at your church?” The pastor replied, “No, but sometimes I think the whole congregation needs a deaf ministry because they don’t seem to hear much of what I say!”
4. There is more involved in hearing than simply listening. Hebrews 4:2 – “...*but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.*” The same message will benefit some while others are never moved. Why? They do not possess true faith. James 1:22-25 teaches that real faith causes a man to put into action that which he has heard.

### **B. Heed The Scriptures** – “*therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed...*”

1. The word “heed” means to “pay attention to; to be cautious about, apply oneself to, adhere to.”
2. Paul qualifies the importance of heeding by the use of the phrase “more earnest”. This simply means

“superabundantly more.” It means we should apply ourselves to the Word of God as if we are facing a life or death situation. After all, the souls of men weigh in the balances. This is more than a life or death situation. It is an eternal destiny!

**C. Hold The Scriptures** – “...lest at any time we let them slip”

1. How many times have we been convicted of some sin of commission or omission by the Spirit in a church service or personal prayer time? What is our response to that impression of the Holy Spirit? So many times hours and even days go by without recollection of the burden of sin. We have let it slip.
2. The word slip implies a slow progression. Such is the case with all indifference.
3. Psalms 119:11 gives us the key to victory over drifting. “*Thy Word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee,*” The word “hid” means to “hoard or reserve” the Word in our hearts.
4. One of the greatest sins in the Church today is the neglect of the Holy Scriptures. Ignorance is prevalent in our pulpits and pews. God commands us to grow in the Lord. II Peter 3:18 – “*But grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.*” The word grow here is “auxano” and means “to cause to grow, to augment; to increase, to become greater.” It is used of inward Christian growth.

**II. THE SERIOUSNESS OF SIN** – vs. 2

**A. Disregarding The Word** – “*transgression*”

1. The word “transgression” is “parabasis” carries with it the idea of “going over.” Metaphorically, it involves disregarding, or violating a definite, promulgated, ratified law. By promulgation we stress the fact that God has declared certain boundaries which we are never to cross.
2. There are some places where God has posted “NO TRESPASSING” signs. To cross the line is to disregard the Word of God and invite the judgment of God.
3. Be careful not to become indifferent and careless about the boundaries God has set. Proverbs 14:9 – “*Fools make a mock at sin.*” The word “mock” paints a picture of a man who makes light of transgressing God’s law. This foolish man arrogantly scorns the regulations of God as if they are meaningless.
4. The classic verse used to show God’s seriousness concerning sin is Galatians 6:7 – “*Be not deceived, God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap.*” The Greek word for mocked here is similar to the Hebrew word used in Proverbs 14:9. The word is “mukterizo (mook-tay-rid’-zo)” and is used to describe a person who turns up their nose at the Word of God in rebellion and ridicule.

**B. Disobeying The Word** – “*disobedience*”

1. The use of disobedience simply means that after one has heard the truth they go ahead and do their own desires without regard to the warning or command. It may be illustrated by a child who has been warned over and over not to play near the road.
2. Disobedience involves both sins of omission and commission. All through the Bible we see instances where God reveals He is serious about obedience.
  - a. When God tells you to do something, He is Serious. Examples are Jonah and Ezekiel.
  - b. When God tells you not to do something, He is Serious. Examples are Adam, Eve, Moses, and Achan.
3. The word disobedience may be best defined as “a breach of duty prescribed by authority.” It may seem as though the use of transgression and obedience is redundant. However, disobedience represents a greater state of sin. The disobedient Christian does so after being directly instructed by the Holy Spirit. The word disobedience portrays the action of “ignoring instruction or warning.”
4. Illustration – A child may be told not to touch the red hot stove by a loving parent. However, the child’s inattention to warning and disobedience will cause him to be burned.

**C. Despising The Word** – Hebrews 10:28-29

1. Hebrews 10:28-29 is a perfect parallel to the teaching of Paul in Hebrews 2:2. Sin against the Law pales in comparison to the punishment of sinning against Grace.
2. Hebrews 10:29 describes the punishment as being “much sorer” for those who trod under their feet the Lord Jesus Christ. This means a more aggravated punishment; a punishment that will be much worse.
3. The greatest sin is not that which is against Law, but that which is against Love. God is serious about sin because of two major reasons.
  - a. The Cost of Sin – I Peter 1:18-19 – “*Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.*”
  - b. The Consequence of Sin – Romans 6:23 – “*For the wages of sin is death.*” Every sin committed

lays a heavier weight upon the back of the Lord Jesus.

### **III. THE SERIOUSNESS OF SALVATION** – vs. 3-4

#### **A. There Is No Escape** – “*How shall we escape...?*”

1. Apart from the great salvation provided by Christ there is no “place of safety and security.” Paul describes our salvation as being great!
  - a. Great because of What we are saved from. The Condemnation of Hell!
  - b. Great because of What we are saved to. The splendor heaven and eternal life!
  - c. Great because of Who we are saved by. Christ is superior to all!
2. The message Paul is trying to get across is that if God was so serious about the Old Covenant, how much more serious is He about the New Covenant.
  - a. The Old Covenant had Inferior Messengers – The Old Testament was revealed through the prophets and angels. The Old Testament was a progressive revelation. The New Testament is a complete revelation. Everything God had to say to man and will ever say to man is embodied in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ.
  - b. The Old Covenant had an Inferior Mediator – Galatians 3:19 states “*(The Law)...was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator.*” The law was given by angels through Moses to the people. But the Bible says in Hebrews 8:6 “*But now hath he (Christ) obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises.*”

#### **B. There Is No Excuse** – “*God also bearing them witness*”

1. The Witness of the Saviour – “*which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord*” – The great salvation is not the wild imagination of a mad man. It is the spoken Word.
2. The Witness of the Saints – “*confirmed unto us by them that heard him*” – The apostles reported that what He said He performed. They were eyewitnesses to His work of redemption. The word “confirmed” means they “corroborated” what was said. Their testimony “strengthened” the witness of the great salvation.
3. The Witness of Signs – “*both with signs and wonders...*”
  - a. Signs for the Jews – “*signs and wonders*”
  - b. Signs for the Gentiles – “*divers miracles*”
  - c. Signs for the Church – “*gifts of the Holy Ghost*”
4. God has left all men without excuse. You can not get around the Great Salvation.

**Conclusion:** One of the best illustrations of personal responsibility in service is the maintenance of the Golden Candlestick in the Tabernacle. The candlestick was the only source of light for the priests in the Holy Place. Every morning the priest would trim the wick so the oil could flow freely and the flame burn bright. The brilliance of the candlestick’s light was dependent upon the discipline of the priests. If we are to have a testimony of the “better” Saviour and Salvation, someone must trim the wick every day. Be careful not to drift!

A closing illustration – A man once took his family to a local river to enjoy a day of swimming. At the close of the trip the dad told his young children to stay in the shallow water while he took a short swim. After swimming for several minutes the dad began floating on his back to rest before heading to shore. After a few short minutes of floating he suddenly heard screaming coming from the bank of the river. Immediately upon hearing the screams he looked to see that his youngest son had left the safety of the shallow waters to venture into the middle of the river. The water was too deep for the young man and he was overcome by the strong current. Upon seeing the dangerous situation the father began swimming frantically in the direction of the child. Because the father had drifted such a long distance down the river, he was only able to reach his son after he had been drowned by the water. There the father stood in tears as he held the lifeless body of his child, a victim of careless drifting.

## **CHRIST: A BETTER MAN – LESSON 4**

### **Hebrews 2:5-18**

**Introduction:** In this passage we find the third comparison made by Paul in his argument that Christ is better. This comparison involves Christ and Man. Paul's declaration of Christ being better than the angels probably provoked an important question from the Jewish perspective. The Hebrews considered the spirit world to be more advanced or superior to the flesh. If Christ is better than the angels, why did He take on the garment of humanity. In light of this question, Paul refers to both the greatness and insignificance of man, and in so doing points out the perfection of Christ.

### **Lesson Goals:**

1. Discuss the purpose of man's creation.
2. To show the great contrast between man and Jesus Christ and how Christ is perfect in His personhood and ministry.
3. Study the ministry of Christ as our Captain, Conqueror, and Counselor.

### **Definitions of Important Terms/Phrases:**

1. Behoove – To be necessary for; to be fit for; to be meet for, with respect to necessity, duty, or convenience.
2. Reconciliation – The means by which sinners are reconciled and brought into a state of favor with God, after natural estrangement or enmity; the atonement.

### **Things to consider:**

The key to the comparison of man and Christ is an understanding of man's destiny and his failure to accomplish what God has purposed for him. Christ, on the other hand, has regained all that has been lost by man's sinfulness. Christ became flesh to fill the void left by man's failure.

Many scholars teach that verses 5 through 8 refer to the Lord Jesus Christ. This is an incorrect interpretation of the passage. In verse 9 we see the key phrase that divides verses 5-8 from verses 9-18. The phrase is "But we see Jesus." This statement denotes a comparison to what has been previously stated. Also, Paul is following the same pattern of comparison as he did in 1:1-2:4.

1. Christ Better Than the Prophets – 1:1 – Paul addresses the Inferior; 1:2-3 – Paul addresses the Superior
2. Christ Better Than the Angels – 1:4 – Paul addresses the Inferior; 1:5-13 – Paul addresses the Superior
3. Christ Better Than Man – 2:5-8 – Paul addresses the Inferior; 2:9-18 – Paul addresses the Superior

## **I. THE PURPOSE OF MAN'S APPOINTMENT** – vs. 5-8

### **A. The Destiny Of Man** – vs. 5-6 – "*What is man, that thou are mindful of him*"

1. In verses 5 and 6, we clearly see that man's original office was superior to the angels when dealing with the inhabited earth. God had ordained a specific position to be held by humanity. We know this because verse 6 answers the evident question raised by verse 5. God did not put the "inhabited earth" (world) under subjection to angels. If not angels, who was the world to be ruled by? The obvious answer is man.
2. In verses 6 through 8, Paul uses a quote from Psalms 8:4-6. This reference in Psalms is connected with Genesis 1:26-31, where God delegated authority to man over the earth. God had great intentions for man. We see this in the use of the phrase "a little lower than the angels." The word "little" means man would be lower than the angels for a "short time" and implies the idea that at some point man would be elevated above the angels to share in the glory and majesty of God in one form or another.
3. Two words used in Hebrews 2:7 give us insight on God's favor toward mankind.
  - a. "*Mindful*" = "mimnesko" and may be defined as "to hold in one's mind; to remember"
  - b. "*Visitest*" = "episkeptomai" and means "to inspect, or examine for appointment or employment"The fact that God granted man the opportunity to serve in such a high position is unbelievable. This choice of such an unworthy creature is beyond comprehension. Why should man be created in "the image" of God? Why should he receive great authority? Why should he enjoy intimate fellowship?

### **B. The Dignity Of Man** – vs. 7 – "*Thou crownedst him with glory and honour*"

1. The word "crownedst" here is very important in understanding to whom these verses refer. It is the Greek word "stephanoo" and describes "the adornment with an honorary wreath." It is a crown given to the individual by appointment and not by right.
2. God crowned man with two things.

- a. Glory = “doxa” and means “a most glorious condition, most exalted state.”
- b. Honour = “time” and refers to “honor which belongs or is shown to one by reason of rank and state of office which one holds.”
3. Man is described in the Bible as being “the image of God”. This refers to man being “the shadow or outline of God.” It isn’t a physical likeness, but a spiritual one. Man portrays the glory of God. Paul writes in I Corinthians 11:7 – “*For a man... is the image and glory of God...*”
4. We see the exalted position of man in the phrase “*didst set him over the works of thy hands*”. The phrase “didst set” means God “placed man in a designated position.”

**C. The Dominion Of Man** – vs. 7 – “*Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet*”

1. Man was ordained to be a “king” over God’s creation. God gave man dominion over all creation and the Garden of Eden according to Genesis 1:26-31. All beasts were inferior to Adam and God gave to him the privilege of naming all creatures. We can only speculate concerning all that was involved in man’s position in Eden. Man’s appointment must have been extraordinary for an angel to question God on His choice of humanity for such a lofty position.
2. Man’s destiny, dignity, and dominion express the idea of man’s opportunity to share in the glory of God. As God was the head of the spiritual world, Adam was given the position of being the federal head of the human race.

**D. The Depravity Of Man** – vs. 8 – “*But now we see not yet all things put under him.*”

1. Here we see the sadness of sin. There is a payment for disobedience against the commands of God. Man was willing to forfeit an eternity of prestige and power for one taste of forbidden fruit.
2. Adam was to be lower than the angels only for a “short time”. God had planned an even greater position for man. No doubt Satan knew of this waiting promotion and offered Adam glory before it was time.
3. There is an important lesson to learn from this. God ordains special positions of service to all His children, but that exalted appointment hinges on His children’s obedience.
4. The result of man’s disobedience is that “*we see not all things under his feet*”. Man has lost it all.

**II. THE PERFECTION OF CHRIST’S ACCOMPLISHMENT** – vs. 9-18 – In verses 8 and 9, we see the great contrast of man and Christ.

1. Man – vs. 8 – “*But now we see not yet all things put under him.*”
2. Christ – vs. 9 – “*But we see Jesus*”

Man had failed God in his position. He could not “fit” the bill. But Christ was the perfect fit for the job that God commissioned Him. This is what Paul meant when he stated “*it became him*”. Christ was the best “man” for the job.

**A. Christ: The Perfect Captain**

1. The definition of Captain – The Greek word is “archegos” and means “the chief leader, prince; used of one that takes the lead in anything and thus affords an example, a predecessor in a matter, a pioneer; the author.” The key word here being pioneer. The word picture is that of a pioneer blazing a trail for all those who would follow. This thought is linked with John 14:6 – “*I am the way... no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.*” We see Christ is both the leader and the way.
2. Christ as our Captain restored what man had lost.
  - a. Position of Dignity – vs. 9 – “*...crownedst him with glory and honour*”
  - b. Position of Dominion – vs. 10 – “*for whom are all things, and by whom are all things*”
3. The restoration of man was made possible by two things.
  - a. Restored By His Substitution – “*made a little lower than the angels... that he should taste death*”  
In this we see the importance of the humanity of Christ. His humanity allowed Him to take the place of man. 2 Cor 5:21 – “*For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.*” Jn. 15:13 – “*Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends!*” The incarnation allowed Christ to be in a position to receive the load of man’s sin.
  - b. Restored By His Suffering – “*for the suffering of death*” The word suffering here is “pathema” and describes “something undergone as hardships or pain; both internally and externally.” Certainly the greatest passage describing the sufferings of Christ is Isaiah 53.
    - (1) Christ walked a Road of Rejection – Isa. 53:2 – “*there is no beauty that we should desire him.*”
    - (2) Christ walked a Road of Denial – Isa. 53:3 – “*H is despised and rejected*”
    - (3) Christ walked a Road Of Sorrow – Isa. 53:4 – “*He carried our sorrows*”
    - (4) Christ walked a Road Of Suffering – Isa. 53:4 – “*smitten of God*”

- (5) At the cross alone, Christ suffered six different wounds. Keep in mind that six is the number of man.  
 Contusion – Hit on the Head; Laceration – Scourged with a cat-o-nine-tails; Penetration – Crown of Thorns; Perforation – Nails in hands and feet; Incision – Sword In His Side  
 (f) Abrasions – The Cross as He carried it upon His back and as He hung upon it.

**B. Christ: The Perfect Conqueror** – vs. 14 – *“that through death he might destroy him...”*

1. Conquered Our Foe – *“he might destroy him... that is, the devil.”* Jesus became man to die a man’s death that He might disarm the one who had the “power” of death. Christ gave Satan home field advantage and then beat him at this own game. We need to understand the meaning of two words here.
  - a. “Power” of death – It means at one time Satan had enough strength to force death upon man.
  - b. “Destroy” him – The word destroy means God rendered Satan “inoperative.” Christ made Satan of no effect in the area of death. Satan is now a Lion locked in a cage. He can roar all he wants, but God has confined him for the safety of the saints. Satan can only shoot blanks at the believer. Like a cap gun, he makes a lot of noise, but there is no danger.
2. Conquered Our Fear – vs. 15 – *“the fear of death”*
  - a. “Fear” = “phobos” a “phobia” – Death was once a terror to the saint, but Jesus took that fear away by “tasting death” for every man. He took away the sting of death.
  - b. Christ delivered us from the fear of death.
    - (1) Christ delivered us from the Shadow of death – Psalms 23:4
    - (2) Christ delivered us from the Sting of death – I Cor. 15:55
    - (3) Christ delivered us from the Sorrows of death – Psalms 18:4; I Thess. 4:13
    - (4) Christ delivered us from the Snares of death – Psalms 18:5

**C. Christ: The Perfect Counselor** – vs. 17 – *“that he might be... a high priest”*

1. Christ is able to Reconcile Us – vs. 17 – *“to make reconciliation for the sins of the people”*  
 “Reconciliation” means Christ was able to bring God and man back together on common ground.
  - a. Why did He do it? – *“it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren”* - The word behooved means Christ felt it was His duty to become like you and me to be our “Great High Priest.”
  - b. How did He do it? – *“a merciful and faithful”*
    - (1) The word merciful is related to Christ reaching his hand toward man.
    - (2) The word faithful is related to Christ reaching his other hand towards God.
  - c. Christ reconciled man and God because He was man’s perfect God and God’s perfect man! As a man He took the feeble hand of humanity. As God He took the fearful hand of righteousness. Then He “reconciled” or brought man and God together by His death on the cross.
2. Christ is able to Relate To Us – vs. 18a – *“in that he himself hath suffered”*
  - a. Christ had the normal emotions of a man.
    - (1) John 11:33-36 – *“Jesus wept”*
    - (2) Matthew 9:36 – *“he was moved with compassion...”*
    - (3) Luke 10:21 – *“Jesus rejoiced in spirit...”*
  - b. Christ had the spiritual experiences of man.
    - (1) Hebrews 4:15 – *“tempted... as we are”*
    - (2) Luke 6:12 – He relied upon prayer – *“He... continued... in prayer”*
    - (3) Matthew 27:43 – He put his faith in God – *“He trusted in God.”*
  - c. Christ went through sufferings as man.
    - (1) He hungered – Matt. 4:2; 21:18
    - (2) He grew weary and tired – John 4:6; Matt. 8:24
    - (3) He experienced thirst – John 19:28
    - (4) He felt loneliness – *“My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?”* Matt. 27:46
    - (5) He felt betrayal – Judas betrayed him for 30 pieces of silver – John 18:3-5
    - (6) He was misunderstood – The Pharisees and Scribes
    - (7) He was rejected – John 1:11 – *“his own received him not”*
3. Christ is able to Relieve Us – vs. 18b – *“he is able to succour them that are tempted”*
  - a. It simply means Christ is able to help us because He knows what we are facing in the trials of this life.
  - b. Christ is our “brother”. He is moved with the same emotions as we are. He is a sympathizing Saviour who can take the balm of Gilead and relieve us of our wounds.
  - c. Don’t fight the war alone. Let Christ do the work for you.

## **CHRIST: A BETTER MEDIATOR – LESSON 5**

### **Hebrews 3:1-19**

**Introduction:** In chapter 3, Paul compares Christ to Moses, the great deliverer of Israel. If Paul can show the Hebrews that Christ is superior to Moses, then they automatically will see that Christianity is better than Judaism. In the minds of the Hebrews, this argument would influence them more than any other Paul has proclaimed to this point.

### **Lesson Goals:**

1. Compare and contrast the character and leadership of Moses with Jesus Christ.
2. Review the example Paul gives of Israel being overthrown in the wilderness to warn us as believers of the danger in disobeying God.

### **Definitions of Important Terms/Phrases:**

1. Grieved – Pained; afflicted; suffering sorrow.
2. Overthrown – The state of being overturned or turned off the basis. Ruin; destruction; as the overthrow of the state. Defeat; discomfiture; as the overthrow of enemies. Degradation.

### **Things to consider:**

Next to Abraham, Moses was the most highly esteemed Jewish leader that ever lived. Why did Moses hold this position in the minds of the Jews?

1. He was protected by God as an infant.
2. He was chosen of God to deliver Israel from Egyptian bondage.
3. He had witnessed the Glory of God and even had its reflection upon his face.
4. He spoke with God face to face.
5. He was the instrument used of God to convey the Ten Commandments to the nation of Israel.
6. He was given the instructions for the erection of the Tabernacle, Israel's place of atonement and worship.
7. He wrote the Pentateuch which directed the lives of every Jew from birth to death.
8. He was buried by God.

No man influenced the spiritual and material well being of the nation of Israel more than Moses. The Jews revered him. In chapters 3 and 4, Paul compares the ministry of Christ and Moses to show the Hebrews why Christ is better than Moses and why Christianity is better than Judaism. The themes of the two chapters are as follows:

1. Chapter 3 – The Person of Christ is Superior to the Person of Moses.
2. Chapter 4 – The Provision of Christ is Superior to the Provision of Moses.

## **I. PAUL OFFERS A COMMENDATION** – vs. 1 – “...*holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling...*”

### **A. The Acceptance Of The Believer** – “*holy*”

1. The Greek word for holy is “*hagios*” and may be defined as “that which is set apart for God.” It may be found in the New Testament under five different terms. These are “*holy*”, “*holiness*”, “*sanctify*”, “*sanctified*”, and “*sanctification*.” All of these terms are used to identify things consecrated and made sacred by God. They are associated most with the position of the believer as a result of regeneration. And this position granted to every believer is the only hope of his acceptance before God.
2. The word “*holy*” here speaks of the “the sacred consecration of the believer.” It does not refer to practical holiness, but a position attained only by declaration of God. It is a reference to the justification of the believer. The idea, introduced by the use of “*holy*”, is divine consecration of the believer. It speaks of our relationship to God. We are now “*acceptable*” in His sight.
3. The word “*holy*” describes the most important characteristic of the believer. Without the word “*holy*”, the terms “*brethren*” and “*partakers*” could never be applied. As in all relationships with God, holiness must be the foundation upon which the relationship is to be built.

### **B. The Affection Of The Believer** – “*brethren*”

1. The Greek word for “*brethren*” is “*adelphos*” and refers to the following. All of the following may be applied to the believer.
  - a. Those born into the same family, by the same father and mother.
  - b. Those united to others by the bond of affection.
  - c. Those belonging to the same organization.
2. In the term “*brethren*” we see three aspects of the Christian life.

- a. The Family of the Believer – We are brothers and sisters by the new birth.
- b. The Fellowship of the Believer – We experience a relationship of love which unites us as brethren.
- c. The Fruitfulness of the Believer – In unity we find the power to accomplish the will of God.

**C. The Association Of The Believer** – *“partakers of the heavenly calling”*

- 1. The phrase “partakers of the heavenly calling” is important because it illustrates to these believers that they are different from the Old Testament saints. If Paul had addressed these believers only as “holy brethren” they would have considered themselves equal with the Old Testament saints.
- 2. The phrase “heavenly calling” refers to something far greater than the relationship granted to Israel by God. Israel was indeed a “called out assembly”, but their calling and final destiny are both earthly. The Christian on the other hand has been called by the “heavenly calling” of God. His calling and destiny are both associated with another world. Therefore the believer’s calling is superior to the Hebrew’s calling.
- 3. Paul states that we are “partakers”. This speaks of our close association with Christ and other believers. We are united in a common task. Here we see the closeness of our relationship with Christ and how our calling is greater than the calling of the nation of Israel. We have been given the opportunity to “rub shoulders” with deity in the work God has ordained us for.

**II. PAUL OFFERS A CONTRAST** – vs. 1-6 – The key word in this study is “consider”. It is the Greek word “katanoeo” and means “to perceive, to remark, to observe fully, to understand; to consider attentively, to fix one's eyes or mind upon.” It was used in Latin to define the act of star gazing. Paul uses this word to direct our attention to God’s focal point of redemption. As we attentively consider Christ, we see His superiority in three areas.

**A. Christ Is Better In His Position** – vs. 1 – *“the Apostle and High Priest of our profession”*

- 1. Apostle – The office of Christ as Apostle shows the superiority of Christ because He was “sent or commissioned” by God from heaven, while Moses was called from an earthly position. The term Apostle carries with the idea of “one suited for a specific task.” It refers to a sent official who possesses the qualities necessary for completing the task. Moses had to be given the power of God through the rod. Jesus embodied the power of God.
- 2. High Priest – As the Apostle, Christ represents God’s will to approach man, but as our High Priest, Christ is the means by which we are to approach God. The office of High Priest will be discussed in detail in a later lesson. The reason Christ is mentioned as High Priest in this contrast with Moses is because it reveals why Christ is better. In the Old Testament, Moses was the apostle of Israel and Aaron held the office of the High Priest. In His perfection Christ has combined both offices in Himself.

**B. Christ Is Better In His Provision** – vs. 3 – *“He who hath builded the house...”*

- 1. The Similarities of Moses and Christ in their provisions – vs. 2
  - a. Moses was Faithful – We often focus on the sin of Moses in striking the rock instead of speaking to it. However, in all the years of Moses’ leadership, this is the only instance in which he was unfaithful. The word faithful represents the “trustworthiness” of Moses.
  - b. Christ was Faithful – Christ was also faithful to the will of the one who commissioned Him. However, in the life of Christ we never see one instance of disobedience on His behalf. Also we see the faithfulness of Christ is greater because He was a faithful minister of grace while Moses was faithful as a prophet of the Law.
- 2. The Differences of Moses and Christ in their provisions – vs. 3-4
  - a. Jesus was counted worthy of more glory. This simply means Christ was more deserving of praise being bestowed upon Him.
  - b. Jesus is the Builder, Moses is the House. Jesus was the author of the House of Israel and therefore superior to Moses, a member in the house. Moses was only a manager over the house of God for a short time. Jesus built the house, sustained the house, and owned the house. Christ is also superior because He is now building a much greater house of which Moses has no part. This house is the Church.

**C. Christ Is Better In His Person** – vs. 5-6

- 1. Moses is a Servant, while Jesus is a Son. This comparison illustrates the greatest reason why Christ is better than Moses. Under the leadership of Moses, men were bound in servitude, living under bondage to the Law. Moses was a servant as well as his followers. Christ on the other hand is a Son which gives the idea of freedom and liberty to live in the presence of the Father with all privileges of sonship. Christ is the Son of God and all those members of the Church are sons of God living in freedom.
- 2. The Testimony of Moses – Every instruction given by Moses to the nation of Israel was a shadow of the things to come. We know Christ is superior to Moses because the whole purpose of Moses’ apostleship

was to point the people of Israel to the coming Messiah. The testimony of Moses only reflected the presence of God. Christ is the presence of God manifested.

### **III. PAUL OFFERS A CAUTION** – vs. 7-19

#### **A. The Expectation Of God** – vs. 10 – “*I was grieved with that generation*”

1. The word “grieved” means God was “displeased” with Israel because of their unbelief. The use of this term points us to Paul’s letter to the Corinthians where he discussed the failure of the Israelites to please God. See I Corinthians 10:1-15.
2. We should all ask the question, “Is God pleased with me?” But how do we begin to attempt pleasing a holy God? Is it at all possible? It almost seems unfair that God was displeased with imperfect people.
3. Some have used Hebrews 11:6 to say that possession of faith alone accomplishes this great obligation. However the key to this verse is the latter part. You must believe, but that belief will produce action. “*That he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.*” According to James, “*Faith without works is dead.*” Js 2:20,26 Faith in salvation does satisfy the holiness of God, because we trust in the finished work of Christ and not ourselves. However, just because God’s holiness was satisfied doesn’t automatically mean His expectations of our service are met.
4. Remember, every Jew that died in the wilderness because of unbelief had experienced the salvation of the Passover Lamb and the parting of the Red Sea. There was nothing wrong with the Lamb. We know this because every time God considered destroying the nation, Moses the Mediator would remind Him of the blood covenant. God was not displeased with the Lamb, but with the lack of progress after the salvation of the nation. The key to pleasing God is not faith which is possessed, rather it is faith that produces. The statement “without faith it is impossible to please him” confirms this. Faith is the only element that gives us power to please Him. It is the only means of pleasing Perfection.

#### **B. The Example Of Israel** – I Corinthians 10:1-15 & Hebrews 3:7-19

1. The Advantage of their Equality – I Cor. 10:1-4 – All had Equal Opportunity
  - a. Experienced The Same Protection – Every Jew in the wilderness had been guided by the cloud. The cloud represents how God safely guides us through a world of confusion and turmoil. The shadow of the cloud assured the nation that God was leading them in the right direction. Like the Hebrew, every believer is guaranteed protection and peace.
  - b. Employed The Same Power – Every Jew that came out of Egypt passed through the Red Sea. Every person destroyed in the wilderness saw the magnificence of God’s Power. God has given every believer the power of the Holy Ghost. Every Christian has access to power.
  - c. Enjoyed The Same Provision – Every Jew shared the same diet. They ate what God fed them. They drank the same water. The water and meat were symbolic of God’s Word. Every believer regardless of age or ability has access to a diet that will give us strength to fight the battle before us.
  - d. Point: Equality Eliminates Excuses – God has given us all the same advantages.
2. The Absence of their Effort – Cor. 10: 5 – Few Put Forth any Effort
  - a. The Unfaithful vs. The Faithful – Hebrews 3:16 – The majority of Israel had no desire to please God. The majority of people will not put forth the effort necessary to please God.
  - b. The Unfavorable vs. The Favorable – God was not “well pleased” with those who doubted. This means He did not “take pleasure in them”, He was not “favorably inclined to them”. Dr. B.R. Lakin always referred to Dr. Percy Ray as “God’s Pet.” I want to be the Christian that God can take pleasure in. I want to be favored, rewarded for my obedience.
  - c. The Unsuccessful vs. the Successful – “No Success” exposes the truth of “No Effort”. Our Equality is not based on our ability, rather it is based on our liberty. We may not have the same ability but we have access to opportunity by the liberty we have in Christ. Success is not dependent upon background, education, wealth, or position. It is always linked to effort! Don’t use the ability of others as a comparative excuse! If you want to be successful, cooperate with the Spirit.
3. The Admonition of their Experience – I Cor. 10:6-12 – Learn from mistakes
  - a. They were overthrown in the wilderness. The word “overthrown” is made up of two Greek words. They are “kata” and “stronnumi”. Kata means “down” with many variations and “stronnumi” means “to strew” as scattering seed. The English word “catastrophe” is derived from these two words.
  - b. In other words they were cast or spread all over the ground. The word picture would be to reach into a bucket of seed and begin scattering it over the ground. The purpose of their lives was torn apart.

#### **C. The Exhortation Of the Believer** – vs. 13 – “*But exhort one another daily*”

1. The word “exhort” means to admonish or encourage one. God has provided for each believer a rest to be enjoyed. We have a positional rest, but there are enemies that wish to keep us out of the practical rest.
2. Paul encourages the Hebrews to be strong against four enemies. These are the weapons of Satan.
  - a. Desertion – vs. 12 – “*departing from the living God*” – The word depart here may be defined as “the act of removing one’s self; to refrain or withdraw.” A great word picture for departing is the desertion of a soldier from his army. You must remain loyal to the will of God for your life.
  - b. Deception – vs. 13 – “*lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin*” – Deception here is the Greek word “*apate*” and refers to deceit caused by “delusion”. It relates to deception that involves the “misleading of the mind through false representation and illusion.” Base all your choices in life upon the clear will of God set forth in His word.
  - c. Discouragement – vs. 14 – “*hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end*” – The key word here is “confidence”. Confidence, as it is used here, pictures the “courage or firmness” by which one takes his stand. We must guard against times of defeat when we seem to lose hope of overcoming the giants in our lives.
  - d. Doubt – vs. 19 – “*they could not enter in because of unbelief*” – The simple definition of “unbelief” is “faithlessness, disbelief” (lack of Christian faith). Don't lose sight of the greatness of God. What He says, He will do!
3. Don't allow Satan to keep you from the blessed rest of God in your service by falling into one of the four traps mentioned above.

## **THE REST OF GOD – LESSON 6**

### **Hebrews 4:1-16**

**Introduction:** It is important to realize that God has always intended that man enter into a state of peace and rest. Sadly, man can not attain that rest outside the realm of God's salvation. Since the beginning, man has forfeited his blessing of safety and peace by disobeying the Word and Will of God. In chapters 3 and 4 of Hebrews, Paul gives a warning to all believers that we can miss God's best for our lives if we do not heed His commands.

### **Lesson Goals:**

1. Define the term "rest" in relation to God's rest for His people.
2. Discuss the different types of rests taught in the Bible.

### **Definitions of Important Terms/Phrases:**

1. Rest – Ceasing from one's work or effort; the cessation of motion or action of any kind.
2. Tranquility – Quietness; a calm state; freedom from disturbance or agitation. We speak of the tranquility of public affairs, of the state, of the world, the tranquility of a retired life, the tranquility of mind proceeding from conscious rectitude.

### **Things to consider:**

Although there are many definitions of God's rest, the context of Hebrews 4 is dealing with the believer's rest in consecration. To give a complete understanding of the rest of God, Paul mentions five different rests in this passage. The key to interpreting the passage correctly is to remember that Paul is writing to saved Hebrews, and although he mentions five different rests his main focus is on the Rest of Consecration. We know this by his warning concerning the unbelief of the nation of Israel which kept them out of Canaan. Canaan is a picture of the spirit filled life and not salvation. The main focus of this lesson will be on the consecration rest. However, we will mention each of the rests briefly as Paul did in chapter 4.

## **I. THE EXPLANATION OF GOD'S REST**

### **A. The Definition Of Rest** – vs. 4 – "*God did rest*"

1. In this passage, Paul uses the term rest in five different senses. However, the definition of the term remains closely related in each use with minor variations.
2. The term "rest" is best defined as "ceasing from one's work or effort; the cessation of motion or action of any kind." The rest in Hebrews 4 is used as a noun and is implied as a verb. The use of it as a noun describes a place of peace and tranquility that God has provided. The use of it as a verb relates to labour which has ceased. We see this use in verse 10.
3. Rest is in essence the nature of God. God is never in a state of restlessness, because the changes in circumstances can never affect His character of holiness.

### **B. The Details Of Rest**

1. To understand the concept of God's rest without becoming confused, one must recognize the different rests mentioned in Scripture. In the next point we will cover these in detail.
2. For now we need to understand that the idea of God's rest is divided into two parts.
  - a. Divine Side – This deals with provision of peace and tranquility. Only God can provide such an environment or state of rest.
  - b. Human Side – The human side relates to the entrance into the rest of God and always hinges on obedient faith. The only reason man will never experience the rest of God in salvation is unbelief. Also, the Christian can not experience the rest of consecration if doubt resides in his heart.
3. Rest depends upon the highest faculties of both Divinity and Humanity.
  - a. Divinity – God's highest faculty which allows for rest is Holiness. God is able to provide rest because the basis of His provision is His holiness. Rest is based upon stability.
  - b. Humanity – Man's highest faculty which allows for rest is Faith. The best thing man can do to attain rest is to trust. We will cover this in greater detail in the last point.

## **II. THE EXAMPLES OF GOD'S REST**

### **A. The Creation Rest** – vs. 4 -- “*And God did rest the seventh day from all his works.*”

1. This is the Sabbath Rest of Creation and refers to the rest into which God entered when He had completed all of creation. He did not rest because of weariness, but because His work had been perfectly completed.
2. In Genesis 2:1-3, we have the record of God's completion of creation. This finished work of creation was not only physical, but it was also symbolic or prophetic of the purposes of God throughout the ages. God's full purpose is to bring all of creation to rest. Notice the following prophetic outline of Genesis 1.
  - a. First Day – Darkness into Light – Represents the Dispensation of Innocence and Conscience.
  - b. Second Day – The Firmament – The division of the waters represents the dispensation of Human Government. The water is typical of the lost world.
  - c. Third Day – The dry land appears from the waters – Symbolic of the birth of the Jewish nation
  - d. Fourth Day – The lights in the heavens – Symbolic of the Church as lights in the world
  - e. Fifth Day – The great whales and fowl – Symbolic of the Antichrist and the Great Tribulation
  - f. Sixth Day – Man is created – Symbolic of the Millennial Reign of Christ with the church
  - g. Seventh Day – God rested – Symbolic of the Ages of Ages
3. There are four facts of the Seventh Day that picture the rest of God.
  - a. The evening is not mentioned in Genesis 2. The omission is intentional to show in symbolism that the rest of God in eternity is without night.
  - b. On the seventh day we see the addition of Jehovah to God's name Elohim. Elohim relates to the actions of God. We praise Elohim for what He does. Jehovah Elohim relates to the essence of God and with this name we praise God for who He is.
  - c. Creation was changed on the seventh day. The grass, herbs, and trees were put in an orderly fashion forming a garden. This speaks of order. In God's rest everything is in order.

### **B. The Canaan Rest** – vs. 6-8 – “*they to whom it was first preached did not enter in*”

1. Canaan was the rest God had provided for Israel after they had been delivered from Egypt. Canaan is not a picture of salvation. Crossing the Red Sea symbolizes salvation rest for Israel. Crossing the Jordan speaks of Israel's entrance in to the land of rest.
2. God did not intend for the wilderness to be the permanent dwelling place for the people of Israel. The wilderness was not God's best for the nation. However, forty years were wasted in the desert because of one act of unbelief.
3. God takes the believer out of Egypt with the intention of bringing him to Canaan. The sad fact is that most Christians will die in the wilderness because they doubt the purposes of God in their lives.
4. This rest is the Old Testament equivalent to the consecration rest of Hebrews 4:9-16. It is the place of God's perfect will for our lives. God does not forsake his children because they do not enter the rest of his perfect will. Every Jew who died in the wilderness was still able to enjoy the provision of God, but they never experienced the complete blessing of God.

### **C. The Conversion Rest** – vs. 9 – “*There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God*”

1. Conversion rest is much different than Canaan rest. This we see from verse 8. Jesus, or Joshua, was not able to lead the Hebrew nation into perfect rest. The Bible says he spoke of “another” day of rest. The day of rest he was talking about is the superior rest of our salvation.
2. Conversion rest is that rest we receive from God when we stop trusting in our own works for acceptance before Him and trust the Lord Jesus Christ for our salvation. Verse 10 perfectly describes our salvation. We cease from our own works. The peace of salvation comes to the sinner only by the grace of God. It is not of works. Sadly, this is why so many religious people are without peace. They are trusting in themselves.
3. Verse 10 compares our salvation rest to God's rest in creation. The word rest means there is nothing left to do. God rested after all the works of Creation were finished. Adam did nothing to help God with the creation of the world, he simply was placed in creation to maintain what God had provided. This is the essence of salvation. On the cross, Jesus cried, “It is finished.” There is nothing left for you and me to do in salvation.

### **D. The Celestial Rest**

1. Although heaven is not mentioned in Hebrews 4, it is implied. The whole purpose of God's salvation is to bring the believer to a state of perfect rest. This rest consists of both spiritual and physical repose.
2. The believer can now live in the rest of salvation and service, but our bodies are still restless. Our bodies

are still affected by sin and the environment of this world.

3. God will take the need of rest of our body at the rapture of the church when we will be glorified.

Although the celestial rest is not mentioned it is important that we know about it. God will combine all rest into one which will be eternal.

#### **E. The Consecration Rest**

1. The Consecration Rest is similar to the Canaan Rest. It is God's perfect place of service after He has redeemed His people. There is something better than just being saved. It is to be surrendered to the one who redeemed you.
2. Consecration Rest is rest that is attained by living in the perfect will of God. In this position there is no fear or doubt, but a reliance upon the Spirit of God.
3. Many religious teachers have used verse 11 to promote salvation by works. This is an incorrect interpretation of what the writer is trying to say. God has provided a rest for the believer in salvation which takes care of his standing before God, but we must be diligent in our service to be in the right state. It is God's intention that every believer live a spirit filled life.

## **ENTERING THE REST OF CONSECRATION – LESSON 7**

### **Hebrews 4:1-16**

**Introduction:** In lesson 6, we discussed the definition of God’s rest, and also mentioned the five different rests found in Hebrews 4. In this lesson, we will focus on the Rest of Consecration. Although chapter 4 mentions all of the rests of God, the context of the chapter is dealing with the rest God gives the believer in consecration.

### **Lesson Goals:**

1. Give four admonitions which counter deception, doubt, delay and discouragement.
2. Encourage the believer to experience God’s best by prayer and dedication to the will of God.

### **Definitions of Important Terms/Phrases:**

1. Boldly – “fearless confidence; cheerful courage, assurance”
2. Hold fast – “to hold in the hand fast, that is, not to discard or let go, to keep carefully and faithfully.”
3. Labour – “toil or the weariness that comes from hard work; using speed when making an effort.”

### **Things to consider:**

Please note, this study relates only to the believer’s entrance into the perfect will of God. This material has no reference to the entrance of the sinner into salvation’s rest. This is very important to realize due to the fact that many have misinterpreted this passage by teaching it as proof of salvation by works. The key to understanding Paul’s message is remember he is comparing the Christian life with that of Israel. He is warning the Hebrew Christians that they can miss God’s best for their lives if they do not enter into His rest of consecration. This is why he gave the example of Israel’s unbelief in chapter 3. It was not unbelief in the realm of salvation. Israel had already experienced redemption by blood and power. The unbelief of Israel concerned their entrance into Canaan.

Paul gives the following four admonitions to help us enter the Rest of Consecration. These four admonitions counter the four methods of attack used by Satan, which we covered in lesson 5.

### **I. THE ADMONITION OF SOBRIETY** – vs. 1 – “*Let us therefore fear...*” – Counters Satan’s attack of Desertion – 3:12 – “*departing from the living God*”

#### **A. The Esteem of Rest** – vs. 1 – “*Let us therefore fear*”

1. The word fear here is “phobeo” and may be defined in a general sense as “to put to flight by terrifying”. It is clear to see that our English word “phobia” has been derived from this Greek word. Although the word is used to describe great fear and terror, in this instance the use of the term is related to its secondary meaning which emphasizes reverence, and is concerned with reverential obedience.
2. We find this same word “phobeo” in Ephesians 5:33 – “*the wife see that she reverence her husband.*” The term reverence does not mean women should flee from their husbands in fright, but refers to reverential obedience the wife should have for her husband because of his delegated position of authority.
3. So what do we mean by “reverential fear?” We should have a “high value, estimation, or regard” concerning the will of God for our lives. The fear we have is that of displeasing God

#### **B. The Entitlement of Rest** – vs. 1 – “*a promise being left us*”

1. The key word in this point is “promise”. It is “epaggelia (ep-ang-el-ee'-ah)” and simply means “ a divine pledge or announcement of good.” It is God’s message to every believer that He wishes to give us a place of rest. Paul’s statement that God’s rest is a promise “being left” is very important because it revealed to these suffering Christians that God had provided them a rest much like He had provided Israel in Canaan.
2. In his study of this passage, Kenneth S. Wuest stated that the Jews only knew tribulation as a means of God correcting His people when He was displeased with their actions. Paul reminds these early Hebrew Christians concerning the rest of God because they were attempting to go back to Judaism because of persecution. They did not understand that tribulation in the New Testament was sometimes used to refine the saints of God and not always used as a tool of God’s judgment.
3. Tribulation does not mean God has forsaken you. Always remember, God has a place of rest for the believer. We are entitled to peace in the midst of the storm, because it has being pledged to us by a sovereign God who cannot change. John 14:27 – “*Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you*”

#### **C. The Entrance of Rest** – vs. 2 – “*we which have believed do enter into rest*”

1. Paul gives a clear reason why Israel could not enter into God’s rest. The declaration of Paul should stand in our minds as a warning of how we may not enter God’s rest of consecration if we harbor doubt. Israel

heard the same message of rest, but it did not “profit” them. The word “profit” is “opheleo (o-fel-eh'-o)” and means that when Israel heard the message they did not “make it useful for their benefit.” The word “opheleo” is translated “advantage” in Jude 1:16. They did not use the Word of God to their advantage.

2. Paul tells us that Israel did not profit from the Word of God because it was “not being mixed with faith.” The Greek word for “being mixed” is “sugkerannumi” and carries the idea of mixing different substances together to form one united body. We do not enter the rest of consecration because we are not willing to let the Word of God become a part of us. We must bring together the Word and Faith.

**II. THE ADMONITION OF SWIFTNESS** – vs. 11 – *“Let us labour therefore to enter”* – Counters Satan’s attack of Doubt – 3:19 – *“they could not enter in because of unbelief”*

**A. A Diligent Servant** – vs. 11 – *“Let us labour therefore...”*

1. I mentioned Paul’s admonition in this verse to be one concerning swiftness. The reason is the definition of the word “labour” in verse 11. Usually in the King James version, the word labour signifies “toil or the weariness that comes from hard work.” In this verse, the word toil is “spoudazo (spoo-dad'-zo)” and is used to express the idea of “using speed when making an effort.” It is the opposite of procrastination. In other verses it is presented as “diligence.”
2. In 2 Pet 1:5 we find the noun form of “spoudazo” which is “spoude (spoo-day)”. It may be defined as “eagerness” and is connected with the speed of doing something. *“And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge;”*
3. One of the great dangers in the Christian life is giving place to the devil. Many times we “waste” time by not “redeeming” it. Ephesians 5:16 is actually telling us to rescue our time from loss. Satan works hardest when we are debating what we should do and it is at this time we are most vulnerable.
4. Israel hesitated at the Jordan river and was unable to enter because of doubt. Do not stall at the door of opportunity. When God offers a place of service, be diligent in your obedience.

**B. A Dividing Sword** – vs. 12 – *“the dividing asunder of soul and spirit... of the joints and marrow”*

1. After exhorting the believer to be swift in his entrance into God’s perfect rest of consecration, he gives the reason for such quick obedience. If we hesitate God will know.
2. There are attributes of the Word of God.
  - a. It is Quick – The word here is “zao (dzah'-o)” and means the Word of God “lives”.
  - b. It is Powerful – The word here is “energes (en-er-gace’)” and means it is “effectively active.”
  - c. It is Sharper – The word “tomoteris (tom-o'-ter-os)” means it “more keenly cuts”. It implies that the Word of God is not used in a “hacking manner”. One blow will cleanly cut whatever it hits.
  - d. It Pierces – The word “diikneomai (dee-ik-neh'-om-ah-ee)” is used here and denotes the ability of God’s Word to “reach through and penetrate the heart of man.”
  - e. It Divides – The word here is “merismos (mer-is-mos)” a simply means a “separation”.
3. The Word of God Divides three things. The body, soul, and spirit of man. This reveals to us the perfect ability of God to view man entirely. The Word is a surgical tool that reveals to man the details of his existence and standing before a righteous God. This is why Timothy stated *“Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”*

**C. A Discerning Sword** – vs. 12 – *“a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart”*

1. The word “discerner” here is “kritikos” and is related to the office of a judge. It means “to be decisive” in a critical sense. The Word of God acts as a judge in our lives determining whether or not our motives and deeds are in accordance with God’s will. In fact the Bible teaches us that the Word of God will be the final method of judgment for the sinners in Revelation 20:11-15.
2. Kenneth S. Wuest makes the following statement: “The word “kritikos” comes from krino “to divide or separate,” thus “to judge,” the usual New Testament meaning being “to sift out and analyze evidence.” “The Word of God is able to penetrate into the furthestmost recesses of a person’s spiritual being, sifting out and analyzing the thoughts and intents of the heart.”
3. Paul gives two things the Word of God discerns. Both words refer to the act of meditation.
  - a. Thoughts – Here we have “enthumesis (en-thoo'-may-sis)” and is defined as a “deliberation.” It is something that we “ponder or think about.”
  - b. Intents – The word here is “ennoia” and refers to “the act of thinking or consideration”. It relates more to the idea of conception as in a notion or manner of feeling.
4. In verse 13, we see again the omniscience of God. The use of the “all things are naked” refers to the exposure of an animal’s neck before it is to be slain. By pulling back the head of the animal, “you make bare the neck.” All things are manifest in God’s sight. This means all things are apparent to Him.

**III. THE ADMONITION OF STRENGTH** – vs. 14 – *“Let us hold fast our profession”* – Counters Satan’s attack of Discouragement – 3:14 – *“hold... our confidence stedfast unto the end”*

**A. Strength To Subdue**

1. The first use of the phrase “hold fast” portrays the idea of “having power over one.” It is used to express control or mastery of something or someone. Of course this relates to our control over the flesh.
2. It is key to realize Paul is speaking concerning our “profession” or confession of Christ. One very important aspect of our confession of Christ is our testimony. We must subdue the flesh by “holding fast” our profession. Paul mentioned this in 1 Cor. 9:27 – *“But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.”*
3. The phrase “hold fast” also is defined as “to seize, to take, to lay hands on one in order to gain control.” This is the only way you can defeat the flesh, by holding your flesh captive by the power of the Spirit.

**B. Strength To Secure**

1. The second use of the phrase “hold fast” relates to securing something. It is defined as “to hold in the hand fast, that is, not to discard or let go, to keep carefully and faithfully.”
2. This definition emphasizes the need to be careful to protect those things entrusted in our care. There is a great word picture here of a messenger who protects orders from a commander with his life. Paul uses this type of language in his first letter to Timothy. I Tim 1:18 – *“This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them mightest war a good warfare”* The word commit is “paratithemi” and means Paul deposited a charge into the trust of Timothy for protection.
3. God has put many wonderful possessions into our care as stewards and it is vitally important that we hold them dear if we wish to enter His rest.

**C. Strength To Sustain**

1. The last use of the phrase “hold fast” deals with “holding in a continual manner”. This relates to our determination to serve God regardless of how weary we may become.
2. A good example of this from Scripture is found in II Samuel 23. Eleazar, one of David’s mighty men, fought against the Philistines until his hand grew weary. However the Bible tells us his hand “clave” to the sword. The word clave means the sword “adhered” to his hand.
3. The Bible states in Galatians 6:9, *“And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not”* Hold fast! God’s strength will sustain you.

**IV. THE ADMONITION OF SUPPLICATION** – vs. 16 – *“Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace”* – Counters the attack of Deception – 3:13 – *“lest... you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin”*

**A. The Believer’s Approach** – vs. 16 – *“come boldly”*

1. The word “come” means to approach, and Paul exhorts the believer to come “boldly.” The word boldly is “parrhesia” and means “fearless confidence; cheerful courage, assurance.” It means we should be outspoken in our request to God. We have been granted freedom to speak in the presence of God by the blood of Christ. Hebrews 10:18 – *“Having... boldness to enter into the holiest...”* (Same word)
2. This is not an approach of arrogance. It is one of faith. The death of Christ opened to all believers “a new and living way”. This was not made possible by ourselves. It was accomplished through the rending of the flesh of the Son of God. We approach the throne on His merit.

**B. The Believer’s Access** – vs. 16 – *“throne of grace”*

1. God was under no obligation to establish relations with man. He has no reason to allow any man into His presence. It is solely based upon His benevolence and grace.
2. Notice the two words Throne and Grace. Without Grace the Throne is a terrible place of judgment. The throne is a symbol of righteousness. A place where sentences of death are handed out to all transgressors. But by the finished work of Christ as our substitute, we now have access.
3. The word grace is simply that “benefit of God granted to man without merit.” But we know according to Hebrews 10:19 that our access is made possible by the “blood of Jesus.”

**C. The Believer’s Aid** – vs. 16 – *“that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need”*

1. The word mercy means “compassion” and grace means “graciousness”. Both are based upon the blood of Christ. It is only through His incarnation that He can grant such blessings.
2. To help – Here we see the purpose of our access. The phrase “to help” simply means “to aid.” The word picture is the frapping of a rope used by seamen to increase tension. By drawing together several parts of a tackle the slack is taken out and the rope is tightened up. Prayer allows the believer to draw nigh to God “in time of need”. “In time of need” means it is “well-timed”, or “right on time.”

## **CHRIST: HIS CALLING, COMPASSION AND CHARACTER – LESSON 8**

### **Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:1-10**

**Introduction:** In the verses mentioned above, Paul brings into view his argument to the Hebrews that Christ is a better priest. This is the beginning of Paul's contrast of Jesus as High Priest and Aaron as High Priest. This study is vitally important if we hope to understand the significance of the Epistle to the Hebrews. Here we discover the basis of our salvation. The basis is the perfection of Christ in His office as High Priest.

### **Lesson Goals:**

1. Show that the Levitical Priesthood ended because of the superior ministry of Christ.
2. Discuss the fact that as Aaron was the first Levitical high priest in the household of Israel, Jesus Christ is the Author of Eternal Salvation.

### **Definitions of Important Terms/Phrases:**

1. Ordained – Designated or placed into a position; appointed.
2. Urim & Thummin – The terms mean “lights and perfections”. They were gems or stones carried by the high priest and used by him to determine God's will in certain matters.
3. Infirmary – An unsound or unhealthy state of the body; weakness; feebleness; Weakness of mind

### **I. THE CALLING OF CHRIST OUR HIGH PRIEST** – 5:1-4 – “*ordained for men... called of God*”

There are three qualifications Christ met to become a High Priest.

#### **A. Christ Was Called** – 5:10 – “*Called of God an high priest after the order of Melchisedec*”

1. In Ex. 28:1, God commanded Moses to separate Aaron for the ministry of the priest's office. This corresponds with Hebrews 5:1 where Paul uses the term “ordained”. The word here means “to place into position; to designate or appoint.” The term is also used in Heb. 8:3.
2. In the same manner, Christ was commissioned for the salvation of mankind. Heb. 5:10 – “*Called of God an high priest after the order of Melchisedec.*” Acts 2:23 states, “*Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain.*” The word “determinate” means “to appoint” showing the commission of Christ by the Father.
3. Ex. 28:3 tells us that Aaron was “consecrated.” This word reveals the separation of the high priest from the congregation. Aaron was “set apart” for a specific purpose.

#### **B. Christ Was Consecrated** – Exodus 29:4 & 7

1. Separation – vs. 4 – The first step in anointing the high priest was his ceremonial cleansing which took place in public. This signified his separation from any defilement. Christ fulfilled this act of separation when He was baptized in the Jordan River by John the Baptist. Upon completion of the washing the priest was pronounced pure. The cleansing was two-fold. Ex. 29:4 – Washed with Water in two ways.
  - a. Ceremonial Cleansing – This was a one time cleansing that set apart the priest for service. It is a type of the believer's salvation from the condemnation of sin. It is never to be repeated.
  - b. Continual Cleansing – This cleansing was practiced on a daily basis – Typical of the Word of God
2. Sanctification – vs. 7 – The next step in the anointing of the priest was the actual pouring of oil upon his head. This is pictured in the baptism of Christ. When Christ came up from the water, the Holy Spirit descended and the Father spake, “*This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.*” This “anointing” of the Spirit signified the beginning of His earthly ministry. Isaiah prophesied this anointing in chapter 61 verse 1: “*The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach...*”

#### **C. Christ Was Clothed** – There were six pieces of clothing worn by the High Priest. Ex. 28:40-43

1. Linen Breeches – Speaks of the Separation and Humanity of Christ
2. The Coat – Speaks of the perfect nature of Christ as a man
3. A Sash around the waist – Speaks of Christ as the faithful and true one
4. The Miter – The Authority of God and the Obedience of Christ
5. The Woven Robe – The Righteousness of Christ as the Son of God
  - a. Bells – The Testimony of His Righteousness
  - b. Pomegranates – The Fruitfulness of His Righteousness
6. The Ephod – The Complete Work of Christ
  - a. The Colors – Gold = Purity, Blue = Deity, Purple = Royalty, Scarlet = Redemption
  - b. Onyx Stones – Representing Christ's power of preservation.

- c. Breastplate – The judgment of God.
- d. Urim & Thummim – The discernment of Christ.

## **II. THE COMPASSION OF CHRIST OUR HIGH PRIEST**

### **A. The Experience of The Ministry of Christ** – 4:15; 5:2

1. Touched – 4:15 – *“touched with the feeling of our infirmities”*
  - a. The phrase “touched with the feeling” is from the Greek word “sumpatheo”. It means “to be affected with the same feeling as another, to sympathize with; to feel for.” The root “patheo” means “to suffer” and is qualified by the prefix “sum” which means “with”.
  - b. The word “touched” reveals the method in which Christ is able to be compassionate towards the believer. He can be compassionate because He has “made contact” with humanity. In English the word “touched” may also be defined as “commiserate” which means “to pity; to feel sorrow on behalf of one in distress.” Christ knows our distress because He was made like unto us.
2. Tempted – 4:15 – *“in all points tempted like as we are”*
  - a. The word tempted is “peirazo (pi-rad'-zo)” and means Christ was “tested under intense scrutiny.” His claim to be the sinless Lamb of God was closely examined.
  - b. The temptation of Christ is qualified by the phrase “in all points”. The word has a two-fold definition.
    1. Individually – He faced each sin we face on a one to one basis.
    2. Collectively – Christ faced some of all types of temptation. He faced every possible method and means of temptation. All temptations shared by believers today were placed upon Christ.

### **B. The Excellence of The Ministry of Christ** – 4:15 – *“yet without sin”*

1. Many scholars have used the phrase “yet without sin” to promote the idea that it was possible for Christ to succumb to temptation. Such statements are made that “no sin ever resulted from the temptations of Christ.” This type of statement implies that there was a possibility of transgression. Their attitude is “it just so happened” that Christ never sinned. Let’s look at the definition of “without sin”.
2. The term “without” comes from “choris” and is defined as “separate, apart.” Christ did not fail in His temptation because He is “separate from sinners” in that He has no sin nature within Him. There was “space between Christ and the sinner.” Hebrews 7:26 – *“For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners...”* The word “separate” is a derivative of “choris”.
3. Notice the Contrast of Christ and the priests of the Old Testament. In 5:2, we read that every high priest among men is “compassed with infirmity.” This reveals the superiority of Christ as our High Priest.
  - a. The term “compassed” is from the Greek word “perikeimai (per-ik'-i-mahee)” and means earthly priests are “encircled” with infirmity. The word picture is that of obstacles “lying all around” a person which hampers them from their activities. “Hanging around” the Levitical priest was his own sinful nature that inhibited his service.
  - b. The Levitical priest was “full” of infirmity. Christ only “feels” infirmity.

### **C. The Extent of The Ministry of Christ** – 4:15; 5:2 – *“our infirmities...the ignorant... out of the way”*

1. Our Infirmities – 4:15 – The Greek word for infirmities is “astheneia” and is defined as “feebleness of mind or body.” It relates to the frailty of the body due to sickness and disease. This speaks of those who have been scarred by sin.
2. The Ignorant – 5:2 – Here we find the word “agnoeo” and it describes a person that “does not know due to lack of knowledge or intelligence”. Usually it refers to a person who does not know because he “ignores” the truth presented to him. This speaks of our misunderstanding of circumstances.
3. Those out of the Way – 5:2 – This is the most common failure of believer’s today. The Greek word for “those out of the way” is “planao” and describes the action of “roaming, wandering, being led astray.” It always portrays the thought of someone “roaming” from safety or truth. This speaks of the backslidden believer who steps off the right course.

## **III. THE CHARACTER OF CHRIST OUR HIGH PRIEST**

### **A. The Sufferings Of Christ** – 5:7 – *“Who in the days of his flesh...”*

1. Verses 7 and 8 reveal the humanity of Christ and how He was affected by the flesh. He depended upon God in the same manner we are to depend upon Him.
2. Prayers and Supplications – Christ entreated and petitioned God for strength in His trials. Christ depended upon the power of God to help Him. He left His followers a perfect example to follow.
3. Strong Crying and Tears – This description of the prayers of Christ reveal His fervency in prayer. No

doubt this verse references Christ as He was praying in the Garden of Gethesemane. He was in “soul travail”. The sufferings of Christ were real and most definitely severe to require such effort of prayer.

4. The prayers of Christ were answered because He “feared”. The word “feared” may be defined as “caution in the sense of reverence.” This shows the attitude of Christ in His request.

**B. The Submission Of Christ** – 5:8 – “*yet learned he obedience*”

1. His Prominent Position – He was a Son. We tend to forget the glory and splendor which were in the possession of Christ. This gave Him the option of rejecting any request for His involvement in paying our sin debt. He was not forced to become the sacrifice. He willingly lay down His life. He who was a Son who chose to become a Servant that we might be made the Sons of God in Him.
2. He Learned – We know that Christ as God is omniscient. How could He “learn” anything? The word learned has many different uses and applications, but here it refers to the act of understanding. Christ became human to get human perspective on obedience and this quality is what makes Him the perfect priest. His sufferings allowed Him to understand our frailty.
3. He Learned Obedience – The word obedience means “attentive hearkening, or compliance.” Obedience is the greatest quality to be found in a servant. This quality was exhibited in the life of Christ as He subjected Himself to the will of God and died for the sinner. Phil 2:8 – “*And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.*” The word obedient here is a variation of the same word used in Hebrews 5:8.

**C. The Success Of Christ** – 5:9 – “*he became the author of eternal salvation*”

1. Being Made Perfect – This phrase comes from the Greek word “teleioo (tel-i-o'-o)” meaning “to complete; to accomplish, to consummate.” It does not mean Christ was imperfect before He died on the Cross. It refers to His complete work upon Calvary. When Christ began His ministry He stated, “I will build my church.” On the cross He cried, “It is finished.” The word for “it is finished” is derived from the same source as “being made perfect.” Christ completed the mission He was sent forth to do. Isa 55:11 – “*So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.*” This statement may be applied to both the Written and Living Word of God. Christ was sent out and He did not return void, but He accomplished what He was sent forth to do.
2. The Author of Salvation – The word author is “aitios (ah'-ee-tee-os)” and means “causative.” Christ was the “causer” of eternal salvation. This is an effect which could never have been caused by Aaron or his priesthood. There are two Greek words for Author.
  - a. Aitios = “a causative” – Hebrews 5:9
  - b. Archegos (ar-khay-gos') = “a chief leader” – Hebrews 12:2
3. Christ is both the Cause and Captain of our salvation. He effected it and He executes it!

## PARENTHETICAL: A LEGAL PERSPECTIVE OF HEBREWS 6 – LESSON 9

### **Hebrews 5:11-14; 6:1-12**

**Introduction:** This chapter is considered the most controversial passage in the Epistle to the Hebrews. This lesson has been taken from the interpretation of Dr. Winston Mazakis, who I feel has interpreted the passage in a clear and correct manner. Following are notes from the study of his interpretation found in chapters 12 and 13 of the book *Those Two Covenants*. For copies of this book please call or write Macedonia Baptist College.

To understand Hebrews 6, we must take the following steps.

1. We should take the advice of I Corinthians 2:13, “*comparing spiritual things with spiritual.*” The one thing we must do is study this passage in light of all the Bible has to about salvation.
2. We must study the historical setting in which this passage was written.
3. We must not confuse the meaning of the words used in the passage.
4. We must become acquainted with the writer’s intentions.

The debate of Hebrews 6 centers on the question “Can a man lose his salvation?” The great debate is between Armenian and Baptist Doctrine. Armenians believe this passage teaches that a believer can “fall away” from salvation.

To understand the correct interpretation of the passage, keep in your mind the key word of the passage which is found in verse 4. It is the word “impossible”. The key to understanding this difficult passage is to approach it legally and not religiously or critically. Hebrews 6 is one of the strongest arguments for eternal security. Paul explains the doctrine of salvation from a legal perspective. Approach this legal study paralleling it with contracts made between men. The answers to the following questions will give a clear interpretation of the passage.

### **Lesson Goals:**

1. Understand the context of Hebrews 6.
2. Determine the correct interpretation of the passage.
3. Expose the error of interpreting Hebrews 6 to support the idea that a Christian can lose his salvation.

### **Definitions of Important Terms/Phrases:**

1. Enlightened – “to shed rays, i.e. to shine or (transitively) to brighten up (literally or figuratively): to illuminate.”
2. Tasted – “to experience”
3. Partaker – “A participant, i.e. (as noun) a sharer; by implication an associate; fellow, partaker, partner.”

### **I. CAN A CHRISTIAN LOSE HIS SALVATION?**

**A. This is the first question that must be answered.** Many Armenians and holiness groups use Hebrews 6 to promote their doctrine that a man may lose his salvation many times and regain it.

**B. We must remember that Scripture** cannot be broken or used in a manner which contradicts other Scripture. If one studies the doctrine of salvation in light of all Scripture, we soon find that the Bible as a whole does not teach a man can lose his salvation. If we consider Hebrews 6 as grounds for losing one’s salvation we are saying it contradicts with the Scripture. This is heresy.

**C. Armenians raise the following question.** “What about those who profess Christ but later return to the world to live sinful lives to their death?” I John 2:19 states, “*They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us; but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.*” True believers persevere.

**D. The strongest argument** against the loss and regain of salvation is the **Legal/Theological Issue**. A person is saved as a result of entering a new covenant with God. The New Covenant is made possible by the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. “If” a person could lose his salvation, he would be annulling the New Covenant. If he annulled the New Covenant, to regain his salvation a third covenant would be necessary. He would have to enter a different covenant with God. Legally, a person cannot re-enter into a covenant that has been renounced, revoked, and made void. If this could happen, the only way one could regain salvation would be for Christ to return to earth and die a second death.

**E. So the only way to regain a lost salvation is the establishment of a third covenant.** The only way a third covenant could be established is for Christ to repeat his work as our Saviour. Paul tells the Hebrew Christians this would be impossible. Christ died “once” and his offering will never be repeated.

**F. A man can not lose his salvation** because he is bound in a legal contract with God. Think of it in the following manner. “If you sign a loan contract with a bank, you cannot annul it at will. You are legally bound by its terms. In the same token, God gave us a privilege to “refinance” our debt to Him, by giving

us the New Covenant. God provided for the annulment of the first, NOT US. We as debtors can annul nothing. We did nothing for the establishing of the New Covenant. It was totally and absolutely His grace. If you cannot annul your loan contract with the bank, how do you expect to have the ability to annul a covenant with God, when you are the debtor? God Himself declared that the New Covenant is eternal, with no intention to annul it. Therefore, when you enter in covenant with God, by accepting Christ as personal Saviour, you are saved forever, with no provision for the loss of that great and eternal salvation.”

*Those Two Covenants*, page 118.

**II. WERE THE PEOPLE MENTIONED IN HEBREWS 6 SAVED?** – Some “scholars” who attempt to explain Hebrews 6, describe the people of Hebrews 6 as those who are not really saved, but they have “tasted” salvation. Could this be possible? Does the passage support this thought? These “scholars” teach that these people were on the brink of salvation but their refusal to fully accept Christ caused them to fall away from redemption. To see if these people were saved or lost we must understand the meaning of the following descriptions.

**A. “Enlightened”** – vs. 4 – Kenneth S. Wuest describes the people as “They were enlightened as every sinner is enlightened who comes under the hearing of God’s Word. As the unsaved in an evangelistic meeting today clearly understand the message of salvation but sometimes refuse the light and turn back into darkness of sin and continued unbelief, so these Hebrews were in danger of doing a like thing.” (p.114)

1. First, a sinner can not be enlightened in darkness and continue in darkness. This is a contradiction in terms. Either you are in darkness or light. There is no middle ground.
2. The Bible uses the word “enlightened” as a synonymous word with “saved”. See Job 33:30 and also Hebrews 10:32 – “*But call to remembrance the former day, in which, after ye were illuminated...*” This word in the Greek is the same as “enlightened.” The Bible never uses a word in one verse to have a certain meaning and then use it in another verse with an opposite meaning.
3. Eph. 1:18 – “*The eyes of your understanding being enlightened...*”
4. The word “enlightened” was never used to describe the unsaved, but it is used to indicate salvation and greater in-depth knowledge of God for the Christian.

**B. “Tasted”** – vs. 4 – Many Bible teachers believe that this word means these people tasted the “sweetness” of salvation, but never actually received the gift itself. We must ask ourselves, “Is there a difference between tasting and eating?”

1. How many bites did it take for Adam and Eve to become sinners? Only One!
2. God Himself stated “*O taste and see that the Lord is good.*” Psalms 34:8 We see from this verse that “tasting” is indeed the “full experience.”
3. The greatest argument that “tasting” is sufficient for salvation is the fact that Jesus “tasted” death for all men to purchase our salvation. Hebrews 2:9 – “*But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor, that he, by the grace of God, should taste death for every man?*” Do you believe Jesus fully experienced death? Of course.
4. The meaning of the word “taste” does not change from one verse to another. If Adam fully experienced the forbidden fruit, if one taste discerns that the Lord is good, if Christ fully experienced death, then the people of Hebrews 6 were truly saved.

**C. “Partakers of the Holy Ghost”** – vs. 4 – Dr. H. A. Ironside wrote the following statement concerning the meaning of “partakers of the Holy Ghost.” “It was not that the Holy Spirit as a divine person ever indwelt them, but they had participated in the blessing that the Spirit had given... To be a ‘partaker of the Holy Spirit’ is not at all the same thing as to be born of the Spirit, anointed by the Spirit, indwelt by the Spirit, baptized by the Spirit into the body of Christ, or filled with the Spirit.”

1. The problem with this interpretation is accepting the idea that the Holy Spirit forms partnerships with unbelievers. How can the Holy Spirit be united with an unrighteous party? Remember the Spirit commands the believer not to be “unequally yoked” with unbelievers. Yet He can be yoked with unbelievers? Of course not!
2. The Bible labels the Christian as being partakers.
  1. Partakers of the inheritance of the Saints – Co. 1:12
  2. Partakers of the Heavenly calling – Hebrews 3:1
  3. Partakers of Christ – Hebrews 3:14
  4. Partakers of His holiness – Hebrews 12:10
  5. Partakers of the divine nature – II Peter 1:4
3. If a sinner is recognized as saved when he partakes of those things listed in the last point, why would the

sinner not be considered saved when he is a “partaker of the Holy Spirit”?

4. The most significant argument that these people were saved is the fact that all three descriptions of “enlightened, tasted, and partakers” are found together. Certainly, these people were saved.

### **III. WHAT IS THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE PASSAGE?**

**A. Remember Paul is writing this epistle to believers who are going through a time of extreme persecution.** These Christians endured great afflictions, were made a gazingstock, their properties were robbed and plundered. This was a terrible time of persecution.

**B. Under the relentless assault of wicked Roman emperors** and Jewish leaders many believers had been murdered. We always like to think of the great heroes of faith that were willing to suffer death for their profession of faith in Christ. However, **many Christians at this time renounced their faith.** In weakness, these Christians forsook the Gospel in order to spare their lives and their possessions. This is not something we are proud of, nevertheless, it is a historical fact.

**C. When the persecution had subsided,** many of these Christians who had renounced their faith came back to the Church seeking forgiveness and restoration. Those Christians who had remained faithful to their testimony of Christ would not allow these “cowards of the faith” back into the church except they repent of their sins and be saved again.

**D. This is the purpose for Paul writing the content of chapter 6.** At the end of chapter 5, Paul reprimands the condescending leadership for their ignorance concerning the matter. In chapter 6, he gives a legal explanation why these Christians who had denounced their could not be born again. It is impossible, because Christ would have to be crucified again in order to establish a third covenant.

**E. The following example will help in understanding** what Paul meant when he said “go on to perfection.” What if a college student in his second year was unable to finish his studies due to some unfortunate circumstance? He drops out in the second year of college. Suppose one year later he is able to resolve the situation and returns to the dean of students to be reinstated. Would this man be required to go back to kindergarten and start his whole education experience over? Of course not. He simply would pick up his studies where he dropped out, namely, the second year of college.

**Conclusion:** Remember the key to correctly interpreting Hebrews 6 is to bring into consideration the legal aspect of our new covenant with God. Also we must understand the historical circumstances of persecution surrounding the Hebrew Christians. Paul is instructing the leaders of the Church to receive those who had renounced Christ as brethren and not to require a second profession of faith, because a second profession would require a new covenant. Christ can not come again and be crucified afresh!

For more information on Hebrews 6, please contact Macedonia Baptist College to order Dr. Mazakis’ book, **Those Two Covenants.** This book is an excellent study to understand the legal ramifications of the Old and New Covenants.

## **CHRIST: CONFIRMED AND COMPARED – LESSON 10**

### **Hebrews 6:13-20; 7:1-10**

**Introduction:** After giving the parenthetical warning at the beginning of chapter six, Paul continues his argument that Christ is a better priest beginning in Hebrews 6:13. In chapter 5, Paul presented the argument that Christ was a better high priest because He perfectly met all qualifications of entering the priesthood. Also he emphasized the fact that Christ was better in that although He was tempted, He knew no sin.

Now Paul begins to argue of the superiority of Christ by contrasting His priesthood with Aaron's priesthood. He does this by introducing Melchisedec who was a Father Priest in the days of Abraham. Our study will be divided into two sections.

### **Lesson Goals:**

1. To show how Christ ministry was the fulfillment of the Abrahamic Covenant.
2. Draw attention to the two immutable things which God uses to guarantee His word.
3. Study the life and ministry of Melchisedec and teach why Christ is after his order of priesthood.

### **Definitions of Important Terms/Phrases:**

1. Melchisedec – “my king is righteous”
2. Immutable – Invariable; unalterable; not capable or susceptible of change

## **I. THE CONFIRMATION OF CHRIST OUR HIGH PRIEST – 6:13-20**

### **A. The Covenant of Abraham** – vs. 13-15 – “*God made promise to Abraham*”

1. Paul uses the Covenant made with Abraham by God as an example of the surety that what God ordains He will ultimately complete. The importance here is not necessarily the content of the covenant. Paul could have used many other examples where God remained true to His word. The Hebrews were very familiar with the Abrahamic Covenant and knew God had kept His word to this point.
2. When God made the promise to Abraham, He swore by His own name because there was nothing greater than God Himself. Here we see the important application of Paul's argument. The promise of God was solely dependent upon the faithfulness of God. It was not based upon man's ability to keep any terms.
3. Although Abraham had to “patiently endure”, God brought to pass that which He had promised. The hardships endured by Abraham aptly apply to the circumstances of the Hebrews to whom Paul's letter is written. Like Abraham, they have been “long-spirited” enduring many persecutions and afflictions. Paul is exhorting them to endure because God has shown “unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel.” He revealed the immutability of His counsel by... The Confirmation of Christ.

### **B. The Confirmation of Christ** – vs. 16-20

1. In verse 16 we see two methods to guarantee a contract between two men.
  - a. Swearing – This is a statement of declaration which promises specific action.
  - b. Oath – This is the recording of such a statement which restrains or limits the person to the promise made. We may consider the physical contract made between two parties.
2. We see the importance of the Oath in verse 16. It is more than “hear-say”. It is the only document that can end all strife between disagreeing parties.
3. In verse 17, we see God justifying His promise by means of human practice. Verse 17 reveals the desire of God to prove Himself to the heirs of the promise. God wanted to show you and me, the benefactors of the Covenant of Abraham, that He meant what He said. Therefore He confirmed it with an oath.
4. What are the Two Immutable Things?
  - a. The Will of God – vs. 17 – “*his counsel*” – The mind of God never changes. He is the same yesterday, today, and for ever more. However, God knew that we might cause strife by arguing over what we think God's will is for salvation, the future, the church, and other important doctrines. We may even doubt His “declaration” given to Abraham that He would send Christ to “bless” His seed.
  - b. The Word Of God – vs. 17 – “*an oath*” – Knowing we might doubt, God confirmed His promise of Christ as our perfect sacrifice and mediator by giving us a written oath. Anytime we find ourselves debating the counsel of God, we can open His “oath” and discover the truth. You may notice the Bible tells us when God gave the promise to Abraham there was none greater than God. Therefore God swore by Himself. Now there is something greater than God. Ps 138:2 – “*I will worship toward thy holy temple, and praise thy name for thy lovingkindness and for thy truth: for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name.*” The word magnified here means He “made it greater and higher”.

### **C. The Consolation of the Believer** – vs. 18-20 – “*that we might have a strong consolation...*”

1. Paul is writing to Jewish believers who are under the stress of persecution and in danger of renouncing their faith in the Lord and returning to the Jewish Religion. He compares the Christian life to that of a boat on a stormy sea.
2. Life of the Believer is Like the sea – A Storm is coming!
  - a. The soul is the Ship
  - b. Hope is the anchor
  - c. Christ is the hidden rock.
3. The purpose of the anchor is to keep the ship from being wrecked. The only thing that will keep us from quitting is the anchor of God’s everlasting truths. The oath or Word of God is a “strong consolation.”
4. Eph. 4:14 – “*That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine.*” The anchor of the Word stabilizes the believer.
5. The anchor is constructed of metal. It is made tough to withstand any strain because lives depend on it. It consists of two parts, like a double fishhook – vs. 18 – “That by two immutable (unchangeable) things” Our hope is based on God’s promise and pledge
6. The weight and size of the anchor is relevant to the size of the ship and the estimation of the storm.
7. The anchor is connected to a chain and both are forged from the same metal. Col. 1:27 – “*Christ in you the hope of glory.*” The Word of God which is my promise and my pledge lies within the veil but also lies within my heart. Inseparable, connected, linked, joined, united
8. The size of the chain depends on the weight of the anchor. Tell me the weight of God’s promises and I’ll tell you the size of our hope.
9. Vs. 19 – “Which hope we have” – We are conscious of two things: The Ship has got a hold on the Anchor but also the Anchor keeps its hold on the ship.
  - a. “*Sure*” – not fail – cannot be made to totter (stagger, stumble, trip) when put to the test. (It’ll work)
  - b. “*Steadfast*” – firm, solid, established; Something which will not break when put under stress.
10. The control of the anchor is unseen. Vs. 19 – “*which entereth into that within the veil.*” When the anchor has been cast out of the ship into the sea, and gets a firm grip upon the “rock” on the ocean floor the more the ship is pulled the tighter the anchor holds. The anchor is made so that the greater the pull, the deeper the anchor digs in.

## **II. THE COMPARISON OF CHRIST & MELCHISEDEC** – 7:1-10

### **A. The Controversy of Melchisedec** – vs. 1-3

1. Many have considered Melchisedec as a “supernatural” character because of the mystical manner in which he is presented in the Scripture. Like many other “controversial” subjects, the misunderstanding of Melchisedec’s existence is surrounded by speculation. Many believe Melchisedec is actually Christ. However this belief is a gross exaggeration of the facts presented in the Scripture. The key to understanding this man is to realize that Paul is writing to emphasize the order of the priesthood which Melchisedec represents and not the man himself. Paul is clever in his tactics of debate. He offers Melchisedec in a mystical manner to reveal the symbolism of his life to that of Christ’s.
2. The descriptions given by Paul of Melchisedec have been exaggerated because of misconception of what these words mean. We will look at the descriptions given by Paul of this great historical figure.
  - a. “*King of righteousness*” – Does this describe Christ? The key to this title is “first being by interpretation”. This is simply the definition of his name. He was a king that could be identified by his righteous acts as many of the kings of Israel were identified. Melchisedec = “my king is righteous”
  - b. “*King of peace*” – King of Salem – This is the place where he ruled as king. It was “Jebus” which later became the city of Jerusalem or the city of peace. This does not identify him with Christ.
  - c. “*Without father, without mother, without descent*” – Many stop here and state “This must be Christ!” However we misunderstand that these descriptions do not mean he was not born naturally. These descriptions describe the manner in which Melchisedec was presented in the book of Genesis. He was presented without any record of his “genealogy”. This is what “descent” means. The importance of the omissions of Melchisedec’s father is that it shows he did not receive his titles and honours from his father as did the priests of the Levitical order.
  - d. “*Having neither beginning of days, nor end of life*” – Because we have no record of his birth and death through genealogical records his life is given greater dignity and better represents Christ.
  - e. “*Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils*” – Many have concluded this action to suggest Melchisedec as

Christ. Why did Abraham pay him tithes? Melchisedec was the supreme chief of the entire nation, around him were local tribes which were subject to his rule. This is why the King of Sodom also was present when Melchisedec met Abraham. It was common for all of the leadership, both spiritual and governmental, to come together. We see this in Job when the “sons of God” came together. The great historian Josephus confirms this by telling us he was the prince of a tribe of immigrants which had settled in the country. Also Egyptian history connects him with Pharaohs who succeeded him.

3. The Holy Spirit omitted certain facts about Melchisedec in order to present a more perfect type of Christ. This we see in verse 8. There is a witness that Melchisedec lives. That witness is the book of Genesis. Please keep in mind the emphasis of Paul’s argument is not placed upon Melchisedec himself, but upon the order of his priesthood which Christ was called after. Paul is not arguing for Melchisedec’s greatness, but he is using the facts of his recorded history to illustrate the superiority of Christ.
4. Here are some practical arguments against Melchisedec being Christ.
  - a. Christ does have a Father and a Mother.
  - b. Christ does have a genealogical record. Matthew 1:1-17
  - c. In verse 3, we see that Melchisedec was presented in a mystical manner to be “made like” Christ.
  - d. Melchisedec did have a “descent” according to verse 6, but it was not “counted” with Abraham’s.
  - e. Verse 23-24 explains to us why Melchisedec’s descent was not given. It would portray the continual priesthood because we have no record of his death. Therefore he “lives on” in our mind.
  - f. If Melchisedec was indeed Christ, Christ would have enacted his ministry as Priest before he had completed his office of Prophet. God never crosses dispensational lines. Christ was Prophet, Priest, and King.

#### **B. The Comparison Of Melchisedec**

1. Melchisedec was both King and Priest – He pictured the person of Christ as both Priest and King.
2. King of Righteousness and King of Peace – These describe the character of the Kingdom of Christ.
3. Without father, mother, descent – Picture the eternal nature of Christ.
4. Neither beginning of days, nor end of life – Christ will forever reign as our Priest and King. It also tells us Christ was and is not limited to a certain period where He may do His priestly work. He chose the moment He would enter the priesthood and has chosen the moment He will set up His kingdom.
5. Made like unto the Son of God – Made like unto means “assimilation” which is “the act of bringing one to resemble another.” Melchisedec was only a type.
6. The priesthood of Aaron was related only to the Hebrew congregation. Melchisedec’s priesthood consisted of a “world-wide” ministry. The King of Sodom was an Emim prince.

## **CHRIST: A BETTER PRIEST AND SAVIOUR – LESSON 11**

### **Hebrews 7:11-28**

**Introduction:** In our previous lesson we discussed the important symbolism shown in Paul's comparison of Christ with Melchisedec. Now we will look at Christ in contrast to the Levitical priesthood.

### **Lesson Goals:**

1. Contrast the weakness of the Levitical priesthood and the superiority of Christ, a priest after the order of Melchisedec.
2. Explain why the priesthood of Melchisedec is superior to the Aaronic priesthood.

### **Definitions of Important Terms/Phrases:**

1. Surety – Certainty; indubitableness; Security; safety; Foundation of stability; support; Evidence; ratification; confirmation; security against loss or damage; security for payment.
2. Uttermost – Adverb = Extreme; being in the furthest, greatest or highest degree; as the uttermost extent or end; the uttermost distress; Noun = the greatest

### **Things to consider:**

In the mind of the Jew, the Aaronic priesthood was viewed as being superior to Melchisedec. To the Jew it seemed that the Levitical priesthood was a replacement of the Melchisedec order. However, Paul illustrates to these Hebrew Christians that Christ is far superior to Aaron. He begins his argument by quoting King David from Psalms 110. *“Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec.”* This central thought surrounding the fact is that God gave these words to David while the Aaronic priesthood was in action. Therefore suggesting there was a greater accomplishment to be made than could ever be achieved by the Aaronic priesthood. Paul now presents his supporting arguments. Throughout the chapter he presents a contrast between the two orders of priesthood.

## **I. CHRIST: A BETTER PRIEST – 7:11-24 – THE ORDER OF MELCHISEDEC**

### **A. Christ: The Perfect Priest** – vs. 11 – *“If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood”*

1. We see in verse 11 the first contrast of Christ with the Levitical priesthood. Evidently, the Levitical priesthood was not able to produce perfection. Therefore another priest had to arise.
2. The term “perfection” is from the Greek word “teleiosis (tel-i'-o-sis)” and refers to the “act of completion or consummation.” It is connected with perfection in one's performance. It is closely related to the Greek word “teleo” which was the last word spoken by Christ on the cross when he stated “It is finished.”
3. Kenneth Wuest made the following statement concerning the use of the word perfection here. He stated: “An institution is perfect and complete when it effects the purpose for which it was instituted, and produces a result that corresponds to the idea of it.” We know that the purpose of the priesthood was to allow man a way to remove sin from his life and be reconciled to God. However, the Levitical priesthood never completed this task. Sin was only covered under the Levitical priesthood and this necessitated the coming of “another” priest. A priest was needed who could complete the job at hand.
4. Verse 18 tells us that the old priesthood was weak and unprofitable. This means it was without strength and was useless to remove sin permanently. Why? Did God ordain an “imperfect” order? No! The problem was the fact that the order of the Levitical priesthood was carried out by imperfect priest. This we see from Hebrews 8:7-8. The covenant had faults because of the priests who ministered.
5. The law made nothing completely finished. It took a perfect priest to bring us nigh to God.

### **B. Christ: The Prestigious Priest** – vs. 13-14 – *“Our Lord sprang out of the tribe of Juda”*

1. Here we see a historical argument from Paul that illustrates the superiority of Christ to Aaron. Verse 12 tells us that the law had to be changed because the priesthood was changed. In what way was the priesthood changed? Christ came from a tribe other than Levi. This is vitally important because Christ is not subject to the laws governing the Levitical priesthood.
2. If Christ was to be after the order of Melchisedec, He must fulfill both positions of priest and king. In order for this to happen Christ had to come through the royal line of Judah. It is from this tribe that the Davidic Kingdom proceeds. It is important to see in verse 14 that Moses spoke nothing of the tribe of Judah when placing regulations upon the priesthood. Why? Because Christ is in no way restricted by the jurisdiction of the Levitical priesthood. See the last main point on Christ: A Better Sacrifice.
3. Christ was both priest and king to perfectly stand as our mediator.

- a. As King Christ deals with God perfectly. He satisfies the Holiness of God.
  - b. As Priest Christ ministers to man perfectly. He understands the frailty of man.
4. The fact that Christ was made after the order of Melchisedec reveals His superiority because Melchisedec came before the Levitical priesthood. Also the Levitical priests paid tithes to Melchisedec because they are the descendants of Abraham. This illustrated the superiority of Christ. See verse 7.

**C. Christ: The Powerful Priest** – vs. 15-17 – *“the power of an endless life”*

1. In verse 16, we see the strength behind the ministry of Christ as our high priest. There is a very important contrast made in this verse between the priest made after the “carnal commandment” and Christ whose was made after the “power of an endless life.”
2. The Carnal Commandment – The use of the term “carnal” reveals the sphere of the Levitical priest. His appointment to the priesthood was dependent upon his “flesh”. The Levitical priest depended upon his ancestry, physical nature, health, and daily cleansing. There could be no physical ailments or deformities in his body. Every qualification of the Levite pertained to his flesh which was subject to the laws of nature.
3. Christ was made after the power of an endless life. The priesthood of Christ did not depend upon the nature of His flesh, but upon the nature of His spirit. The Levitical priest performed his duties because of the outward compulsion of the law’s demand. Christ did not perform His duties as high priest because of pressure from without. He did not become our high priest because that duty was laid upon Him. It was the essence of His holy nature that empowered Him to hang upon the cross overcoming the pain of natural man and then proving His internal power by getting out of the grave on the third day! Never had there lived a Levite who could overcome the laws of nature. Christ did because His priesthood was based upon an “endless” life. One which was “indestructible, or indissoluble.” This is why He rose from the grave.
4. Just a note – The believer also is made after this order. Therefore we perform our duties from a greater power within us and we are not subject to the frailty of the flesh. Our power stems from an “endless” life.

**D. Christ: The Prominent Priest** – vs. 20-22 – *“but this(Christ) with an oath”*

1. Here we discover another striking contrast. The priesthood of Melchisedec was ordered by an oath from God while the Aaronic or Levitical priesthood was not. This shows that the Aaronic priesthood lacked permanence, which is one of the most distinguished characteristics of the order of Melchisedec.
2. The contrast is made concerning the security of both priesthoods. The priesthood of Aaron was dependent or conditional upon the obedience of the priest. The priesthood of Christ was declared absolute by God Himself without any conditions to be met by humanity. Security of the Aaronic priesthood was man’s obedience. The security of the Melchisedec priesthood is God’s oath or pledge.
3. Verse 22 tells us that by the oath, “Jesus was made a surety of a better covenant.” The word “surety” is the Greek word “egguos (eng'-goo-os)” and is a “pledge”. In other words Christ is the guarantor or bondsman that guarantees the covenant. Christ is the guarantee that the legal obligation will be carried out to completion. Christ indeed now stands as our high priest contending on our behalf as an advocate.
4. Christ guarantees to men that God will never forsake them because the blood has provided a means of justification. Christ guarantees God that the believer will always be acceptable because we are in Christ.
5. To illustrate the position of Christ as a “surety” we may look back to the Old Testament to Genesis 43. In this passage Joseph demanded that upon their return to Egypt the sons of Jacob must bring Benjamin with them. To assure his father that Benjamin would not be hurt, Judah offered himself as a surety for his younger brother. Of course Joseph concealed a silver cup in Benjamin’s sack when they left Egypt to return to their father. This demanded that Benjamin be held captive in Egypt, but in Genesis 44:33, Judah again offers himself a surety for Benjamin to Joseph. Judah was willing to go to prison that Benjamin might be free. This is the heart of Christ, and before we would ever lose our salvation and be condemned to hell, Christ would take our place and go to hell for us. However, I don't think that will ever happen!
6. Another illustration of the doctrine of Christ as our surety is seen in Philemon where Paul tells Philemon to put on his account any wrong that Onesimus had done. Philemon 1:18 – *“If he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee ought, put that on my account.”*

**E. Christ: The Perpetual Priest** – vs. 23-24 – *“because he continueth ever”*

1. The greatest problem which plagued the Levitical priesthood was the fact that every Levite was subject to death, and death was the termination of their priesthood. According to Josephus, there were at least 83 high priest from Aaron to the destruction of the temple in 70 AD.
2. Here we see another great contrast. The Levitical priest was not able to “continue”. This is “parameno” and means he was unable “to remain beside or to continue always near” his ministrations. Therefore he

could not guarantee its success. However the next verse states that Christ “continueth ever”. This means His priesthood is permanent, and therefore it is “unchangeable.” The word “unchangeable” here doesn’t have the same meaning as the term “immutable” found in Hebrews 6:18. Here it is “aparabatos” and means the priesthood of Christ is “unviolated”. The idea is that of someone stepping over a boundary. Here the boundary is death, and this suggests that Christ’s priesthood will never be handed down or transferred because His office will never cease.

**II. CHRIST: A BETTER SAVIOUR – 7:25** – The word “uttermost” here is the key to the verse. It is the Greek word “panteles (pan-tel-ace)” and is defined as “full-ended, i.e. entire.” The salvation of Christ is “completely, wholly, entirely to the end.” We need an uttermost salvation because we are uttermost sinners.

**A. The Person Of Uttermost Salvation – “He is able”**

1. The salvation which is Christ is not a program. The Bible did not say “she” or “it” was able to save. This might have made reference to the church or an ordinance such as baptism or communion.
2. “He” – It’s not the Church, not clean living, not prayer, nor our strength, only through the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ. Acts 4:12 – *“Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.”*

**B. The Present Work of Uttermost Salvation – “He is able”**

1. The word is in the present Tense. Salvation is not an act of God for which we must wait. It is available now to all that come. Heb. 11:6 – *“He that cometh to God must believe that he IS.”*
2. The same God that talked with Abraham under the starry sky is present with you and me today. He was with Moses at the Red Sea and with Daniel in the Lion’s Den. Not only is our salvation in a person, but that person is ready, willing, and anxious to save. Luke 19:10 – *“Son of man is come to seek.”* I John 1:9 – *“Confess, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins.”*
3. Christ as a Lamb is described in two ways.
  - a. The Lamb Slain – The use of the term slain reveals to us the “fresh marks of slaughter” which are still upon Him. There are no scars upon Him, but fresh wounds.
  - b. The Lamb Standing – John saw the Lamb of God standing at the right hand of the Father. This is evidence that the Resurrection of Jesus is not a myth, but a fact. The same John who saw Him dead on Calvary, sees Him alive in heaven.
4. Paul doesn’t describe Jesus as saving in the past or future, but that He can save right now.

**C. The Power Of Uttermost Salvation – “He is able”**

1. Matt. 28:18 – *“And Jesus came and spake unto them saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.”* If Jesus ever touches you, you will never be the same! Every person that came to Christ left a different way. We see this demonstrated as He touched the deaf, blind, lepers, dumb, dead, and the possessed. Jesus has the power to make the sinner different.
2. The word “able” here is “dunamai (doo'-nam-ahee)” and is the word from which we derive “dynamite.” When you receive Christ, you experience His power. A variation of the word is used in Mark 5:30 when the woman with an issue of blood touched the hem of Christ’s garment. Christ felt “virtue” or “dunamis” go out of Him. Thank God for the saving “force” of Christ.

**D. The Purpose Of Uttermost Salvation – “He is able to save”**

1. The word save implies sin. Sin has wrecked humanity leaving behind those afflicted and condemned by its terrible consequences.
2. The word “save” here means God is able to “make safe; to deliver or protect” the sinner that is bound in the chains of iniquity. In other places in the KJB it is used as “heal, preserve, do well, be (make) whole.”
3. If there is anything this Bible teaches, it is that the Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which is lost. Every book in the Old & New Testament testifies of His wonderful purpose.

**E. The Provision Of Uttermost Salvation – “save to the uttermost”**

1. There is no case too bad, no life so wrecked, no stain too deep. Christ can save to the uttermost.
2. Saved from the Uttermost of the Past – Isa. 55:7 – *“Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon”* The word abundantly is so important here. It means God will bring you out farther than you were in.
3. Saved to the Uttermost of the Future – I Cor. 10:13 – *“There hath no temptation taken you but such as in common to man: BUT GOD IS FAITHFUL, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able, but will with the temptation also make a way to escape that ye may be able to bear it”* God

is able to make us able. It is His faithfulness that makes us able!

**F. The Proposal Of Uttermost Salvation** – *“That come unto God by him”*

1. You Must Come – God will never force any one to receive his great salvation. Man must choose salvation according to his own free will.
2. You Must Come to God – “Salvation is of the Lord”
3. Here is the biggest problem most sinners face. You must come “By Him” God cannot be approached except by Jesus. Illustration – A Little girl was crying outside the gate of the palace. A man comes along and the girl told him, “Guards won't let me in.” The man takes her by the hand and leads her past the guards into the Palace. She excitedly asks, “How did you do that?” He answered, “Well, I'm the Prince and anybody that comes with me gets to see the king.”

**G. The Promise of Uttermost Salvation** – *“Seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them”*

1. Once you are saved Christ stands as your lawyer to defend you against Satan's accusations
2. Jesus the “surety” of our salvation. See previous point in lesson.

## **CHRIST: A BETTER OFFERING AND OFFICE – LESSON 12**

### **Hebrews 7:26-28; 8:1-6**

**Introduction:** In our last study we looked at the contrast of Jesus Christ our high priest and Aaron the high priest of the congregation of Israel. This lesson will be a continuation of that study. Paul presented a total of four arguments for the superiority of Christ: A Better Priest, Saviour, Offering and Office.

Remember, Paul is offering arguments to the Jews to reveal the perfection of Christ as a High Priest. Paul offers the arguments to support the fact of the superior nature of Christ's ministry.

### **Lesson Goals:**

1. Study the sacrifice which Christ offered as the perfect High Priest and perfect Lamb.
2. Emphasize the superior nature of Christ's ministry as our High Priest.

### **Definitions of Important Terms/Phrases:**

1. Condescension – Voluntary descent from rank, dignity or just claims; relinquishment of strict right; submission to inferiors in granting requests or performing acts which strict justice does not require.
2. Mediator – One that interposes between parties at variance for the purpose of reconciling them.

## **I. THE SACRIFICIAL OFFERING OF CHRIST – 7:26-28**

### **A. The Condescension Of Christ** – vs. 26 – *“For such an high priest became us.”*

1. The important word here is “became”. It is from the Greek word “prepo (prep'-o)” and by implication means “that which is suitable or proper.” It literally means “to be the perfect fit.” Paul argues that there has never lived a man who so perfectly suits the sinner for salvation.
2. Jesus is all that we need because of His experiences as a man. The incarnation of Christ allows Him to be “touched with the feeling of our infirmities.” In order to be the perfect Saviour for mankind, Jesus had to be both divine and human. Jesus was exactly like us except in the aspect of sinfulness.
3. Another important word in this verse is “for”. This small word links verse 26 to verse 25. In many versions, like the NIV, this word is omitted. Why is its presence so important? Verse 25 declares to the believer what Christ IS. Verse 26 declares to the believer what Christ DOES! Christ intercedes as He does because of the fact of who He is.

### **B. The Character Of Christ** – vs. 26 – *“who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners”*

1. Christ is Holy – The use of the word “holy” here denotes the personal holiness of Christ and how this relates to His being the perfect sacrifice for the sins of humanity. Christ was undefiled by sin, and free from any form of iniquity. Christ fulfilled the law completely. He was not lacking in any religious or moral obligation.
2. Christ is Harmless – The word “harmless” is defined as “totally free from fraud or guilt”. Christ is totally free from guilt or fraud because He is “innocent”.
3. Christ is Undefiled – The word “undefiled” reveals the “unspoiled” nature of Christ. He knew no sin. He was pure and unspotted by sin. There is a great contrast here from the ceremonial cleansing of the Levitical priesthood and the purity of Christ, which was based upon His moral essence.
4. Christ is Separate – The term “separate” reveals the sinless nature of the Lord. He could not sin because He was on a different moral level than mankind. The word “separate” literally means to “put room in between.” Certainly, there is a great difference between sinners and Christ.

### **C. The Completion Of Christ** – vs. 27 – *“Who needeth not daily... to offer up sacrifice”*

1. This is one of the greatest passages in the New Testament for the doctrine of salvation by the blood of Christ. It is also considered the greatest Scriptural argument against such religious sacraments as the Mass of Roman Catholicism. Christ made an offering for sins once and this action will never be repeated.
2. The One Time offering for atonement of sin reveals two important truths.
  - a. A Complete Saviour – *“to offer up sacrifice, first for himself”* – This references the importance of Christ being a priest after the order of Melchisedec. It also illustrates the sinlessness of Christ. The sin of Aaron and his sons called for repetition in the atonement of sins. However, Christ only needed to offer himself once for sins. Paul again illustrates the superiority of Christ to Aaron because Christ offered the “real thing” while the sacrifices of Aaron and his sons were merely pictorial.
  - b. A Complete Salvation – Because the offering of Christ was acceptable, the believer can now rest in full assurance that his salvation is complete. The question we should ask ourselves is “Who must be

satisfied in order for us to gain eternal redemption?" The answer is God, and we know from the present position of Christ, that God is most definitely satisfied.

3. Although the one time sacrifice for sins is significant to the doctrine of eternal security to the believer, the student should realize the main purpose for Paul's presentation of this fact is for the magnifications of Jesus' superior priesthood. We know this from the statement "needeth not daily... to offer up sacrifice." This statement qualifies the sacrifice as being for the transgression of the priest and not the people. The high priest of the tabernacle offered a sacrifice for the atonement of the people only once a year. We learn from Leviticus 4:2-3 that if the priest committed a sin during his "daily" work, he must offer a sin-offering to ensure his acceptance for the ministry.
4. The importance of Paul's argument is centered on Christ and not the Christian.

**D. The Consecration of Christ** – vs. 26, 28 – "*made higher than the angels... consecrated for evermore.*"

1. Christ is forever a priest after the order of Melchisedec. This fact exempts Christ from the practices of the Levitical priesthood. If Christ had been a priest after the order of the Levites He would have been required to offer a sacrifice for Himself before offering one for the sinner. If this had taken place, He would have exhausted the means by which we are saved.
2. Why is the Priesthood of Christ superior? What makes the difference between Christ and Aaron? It is the fact that the priesthood of Christ was established by an oath. God's oath is forever settled.
3. The oath "maketh the Son, consecrated forever." His office can never change because His calling can never be repented of by God. Christ has been "set apart" for the purpose of man's complete redemption. The phrase "consecrated forever" used in this verse means the priesthood of Christ is "eternally complete."
4. Paul stated earlier in verse 26 that Christ has been made higher than the heavens. See Phil 2:9-11.

**II. THE SUPERIOR OFFICE OF CHRIST – 8:1-6** – Paul begins chapter 8 with the declaration that he has reached the main thought behind all the arguments he has presented to this point. Critics of the King James Bible are very quick in their accusations that in verse 1 there is a "misinterpretation". The controversy surrounds the word "sum". It is the Greek word "kephalaion (kef-al'-ah-yon)" and is defined as "the main point". These "giants" of textual criticism say the phrase "Now of these things which we have spoken" is an incorrect translation from the Greek because the term "sum" does not mean "a conclusion" but a "principle or main thing". In their accusation, they assume the translation is putting the emphasis on what has already been stated instead of those statements which follow. What they seem to misunderstand is that Paul is simply stating the fact that all his arguments are under the main heading of "We have an high priest". All the arguments to this point were made by Paul to support this "main idea". The KJV is correct.

**A. The Majesty of His Seat** – vs. 1 – "*set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens*"

1. The use of the term "Majesty" denotes reverence to God for who He is. It is from the Greek word "megalosune (meg-al-o-soo'-nay)" and refers to the "greatness" of God.
2. The position of Christ is very important. Only those worthy of high honour were placed beside the King.
3. Even greater is the idea of completion presented by this description of Christ. In the Levitical priesthood we see no time or place for rest. The sins of the people demanded a sacrifice and the sufficiency of the sacrifices presented demanded much repetition. Christ is now "seated". His work has been accomplished.
4. We also need to stress the importance of the word "set" in the KJV. It has been changed in the NIV and NASV translations of the bible. The NIV replaces "set" with "who sat down". The NASV reads, "who has taken his seat". One may question, "What is so important about this small word?" There is a great theological difference between "set" and "sat". Jesus did not assume His seat, but was placed there by the divine oath of God. This reveals the satisfaction of God the Father with His Son.

**B. The Ministry of the Sanctuary** – vs. 2 – "*A minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle...*"

1. Immediately following the declaration of the highly exalted position of Christ, Paul offers a contrast. Christ is also a Servant that ministers in those things which God has consecrated. His enthroned position allows for expiatory purpose.
2. In verses 2 through 6, Paul explains to these Hebrew Christians that the purpose of the tabernacle was to be a shadow of that which is perfect. Every detail, both material and ceremonial, pointed to Christ.

**C. The Mediator Of Our Security** – vs. 6 – "*he is the mediator of a better covenant*"

1. The word "mediator" is a legal term for one who "arbitrates between two parties".
2. Christ is the one who reconciled the sinner to God.