

Hebrews, Part 5

Key words: better (13x), perfect (14x in Greek), eternal

What Jesus gives us is **better** because it gives us **perfect** standing before Him, and because it is **eternal!**

In chapter one, Paul gives us several quotations back-to-back from the Old Testament, in order to prove that Jesus is BETTER than angels.

In chapter two, Paul shows us that Jesus was made “a little LOWER than the angels” – God took on a human nature that He had never possessed so we could take on a divine nature that we had never possessed!

In chapter three, to show these Jewish Christians that going back to the Law would be futile, Paul proves that Jesus is BETTER than Moses.

In chapter four, Paul warns us against hardening our hearts – if we do, we will miss the REST God has for us, just like Israel did in the OT.

In chapter five, Paul proves that Jesus has an eternal (and surprisingly sympathetic!) priesthood that is BETTER than the priesthood of Aaron.

In chapter six, Paul exhorts these believers to GROW UP and MOVE FORWARD, because if they don't they will go backwards spiritually

Growing OLD without growing UP is a tragedy! It is natural that babies should desire only milk, and we expect them to be deficient in their maturity. But if these things are still happening years later there is a serious problem (and this applies both physically and spiritually).

There is a time in every Christian life when we must graduate from MILK to MEAT (solid food). It is at this stage that we become more than just BELIEVERS – we take on the responsibility of becoming DISCIPLES.

Anything that refuses to grow and change will eventually die. In fact, a clinical definition of death is a body that does not change. If you are not moving forward in your Christian life, you are backsliding.

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

“THEREFORE” – “what therefore is there for!” – we must do this because of all that Jesus has done for us (chapters 1-5)

“LEAVING” – not “leaving behind” but “moving beyond” the principles
“PERFECTION” = “maturity, completeness”

Foundational truths:

- Repentance from dead works
- Faith toward God
- The doctrine of baptisms (plural - water and Spirit baptism)
- Laying on of hands (healing, calling, gifting)
- Resurrection of the dead
- Eternal judgment

Hebrews 6:4-6 For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.

Is this the “unpardonable sin”? Yes and no. In verse 6, the words “crucify” and “put” are present participles in the Greek ... “WHILE they are crucifying” and “WHILE they are putting” ... they refer to an ongoing action. In other words, no one who “falls away” (backslides) can be renewed WHILE they are continuing the same actions that took them away from God in the first place! They have to TURN AROUND.

The “unpardonable sin” is not something you did in your PAST – it is an attitude toward God that you have in the PRESENT! Think about the context of this chapter (and this book) – the “unpardonable sin” is to stop growing in God, because to stop growing is to start backsliding!

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

The issue is your FRUITFULNESS as a Christian! The fruit of your life will either bring BLESSING or CURSING to you. And what is “FRUIT”?

- FRUIT indicates the “long term results” of your actions and attitudes
- FRUIT indicates “maturity” or “development” in your spiritual life
- FRUIT indicates a part of your life that can “nourish” someone else
- FRUIT indicates the “visible” result of a seed that is invisible (buried)

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

Just because it's not a "salvation issue" doesn't mean it isn't an issue!
Hebrews 6:10-12 For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister. And we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end: That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

God doesn't forget your efforts for His kingdom – His payday isn't Friday! So don't be lazy ("slothful"), but follow good examples – not those who are "impressive" but those who continually show FAITH and PATIENCE. Why? Because BELIEVING in God and WAITING on God are worth it!

Hebrews 6:13-15 For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he sware by himself, Saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee. And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise.

Abraham's promise was so big it was staggering. But he had such faith in God that he didn't waver, even when the process seemed to move in reverse! There is a difference between PROCESS and PROMISE – if we don't trust God in the PROCESS, we are not worthy of the PROMISE.

Romans 4:20-21 He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform.

God not only gave Abraham a promise, but He also confirmed that promise with an oath. (Genesis 22:15-18) When a witness takes an oath in court, he says the words "so help me God." We call on the greater to witness for the lesser. None is greater than God, so He swore by Himself! His promise and his oath are BOTH immutable.

Hebrews 6:16-18 For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife. Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us:

God said to Abraham, "I swear I'm going to bless you." Why did He swear? To make a covenant that He was telling the truth!

- Sometimes, it will look like I'm a liar.
- Sometimes, it will look like serving me doesn't work.
- Sometimes, things will get worse before they get better.
- Sometimes, it will look like you're going backward instead of forward.

- Sometimes, it will look like I'm trying to kill you instead of bless you.
BUT I SWEAR I'M GOING TO BLESS YOU!
You cannot get the PROMISE unless you go through the PROCESS!

David, Joseph, Paul, etc ... **I swear I'm going to bless you!**

"CONSOLATION" = "comfort" (from same root as the word "Comforter")
– WE HAVE A STRONG HOLY GHOST!

"FLED FOR REFUGE" – referring to OT cities of refuge

Hebrews 6:19-20 Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.

Our anchor is SOLID, but it is different from physical anchors on boats – we are anchored UPWARD, and we are anchored to MOVE AHEAD!

"FORERUNNER" – the OT high priest was not a forerunner, because no one could follow him into the Holy of Holies – but Jesus has gone to Heaven and we are able to follow Him there!

WE CAN HAVE SECURITY WHILE WE ARE WORKING ON MATURITY (it doesn't matter "where we are" – it matters "where we are headed") ... THEREFORE, LET US GO ON UNTO MATURITY!