

OCTOBER 2018

CELEBRATING  
30 Years

# TODAY IN THE WORD™



*Let us run with perseverance the race  
marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus.*

Hebrews 12:1–2

## BOOK OF HEBREWS: A Call to Faith in Christ

A devotional from



MOODY  
BIBLE INSTITUTE™

# TODAY WITH GREG THORNTON

Interim President of Moody Bible Institute

## Running with Faith



Ethiopia's Abebe Bikila bought new running shoes when he arrived in Rome for the 1960 Olympic Games, but he found them uncomfortable

and decided to run the marathon without them. His barefoot marathon run made history. He claimed the gold with a time of 2:15:16, breaking the previous world record. When asked how he was able to run the 26.2-mile distance with no shoes, Bikila said, "I wanted the whole world to know that my country, Ethiopia, has always won with determination and heroism."

We may never win an Olympic medal, but all Christians are called to run the journey of faith, following our Savior. "Let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles and let us run with perseverance the race marked out before us" (Heb. 12:1).

Many of us wish we could run our spiritual race with the determination of Bikila, pressing on mile after mile. The author of Hebrews reminds us that we do have a cheering crowd, encouraging us to persevere: Noah, who built an ark on dry land to save his family (11:7); Abraham, who packed up his home and traveled to an unknown destination

(11:8); Rahab, who risked her own life to shelter spies in her home (11:31).

Scripture tells us that running the race of faith means we refuse to be distracted by our present circumstances, instead looking to our destination: "Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see" (11:1). Faith changes the way we live, the decisions we make, and the goals we strive toward.

Faith enables us to push through and overcome our difficulties. No matter what obstacles we face, we place our faith in Jesus who has run this race before us. "Fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God" (12:2).

And running with faith is not a sprint but a long-distance, lifelong marathon of a run. Day after day, week after week, even year after year, we are called to faithfully listen, learn, love, serve, and obey.

The finish line is approaching. Our reward is drawing near. Jesus, our Savior and High Priest, is seated at the right hand of God, ready to welcome us home. ■

# THEOLOGY MATTERS

by Dr. John Koessler

## Vicarious Substitutionary Atonement

**M**any critics of contemporary worship songs charge that they focus only on an emotional experience with Jesus, unlike an older generation of Christian hymns that seemed to talk about something else: the blood. But why would Christians sing about blood?

The Bible says much about blood, especially in connection with atonement. The New Testament's theology of atonement is grounded in the Old Testament practice of animal sacrifices. The Law of Moses prescribed animal sacrifices as a sin offering (Ex. 29:36). The Hebrew word translated *atone* is linked to the idea of ransom. To atone is to ransom or redeem by offering a substitute. In the Old Testament sacrificial system, this ransom involved a blood sacrifice.

The book of Hebrews makes clear, however, that the sacrifices required by the Law of Moses were merely anticipatory. The author calls them "shadows of the good things to come" and explains that it is "impossible" for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sin (Heb. 10:1, 4).

The Old Testament system was really a reminder of sin, intended to point forward to Jesus Christ. Jesus was

sacrificed for our sins "once for all" when He offered Himself on the cross (Heb. 7:27). What Jesus offered in place of our sins was "his own blood" (Heb. 9:12). This means that the offering of Christ was not only substitutionary, it was also vicarious. In law, vicarious responsibility is the principle where one person is held accountable for the action of another.

Christ's atoning work also speaks of a shared experience. (The practice of baptism is a picture of this.) Not only did Christ die on our behalf, but we also died and rose with Him (Rom. 6:8). This is one of the things the New Testament means when it describes believers as being "in Christ" (Rom. 6:11; 8:1; Eph. 2:6–7). Jesus took upon Himself the guilt and penalty that were ours. We were united with Him in His death and resurrection. The result is new life for all who are in Christ.

Jesus took upon Himself our guilt and punishment and in return gives us His righteousness and life. ■

### FOR FURTHER STUDY

To learn more about the doctrine of the atonement, read *The Atonement: Its Meaning and Significance* by Leon Morris (InterVarsity).

# FROM THE EDITORS

by Dr. Brad Baurain

## Learning TESOL as Ministry

For nearly 20 years, Moody has been training students to do ministry with and through TESOL, “Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages.” How is this a ministry, you might ask?

TESOL is a ministry of *service*. Refugees and immigrants to the U.S. need English to seek employment, send their children to school, and live their daily lives. It is also a ministry of *witness*. Both in North America and overseas, Christian English teachers build relationships in order to proclaim and live out the gospel in their classrooms and communities. Finally, it is a ministry that contributes to *discipleship*. Christians around the world use EBT (English for Bible and Theology)—with the assistance of fellow believers trained to teach English—to gain access to the plentiful biblical and theological resources available in English. Training and professionalism are essential for effective TESOL ministry. It is not the case that if you can speak English, you can teach English!

This vision is the heart of Moody’s TESOL programs. Our BA TESOL program is currently training more than 80 students both in and out of the classroom, as TESOL majors work with churches and organizations throughout the Chicago area to teach English as part of their weekly Practical Christian Ministry

assignments. Their classes include international graduate students, Muslim refugees, and newly arrived Chinese immigrants. Last summer, undergraduate interns taught in Lithuania, Iraq, Korea, Colombia, China (including Hong Kong), Taiwan, and Honduras. Graduates can go anywhere in the world, including “creative access” countries, as Christian English teachers. Some stay in the U.S. and work with thousands of churches that are witnessing to their communities through teaching English.

This fall, Moody Theological Seminary launched a new MA TESOL program with three degree options—a Graduate Certificate in TESOL, the MA in TESOL, and an MDiv with a TESOL emphasis. All integrate professional and ministry skills in order to equip graduates for effective teaching and ministry. And for 13 years, an ESL Ministry Conference, co-sponsored by Moody, Wheaton College, and the Institute for Cross-Cultural Training, has trained hundreds of church volunteers for TESOL ministry throughout the Midwest and beyond. Thank you for praying that God—the Creator of language!—will continue to work through our TESOL alumni around the world. ■

*Brad Baurain leads the TESOL programs at Moody. An alumnus of Moody, he has taught in China, Vietnam, the U.S., and Canada.*

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SENIOR EDITOR

Elena Mafter

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

Jamie Janosz

John Koessler

WRITER

Bryan A. Stewart

ART DIRECTOR

Lynn Gabalec

GRAPHIC DESIGNERS

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# TODAY IN THE WORD™

## Book of Hebrews: A Call to Faith in Christ

Matthew Henry, 18th-century British theologian and author, is best known for his exhaustive verse-by-verse Bible commentary, *Exposition of the Old and New Testaments*. In his study of the book of Hebrews, Henry wrote about faith: “Christ dwells in the soul by faith. . . . It is designed to serve the believer instead of sight, and to be to the soul all that the senses are to the body.”

This month in *Today in the Word*, as we study the book of Hebrews, we'll follow Matthew Henry's example by taking a wider look at our faith in Christ. We'll learn how to view faith through the prism of God's Word given to us (chapters 1–6); we'll consider the connection of Christ's redemptive work and our faith in Him (chapters 7–10); and we'll see the power of faith, hope, and love in relation to God's call on our lives in Christ (chapters 10–13).

So join us on this soul-enriching journey this month. Our prayer for you is that the powerful message in Hebrews will strengthen, enrich, and enliven your faith, that your hope will endure, and your love will abound. Thank you for being part of the *Today in the Word* family! Your faithful prayers, your financial support, and kind words about this ministry are a testimony and an encouragement to all of us! ■

—Elena Mafter, Senior Editor

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MONDAY  
OCTOBER

1

*In these last days [God]  
has spoken to us by his Son.*

Hebrews 1:2

## A New Revelation: The Son

For many people, the best way to get into a swimming pool is not gradually wading into deeper waters but just jumping right in. That is what the anonymous author of Hebrews does in the opening prologue. Without giving the name of our subject, the letter immediately launches into the Son's superior roles, which will be developed throughout the rest of the book.

First, we are told of Christ's prophetic role. Although God spoke previously through various prophets, now "in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son" (v. 2). In other words, God's message through His Son is not the first time He has spoken to His people. It is, however, the final and definitive message, the culmination of all that God had been saying in the old covenant.

Second, we are told of Christ's priestly role. This Son "had provided purification for sins" (v. 3). The original readers of

these words would have understood the entire Israelite sacrificial system of cleansing and purification. Now, says the author, the ultimate purification of sins comes through God's Son.

Third, we are told of Christ's kingly role. Having accomplished His priestly role, the Son "sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven" (v. 3). Everyone in the ancient world knew that the right hand of the king symbolized the highest position, equal in honor and authority to the monarch himself. This divine position at the right hand of the King of the universe belongs to the Son.

More than this, however, we are also told of Christ's divinity. God's Son has not only made the universe and "sustain[s] all things by his powerful word", the book of Hebrews assures us that the Son is "the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being" (v. 3).

### APPLY THE WORD

Many of the themes of this month's book are laid out in the opening prologue. As you begin the study this month, look for the ways Christ, the divine Son, is depicted as prophet, priest, and king. Also ask God to help you hear His message through the Son as you read, study, and meditate on His Word in the book of Hebrews.

### PRAY WITH US

Today, we'd like to thank God for the faithful leaders of Moody, our board of trustees. Join us in praying for their service as they bring their professional and ministry experience, skills and time to Moody Bible Institute.

*When God brings his firstborn into the world,  
he says, “Let all God’s angels worship him.”*

Hebrews 1:6

## The Son’s Superiority

In his poem “As Kingfishers Catch Fire,” Gerard Manley Hopkins writes of the way God’s grace and light fill every aspect of our natural world. Near the end of the poem is Hopkins’s famous line, “Christ plays in ten thousand places,” which poetically underscores the idea that Christ’s presence can be seen in innumerable ways.

The author of Hebrews would agree, expanding his opening prologue to reveal Christ in innumerable Old Testament passages. This string of seven biblical quotations (most from the Psalms) underscores Christ’s identity and superiority as God’s divine Son. First, Christ is the unique Son of the Father, as the quotations from Psalm 2 and 2 Samuel 7 demonstrate. Originally proclaimed about an earthly, Davidic king, in Hebrews those texts are now applied most fully to God’s Son. No angelic being has ever received such status.

Second, the Son’s divinity is proclaimed: “Let all God’s angels worship him” (v. 6), a quotation from the Greek version of Deuteronomy 32:43 and Psalm 97:7. We need think only of the angelic hosts gathered at Christ’s birth to see such worship in action. Third, the contrast between angels and the Son is made even sharper by quotations from two royal psalms (45 and 110). While angels serve, Christ the Son reigns as Lord and King. Only to the Son has God ever said: “Sit at my right hand” (v. 13). Notice especially the repeated description of the Son as “God” in verses 8 and 9!

Finally, the author of Hebrews quotes Psalm 102 as proclaiming the Son’s role in the creation of the world (vv. 10–12). What is true of our Creator God is also true of the Son: “You remain the same, and your years will never end” (v. 12). Truly, the Son is far superior to any angelic being.

### APPLY THE WORD

The author of Hebrews read the Old Testament through a Christ-centered lens, finding Him in a thousand places. Consider reading one of the royal psalms—such as Psalm 2, 45, or 110—in this way. Ask God for the insight to see Christ in all of Scripture. Then give thanks for the way God has fulfilled His Word in the coming of His Son.

### PRAY WITH US

Moody Radio’s Fall Share, Stand Together, starts today. Please pray that this week would be a fruitful and encouraging time for Moody Radio’s staff and its listeners. May the Lord be glorified through the generosity of His people!

WEDNESDAY  
OCTOBER

3

*We must pay the most careful attention, therefore, to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away.*

Hebrews 2:1

## A Call to Attention

Experienced sailors know the perils of drifting off course or running ashore on dangerous ground. The remedy is simple: pay attention to your surroundings. Only then can you avoid drifting into dangerous territory.

Our passage today offers similar advice for the Christian life. If we are not careful, we can find ourselves drifting away from God and His Word. The remedy is equally simple: “pay the most careful attention, therefore, to what we have heard” (v. 1). Given the author’s statement about Christ in chapter 1, we are now called to give our full attention to its truth.

The argument proceeds by reminding the readers of the attention they would have given to angels. Scripture tells us that angels played a central role in communicating God’s will (Gen. 18:1–8), protecting God’s people (Ps. 91:11), and even giving God’s Law (Acts 7:53).

Every Jewish person knew that violating the Law that was mediated by angels would require a just punishment. How much more important, then, would it be to pay attention to the salvation brought by Christ, the Son who was shown in the opening chapter to be superior to angels?

Moreover, the work of the Son is not an imagined fable. It was “confirmed to us by those who heard him” (v. 3), that is, the disciples who lived with Christ and heard His teaching. Likewise, the identity of Christ’s Sonship was also accompanied with “signs, wonders and various miracles, and by gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed according to his will” (v. 4).

The author of Hebrews will have much more to say about Christ’s work, but before continuing, he pauses to give us this important call to re-focus our attention on what truly matters.

### APPLY THE WORD

Scripture reminds us of the importance of careful attention to the message of Christ. Without a focus on Him, we are bound to drift away. Copy onto an index card this important reminder in Hebrews 2:1 and put the card in a place where you will see it on a daily basis—perhaps on your desk, in your car, or at the kitchen sink.

### PRAY WITH US

Would you pray today for the Copy Center on Moody’s Chicago campus? We are grateful for its many years of faithful service helping many departments with their printing needs.

*But we do see Jesus . . . now  
crowned with glory and honor.*

Hebrews 2:9

THURSDAY  
OCTOBER

4

## The Son's Humanity

A favorite tourist attraction in London is the Changing of the Queen's Guard at Buckingham Palace. Every day at 11:00 a.m., with great pomp and ceremony, the Old Guard detachment is replaced by the New Guard who now have the responsibility of protecting the official royal residence of the United Kingdom.

Something of the idea of a “changing of the guard” is envisioned in our reading today. While in times past angels were given a certain authority, in “the world to come” (v. 5) it is humanity who will reign. The author of Hebrews turns to Psalm 8 as evidence for this promise. There, the psalmist reflects on the beauty and splendor of God's creation. In comparison to the majesty of the heavens, he proclaims: “What is mankind that you are mindful of them?” (v. 6; Ps. 8:4). Nevertheless, humanity was made “a little lower than the angels” and crowned “with glory and honor” (v. 7; Ps. 8:5). God has put

“everything under their feet” (v. 8; Ps. 8:6). Echoing God's declaration in Genesis 1:26, the psalmist proclaims God's original promise and intention for humanity.

Nevertheless, the author of Hebrews quickly observes a problem: “At present we do not see everything subject to them” (v. 8). Ever since the Fall, life is broken and full of struggle, suffering, and death; our intended purpose has not been realized. Enter Jesus, the ultimate fulfillment of humanity's purpose in Psalm 8. In Hebrews 1, Scripture emphasized the Son's divinity and superiority; now we see Christ's humanity, shared with us.

Because the man Jesus “tasted death for everyone,” His crown of “glory and honor” (v. 9) is made ours as well. Only in Jesus is God's original intention for humanity fulfilled and made possible for all.

### APPLY THE WORD

Hebrews 2 reminds us of not only Jesus' shared humanity with us but also our intended place in God's creation as those who care for it in His name. What might this stewardship of the Earth look like in your life? Find a way this week to care for God's creation to reflect your intended purpose now made possible in Christ.

### PRAY WITH US

Our Student Programs department has encouraged and edified thousands of students on our Chicago campus. The department staff welcomes your prayers today!

FRIDAY  
OCTOBER

5

*Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.*

Hebrews 2:18

## Our Pioneer in the Faith

By definition, a pioneer is someone who explores or settles a new realm. By metaphorical expansion, however, we often use the word *pioneer* for anyone who accomplishes something for the first time, opening a new way for those who follow.

That metaphor is applied to Jesus when Scripture declares Him “the pioneer of salvation” (v. 10). In fact, Christ is our pioneer in several important ways. For example, He is the first to defeat “the power of him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil” (v. 14). He was made “perfect” in this way (that is, brought this work to completion), only “through what he suffered” (v. 10). Through the cross and resurrection, Christ has pioneered the defeat of death.

Second, Christ’s identity with us means He is a pioneer on *our* behalf! He did

not defeat death for His own sake, or even for the sake of angels (v. 16), but for us. In order to do that, He had to share our humanity completely. He was “fully human in every way” (v. 17) and shared in our “flesh and blood” (v. 14). Because Christ participates in our identity, Scripture says: “The one who makes people holy and those who are made holy are of the same family. So Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers and sisters” (v. 11). Because of our shared identity, His pioneering work now applies to us.

The benefits of Christ’s work are nothing less than salvation! He has freed those who were “held in slavery by their fear of death” (v. 15), and has made “atonement for the sins of the people” (v. 17). And because He has shared in our human suffering, “he is able to help those who are being tempted” (v. 18). A great pioneer indeed!

### APPLY THE WORD

Today’s reading offers comfort; Christ also knew suffering. He understands our experience and can help us when we are tempted to despair. But more importantly, He has ultimately defeated the power of suffering and death and brought salvation to us. Share this message today with someone you know who is suffering.

### PRAY WITH US

As Moody prepares students for a lifetime of service, employees in Residence Life provide direction and support. We thank God in prayer for the insight and love they demonstrate while interacting with students.

*Therefore, holy brothers and sisters . . .  
fix your thoughts on Jesus.*

Hebrews 3:1

SATURDAY  
OCTOBER

6

## Greater than Moses

The importance of the person of Moses to all of Israelite history cannot be overstated. He was the faithful messenger of God, the instrument through which the Law was given, and the one who established the Levitical priesthood. One ancient Jewish text describes Moses as “equal in glory to the holy ones.”

Yet, just as the early chapters of Hebrews demonstrated Christ’s superiority to angels, now in chapter 3 we see His superiority to Moses as well. Our reading makes several important points of comparison. First, whereas Moses was “faithful as a servant” (v. 5), Jesus is “faithful as the Son” (v. 6). Second, whereas Moses was a “witness to what would be spoken by God in the future” (v. 5), Jesus was the message itself, the full revelation of God to the world (Heb. 1:3). Third, whereas Moses was “faithful *in* all God’s house”

(v. 2), Jesus was the very builder of the house and “faithful as the Son *over* God’s house” (v. 6, emphasis added). In fact, Scripture tells us that we are the house, not an inanimate building, but a “house(hold)” of faith, “holy brothers and sisters, who share in the heavenly calling” (v. 1).

Scripture shows us not only Christ’s superiority to Moses but also His fulfillment of all that Moses established and witnessed to. The household of God established in the old covenant is completed and carried on now in the person of Jesus. It is no surprise, then, that the author of Hebrews encourages his readers to “fix your thoughts on Jesus, whom we acknowledge as our apostle and high priest” (v. 1). Jesus, sent from heaven to us (apostle) and representing us to heaven (priest), is also “our confidence and the hope in which we glory” (v. 6).

### APPLY THE WORD

In the original Greek, the call to “fix your thoughts” is an exhortation to “give diligent and continuous attention” to the person of Jesus. It is easy to give only passing attention to all that Christ has done for us, but today, commit to spend time simply focusing your mind and heart on the person and work of Jesus, our “apostle and high priest.”

### PRAY WITH US

Keeping our Residence Life staff in prayer today, we ask for God’s help in their work. May the Lord bless their service as they provide our students with everything they need in their life out of the classrooms.

*Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as you did in the rebellion.*

Hebrews 3:15

## The Danger of a Hard Heart

Many Old Testament passages provide a correspondence between ancient Israelite figures and events and Christian realities and experiences. In today's reading, the Israelite experience in the Exodus and Wilderness is depicted as a significant type for the Christian journey itself.

Just as Moses led the Israelites out of Egypt, so One greater than Moses leads the Christian community out of spiritual slavery. Using Psalm 95 as the guiding passage (including the fuller description in Numbers 14 through 25), the author highlights the Israelite response of disobedience and hard-heartedness. They fell into "rebellion" (v. 8); they "tested and tried me" (v. 9); and "their hearts are always going astray" (v. 10). Despite their promising start with faithful Moses, the Israelites did not remain faithful themselves. As a result, God declared: "They shall never enter my rest" (vv. 11, 18).

The point of reviewing these events, of course, is the application to the Christian community and the exhortation *not* to follow that pattern: "See to it, brothers and sisters, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God" (v. 12). Scripture urges the Christian community to encourage each other toward faithfulness, "so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness" (v. 13). Twice, the author of Hebrews applies the words of Psalm 95 as an admonition to the Christian community: "Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts" (vv. 7–8, 15).

The key to such faithfulness, lies in verse 14: "We have come to share in Christ." If we are to remain faithful to God's voice, and enter His promised rest, we must remember the One to whom we belong and cling to Him.

### APPLY THE WORD

For at least 1,500 years, many Christians have read Psalm 95 to begin each day. As you worship this Sunday, read Psalm 95 in preparation, asking God's Spirit to help you hear His voice today. Ask also for His sustaining grace so that you might respond with a willing heart that is obedient to His leading rather than resistant to His direction.

### PRAY WITH US

Moody's Customer Service Center staff answer hundreds of phone calls every day and manifest God's love to everyone coming in contact with Moody. We thank God today for their dedicated service and excellent teamwork.

*There remains, then, a  
Sabbath-rest for the people of God.*

Hebrews 4:9

MONDAY  
OCTOBER

8

## The Promised Sabbath Rest

Many people joke that they need a vacation after their vacation! They arrive home, weary from the exhaustion and challenge of travel—but instead of much-needed rest, they are met with a yard needing attention, an air conditioner needing repair, and grocery shopping needing done. The hoped-for rest still lies in the future.

That experience of realizing that a future rest is yet to come is the main theme of our Scripture reading for today. Although the Israelites entered the land of Canaan under Joshua, and some seemed to attain the promised rest, Scripture would continue to speak of another rest promised even “Today” (v. 7; Psalm 95). As the author of Hebrews says, “If Joshua had given them rest, God would not speak later of another day” (v. 8).

The point is that the true promised rest was not the earthly land of Canaan

but the heavenly rest of God, which is mentioned in Genesis 2:3. Accordingly, “There remains, then, a Sabbath-rest for the people of God; for whoever enters God’s rest also rests from their works, just as God did from his” (vv. 9–10). We continue to look forward to that promise of entering a heavenly rest (v. 1).

Although Israel failed through disobedience, Scripture urges us, “Let us, therefore, make every effort to enter that rest, that no one will perish by following their example of disobedience” (v. 11). Attention to God’s Word is the key, a Word that is “alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword” (v. 12). It can pierce our thoughts and penetrate our hearts, a description equally true of God’s penetrating knowledge of all creatures. One day, all will stand before the God “to whom we must give account” (v. 13). How will we respond to His Word while it is still “Today” (v. 7)?

### APPLY THE WORD

In a world of frenetic activity—multiple jobs, volunteer activities, social media—the idea of *rest* seems hardly attainable. Yet Scripture calls us to strive for true spiritual rest in God, anticipating the final rest we will know in Him. Find time to put away distractions today and ask God to help you experience a taste of His promised eternal rest.

### PRAY WITH US

Tens of thousands of readers spend time in God’s Word each month with *Today in the Word*. Pray that this community will grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ and be blessed by their study of Scripture.

TUESDAY  
OCTOBER

9

*Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence.*

Hebrews 4:16

## Jesus, Our Great High Priest

For ancient Greeks, the divine was detached from human suffering. Aristotle believed that God was the Unmoved Mover who started the world but then remained uninvolved. Stoics taught that God was beyond all feeling or emotions. And Epicureans believed that the gods lived in blissful ignorance of human affairs.

How radically different is the Christian conception of Christ, who is more than a detached, impersonal force—He is the divine Son who enters into our very world! Even more, He is our “great high priest” (4:14) who fully identifies with us in our humanity. Today’s reading highlights several important aspects of Christ’s priesthood.

First, because of Christ’s humanity, our high priest “has been tempted in every way, just as we are” (4:15). His full humanity means that Christ stands in solidarity with us, including

being subject to temptation, and can “empathize with our weaknesses” (4:15).

Second, Christ understands human suffering because He has experienced it Himself: “Son though he was, he learned obedience from what he suffered” (5:8). Through that suffering, Christ was “made perfect” (5:9); His obedience became the complete expression of His love for the Father.

Third, Christ remained perfectly obedient in suffering, faced temptation, and did not sin (4:15). His priesthood is far superior to that of an earthly priest who “offers sacrifices for his own sins, as well as for the sins of the people” (5:3). He “has ascended into heaven” (4:14) on our behalf, and “became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him” (5:9). He represents us before the Father and we can “approach God’s throne of grace with confidence” (4:16).

### APPLY THE WORD

We can approach God’s throne to “receive mercy and find grace” (4:16). Look in a hymnal or search online to find John Newton’s hymn, “Approach, my Soul, the Mercy Seat,” which echoes so well today’s lesson: “Bowed down beneath a load of sin, / By Satan sorely pressed, / By war without and fears within, / I come to thee for rest.”

### PRAY WITH US

Please pray for Moody students on our campus in Chicago. Pray that God will use their classes, field education, chapels, and friendships to grow the students in faith and maturity so that their lives and ministries will point to His glory.

*Let us move beyond the elementary teachings about Christ and be taken forward to maturity.*

Hebrews 6:1

WEDNESDAY  
OCTOBER

10

## The Danger of Falling Away

Any serious student of the Word knows that there are some “hard sayings” in the Bible. Sometimes the meaning of a passage is not clear; sometimes the meaning is troubling and difficult to apply. Still others, like our passage today about the danger of falling away, are hard in both ways.

Nevertheless, several important lessons still emerge quite clearly. First, Scripture highlights the danger of an ignorance of God’s Word. Although the author of Hebrews wants to delve deeper into truths about Christ, the community has become “dull of hearing,” as one translation puts it (5:11, ESV). They are still drinking spiritual milk and not eating solid food. As a result, they are unable to teach others and unable to “distinguish good from evil” (5:14). Knowledge of God’s Word would allow them to move “beyond the elementary teachings about Christ and be taken forward to maturity” (6:1).

Second, Scripture warns about the danger of rejecting God. As the passage makes clear, the issue was not merely slacking off in the spiritual life but something much more serious. The author is warning against the influence of people who had seemingly been part of the body of Christ and known the blessing of God’s gifts, word, and power but were now actively rejecting Christ and the gospel. They were “crucifying the Son of God all over again and subjecting him to public disgrace” (6:6). They are “in danger of being cursed” by God (6:8). While they remained in such a state of active rebellion against God, it would be “impossible” (6:4) to repent.

The pastoral application of today’s passage may be challenging, but one thing is clear: willful rejection of Christ in one’s life is a serious matter.

### APPLY THE WORD

Studying Scripture is the antidote to the danger of falling away from God. A mature Christian life requires more than a few favorite Bible verses; we need solid food! In addition to your daily study, consider joining a local Bible study or listening to biblically focused preaching on Christian radio or online ([moodyradio.org/programs/#teaching](#)).

### PRAY WITH US

The staff of our Legal department use their skills and legal training to serve God at the workplace. Would you pray today that the Lord will always guide them and give them wisdom in taking care of Moody’s legal needs.

THURSDAY  
OCTOBER

11

*We have this hope as an anchor  
for the soul, firm and secure.*

Hebrews 6:19

## Confidence in God’s Word to Us

Parents who have to reprimand a child or give a stern warning about some danger know they do this out of love and a desire for something better for their child. The author of Hebrews held that same attitude toward his congregation: “Even though we speak like this, dear friends, we are convinced of better things in your case” (v. 9).

The harsh and sober warnings of the previous passage were given out of a desire for better things: “the things that have to do with salvation” (v. 9). To that end, the author encourages perseverance in the faith—to show diligence rather than laziness—and to “imitate those who through faith and patience inherit what has been promised” (v. 12). They have begun the journey of following Jesus well with good works and love, but they must continue to the end.

Notably, the way to persevere is not through exerting self-effort but by holding to the hope of God’s promises. Our confidence is in His Word to us in Christ, His Son. Scripture calls that hope “an anchor for the soul, firm and secure” (v. 19). How can we be sure about God’s Word? Look at the example of Abraham. God not only made a promise to him but also reinforced that promise by an oath. And then, “after waiting patiently, Abraham received what was promised” (v. 15).

The same is true for us who “have fled to take hold of the hope set before us” (v. 18). We have the promises to share in God’s glory (2:10) and to enter His eternal rest (4:10). Christ, the Son, is God’s promise and oath of that future hope, for He is our “forerunner [who] has entered on our behalf” (v. 20). Our confidence lies in Him.

### APPLY THE WORD

Where does your confidence lie? If we look to ourselves, we will fall either into presumption, thinking our own efforts are good enough, or despair, seeing our failings as insurmountable. Scripture reminds us that our only confidence must be in God and in the anchor of hope found in His Son, our high priest, Jesus Christ.

### PRAY WITH US

We thank God today for the gift of music and ask the Holy Spirit to use for His glory the talents and ministry of our faculty in the Music department. Their dedicated service helps to prepare music ministers and sacred musicians.

*You are a priest forever,  
in the order of Melchizedek.*

Hebrews 7:17

FRIDAY  
OCTOBER

12

## Melchizedek the Priest

Most Jews expected the promised Messiah to be from the royal line of David, a reasonable conclusion based on the Davidic covenant (2 Samuel 7). Psalm 110, a psalm of David, was read as a promise about the Messiah's kingly reign. But that psalm also describes the Messiah as a "priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek" (Ps. 110:4).

The author of Hebrews has already made three references to Jesus in connection to this psalm that mentions Melchizedek (Heb. 5:6, 10; 6:20). Using the only other Old Testament passage about Melchizedek (found in Gen. 14:7–20), he highlights several important aspects about Melchizedek that help us better understand Jesus, the Messiah.

First, Melchizedek was *both* a "king of Salem *and* priest of God Most High" (v. 1). Although most Jews anticipated a kingly Messiah (as promised in Ps. 110), the reference to Melchizedek in the

psalm reveals that the Messiah would also be a priest. The dual meaning of Melchizedek's name now makes sense when applied to Christ: "king of righteousness" and "king of peace" (v. 2).

Second, Melchizedek had a mysterious eternal quality, with no backstory: "Without father or mother, without genealogy, without beginning of days or end of life" (v. 3). He shows up in the story and then disappears, with no recorded beginning or end. This resembles the eternal "Son of God" who "remains a priest forever" (v. 3).

Third, Melchizedek was superior to Abraham, who "gave him a tenth of the plunder" (v. 4). Melchizedek blessed Abraham, not the other way around. In a sense, through Abraham all of Abraham's descendants paid homage to Melchizedek! Thus, if Christ is a priest in the order of Melchizedek, then He is truly superior to all who came before.

### APPLY THE WORD

The author of Hebrews makes ample use of Old Testament passages to better understand the person and work of Christ. All of Scripture truly is Christ-filled! Go back and slowly read the account of Abraham and Melchizedek in Genesis 14, asking God's Spirit to open your eyes to see Christ in ways you may not have noticed before.

### PRAY WITH US

Please continue to keep in your prayers the faculty and staff of the Music department in Chicago. May God bless their ministry to students and community outreach through concerts and music school.

SATURDAY  
OCTOBER

13

*The former regulation is set aside . . . and a better hope is introduced, by which we draw near to God.*

Hebrews 7:18–19

## A New Priesthood Arises

In the television program *The Great British Baking Show*, contestants in a baking competition must impress two demanding judges. One expects “sheer perfection” from her bakers; few ever deliver such a product.

In our reading, perfection is also the goal, but the Levitical priesthood and the Law were unable to deliver that standard. It was “weak and useless” and “made nothing perfect” (vv. 18–19). Otherwise, why would there be a need for “another priest to come, one in the order of Melchizedek, not in the order of Aaron?” (v. 11). That change of priesthood is revealed in Jesus, who came from a nonpriestly tribe (Judah) from which “no one . . . has ever served at the altar” (v. 13). His priesthood, however, is not determined by heredity, but by something else.

Our English translations don’t always capture the subtlety in the original

Greek, but three times in this passage the verb *arise* is used about Christ and the Melchizedek priesthood: there was need for another priest “to come” (literally “arise,” v. 11); Jesus “descended” (literally “arose”) from the tribe of Judah (v. 14); and “another priest like Melchizedek appears” (literally “arises” v. 15). These words are all used elsewhere to speak of Christ’s resurrection, which Hebrews clearly has in mind: Christ has become priest “not on the basis of a regulation as to his ancestry but on the basis of the power of an indestructible life” (v. 16).

Perfection is God’s goal for each of us, and Christ’s death and resurrection have become the new vehicle by which God’s intentions for us will be achieved. Where the older Levitical system remained ineffective, Christ’s priesthood introduces a “better hope . . . by which we draw near to God” (v. 19).

### APPLY THE WORD

None of us is “perfect,” but that is God’s intention for us all. Thankfully, we have a perfect high priest who gives us hope and enables us to approach our holy God. Spend time confessing your sins before God. Then receive the promise of His forgiveness, made possible through Jesus’ death and resurrection, and give thanks to Him for His mercy.

### PRAY WITH US

We invite you to pray for Moody’s friends and supporters in the United States and overseas. We’d like to thank those who help Moody’s ministries for your generosity and faithfulness.

*Because Jesus lives forever, he has a permanent priesthood . . . [and] is able to save completely.*

Hebrews 7:24–25

SUNDAY  
OCTOBER

14

## Christ's Superior Priesthood, Part 1

Many consumers prefer it when an expensive purchase is backed by a warranty. With a guarantee, the consumer has more confidence the purchase will last.

We find a similar logic in today's reading. While the old Levitical priesthood was appointed without an oath, Christ's priesthood came with a divine promise when God said: "The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind: 'You are a priest forever'" (v. 21). For this reason, "Jesus has become the guarantor of a better covenant" (v. 22).

Scripture continues the comparison by highlighting several other differences between the Levitical priesthood of old and Christ's new priesthood. The Levitical priests were temporary; because "death prevented them from continuing in office" (v. 23), multiple priests were needed over time. On the other hand, "because Jesus lives

forever, he has a permanent priesthood" (v. 24). His superior priesthood "is able to save completely . . . because he always lives to intercede for them" (v. 25). There is no longer a need for any other priest.

Another important difference: the efficacy of the sacrifices offered. As the Old Testament teaches (see Ex. 29:38–42; Lev. 16:11–19), Levitical priests needed "to offer sacrifices day after day, first for his own sins, and then for the sins of the people" (v. 27a). Christ, however, "sacrificed for their sins *once for all* when he offered himself" (v. 27b, emphasis added).

Not only is Christ's sacrifice unique and sufficient—never to be repeated—He is both priest *and* sacrifice at once. He offered Himself! In the end, our high priest is "holy, blameless, pure, set apart from sinners, exalted above the heavens" (v. 26). Christ's priesthood is far superior to the old.

### APPLY THE WORD

What a comfort it is to know that Christ our priest, superior to the old priesthood in every way, now stands before the Father, interceding for us. Make a list of the cares and concerns in your life, then offer those items to God in prayer, confident that Christ our high priest also stands with you as you approach the Father.

### PRAY WITH US

Would you uphold in prayer Moody's Education ministry? Ask for God's blessing and guidance for our undergraduate, graduate and distance learning schools.

# QUESTION AND ANSWER

by Eric C. Redmond, Associate Professor of Bible

## **Q** Is Caleb, the son of Jephunneh, a Gentile from the Kenizzites?

**A** The Old Testament mentions Caleb several times. He is first named along with Joshua as one of the two spies who brought back a positive report on the Promised Land during Israel's failure at Kadesh-Barnea (Numbers 13–14). This account often refers to him as “Caleb son of Jephunneh” (Num. 13:6; 14:6, 30, 38). Later accounts refer to him by his extended genealogy, “Caleb son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite” (Num. 32:12; Josh. 14:6, 14). Three times the Scriptures mention him in connection with the early judge “Othniel son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother” (Judges 1:13; 3:9; see also Joshua 15:17).

In the book of Genesis, we find that Kenaz was a grandson of Esau, and therefore was not directly part of one of the tribes of Jacob (see Gen. 36:11, 15). The descendants of Kenaz would not have been the offspring of Jacob or part of the Israelite community by birth.

Scripture also says that Caleb and Othniel were part of the tribe of Judah (Num. 13:6), and they received their inheritance possession (Josh. 15:13). Thus we can reasonably conclude that at some point either Caleb or his father would have been proselytes to Israel—

Gentiles who placed faith in the God of Jacob and submitted themselves to His commandments. The Lord was pleased to use both Caleb and Othniel to provide victorious leadership for the people of Israel.

## **Q** Why can't an ordinary Christian do what the Apostles did in the book of Acts?

**A** Some unusual things happen in the book of Acts when the Lord was establishing the church. Prior to the ascension of Christ and the Day of Pentecost, the church did not exist. When Christ poured out the Spirit of God from heaven upon the disciples, He created a new entity—the Church—whose expansion depends upon the message of eyewitnesses to the resurrection (Acts 1:8).

In Acts, God verified the gospel message of the Apostles' preaching through signs and wonders (see Acts 2:22, 2:43; 5:12; 14:3). Some of the more unusual miracles included healing a lame man by the name of Jesus (Acts 3:6–8), people being struck down for lying (5:1–10), healing by a passing shadow or a handkerchief of an apostle (5:15, 19:12), angels or earthquakes opening prison doors (5:19; 12:7; 16:26), the Spirit transporting a person from one city to the next (8:39–40), Jesus blinding a man in order to save him

*If we want to do as the Apostles did in Acts,  
we should tell people about salvation in Christ.*

(9:3–8), an angel from the Lord striking down a king (12:23), the Spirit speaking to an entire group (13:1–5), and a man remaining alive after being bitten by a poisonous snake (28:3–6).

In order to be an apostle, one had to meet several criteria. First, he had to be appointed directly by the Lord (Acts 9:15; 22:14–15; 26:16–18; 1 Cor. 15:8–9; Gal. 1:11–12, 15–16). Second, he had to have seen the resurrected Christ and be an eyewitness to the resurrection (Acts 1:22; 22:14; 1 Cor. 9:1). Third, he had to have the accompanying signs gifts, which refers to signs that bear witness to Jesus, that characterized an apostle (2 Cor. 12:12). These men, through being eyewitnesses to the resurrection of Christ in their preaching of the gospel, established the foundation for the church (Eph. 2:20).

Since the church was established, we rest our faith on the Apostles' eyewitness testimony about the truth of the resurrection of Jesus as the divine Son of God, the Messiah, as recorded in the Scriptures. There is one thing we can share with the Apostles: boldness in our proclamation of Christ to all people, as Jesus commanded in the Great Commission (Matt. 28:19–20). If we want to do as the Apostles did in Acts, we should tell people about salvation in Christ.

**Q** **How do you minister to a family member who isn't a believer without causing division? Or is division inevitable? If so, is it worth talking about Christ at the risk of your relationship being marred or even destroyed?**

**A** Families are often the hardest context in which to live out our faith. It is wise for believers to live among our family members with humility, submission, forgiveness, and love to all and with honor to our parents, praying daily for our family members. In this way, we might minimize relational conflicts.

When you tell your family members that Christ is the only way to God and that they will perish apart from Him, some may become angry. If you do receive a hostile reply, remain as loving as possible, admit your own faults, and explain that you do not have answers to every question about Christ.

Once you have an opportunity to share the gospel, leave the door open for family members to return to you by letting them know you are praying for their good every day and offering to talk more about Christ only if and when they want to. In the end, God must be the one who saves them, and we trust Him to do so.

MONDAY  
OCTOBER

15

*We do have such a high priest, who sat down at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven.*

Hebrews 8:1

## Christ's Superior Priesthood, Part 2

Have you ever been in a conversation with a friend in which you were explaining a complex argument? After working through all the pieces, you might end with a summary statement by saying, “The point I am trying to make is . . .”

Today’s passage opens in a similar way. Having worked through the complex argument comparing Christ’s priesthood to the Levitical priesthood, the author of Hebrews says, “The main point of what we are saying is this” (v. 1). In this summary, Scripture shows us the superiority of Christ’s priesthood in two main ways.

First, Christ is superior because of *who* He is. Our high priest “sat down at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven” (v. 1). The “right hand,” of course, signals a place of authority and power. Christ’s position here indicates

His exalted status as equal to God the Father. Moreover, the fact that He “sat down” points to the completion of His task. As priest, His work is done, and His self-sacrifice has been offered. No earthly priest could ever be said to enter into God’s presence and be seated at the very throne of God!

Second, Christ is superior because of *where* He serves: “in the sanctuary, the true tabernacle set up by the Lord” (v. 2). Levitical priests served in a sanctuary, but theirs was an earthly tent, made by human hands. In fact, Scripture tells us that “they serve at a sanctuary that is a copy and shadow of what is in heaven” (v. 5; see Ex. 25:40). The true, heavenly sanctuary is where Christ serves as priest. As a result, “the ministry Jesus has received is as superior to theirs as the covenant of which he is mediator is superior to the old one” (v. 6).

### APPLY THE WORD

Jesus is our high priest in the true sanctuary in heaven. Every worship service on Earth, and every Christian minister, should be a “copy and shadow” of that reality. Pray for your pastor and other church leaders today, that their lives, their teaching, and their worship-service planning would accurately reflect the majesty and glory of Christ.

### PRAY WITH US

Moody Publishers produces printed and online materials to help believers grow in faith and know God better. We welcome your prayers for the fruitful publishing ministry at Moody.

*I will put my law in their minds  
and write it on their hearts.*

Jeremiah 31:33

TUESDAY  
OCTOBER

16

## The Need for a New Covenant

In the ancient Near East, a covenant was used to establish the relationship between two parties. In it, the suzerain (or lord) promised protection and blessing, while the vassal (or servant) promised obedience and loyalty. For Israel, the Mosaic covenant was the binding relationship between God and His people.

Yet, as we see in today's reading, however good the old covenant was, it was also limited. A new covenant was needed, as first promised in Jeremiah 31. The problem was not with God's Law but with the people's inability to keep it. Despite God's care and protection, He "found fault with the people" (v. 8) because "they did not remain faithful to my covenant" (v. 9). The new covenant would be better in several ways.

First, the new covenant is internal, rather than external. While the old

covenant was written on tablets of stone and had no power in itself to enable obedience, the new covenant is different: "I will put my laws in their minds and write them on their hearts" (v. 10). This internal dimension of the new covenant, which is the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, not only tells us what to do but also enables us to do it.

Second, the new covenant has a universal scope. Whereas the old covenant was for Israel, in the new covenant "they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest" (v. 11; see Gal. 3:28). Third, the new covenant provides perfect forgiveness. Whereas the old covenant required repeated sacrifices to deal with the barriers of sin and death, Christ's perfect sacrifice in the new covenant means God "will remember their sins no more" (v. 12). The new covenant truly is better than the old.

### APPLY THE WORD

At the Last Supper, Jesus said: "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you" (Luke 22:20). Through Christ's life, death, and resurrection, the promised new covenant is fulfilled. The next time you partake of the Lord's Supper, think of all the covenant benefits Christ has secured for you, and give Him thanks.

### PRAY WITH US

While keeping our prayer focus on Moody Publishers, please add to your list the Acquisitions team. Ask for the Holy Spirit's encouragement as they seek new venues and authors.

WEDNESDAY  
OCTOBER

17

*At that moment the curtain of the temple  
was torn in two from top to bottom.*

Matthew 27:51

## Worship in the First Covenant

Architecture and design of buildings and physical spaces often convey meaning. A Gothic cathedral directs the eye and mind upward to heaven. Frank Lloyd Wright’s Fallingwater incorporates domestic space within the natural landscape. A Japanese garden is intended to instill peace and calm.

In the same way, says the author of Hebrews, the glorious tabernacle of the old covenant also conveyed its own limited nature. The author reminds us of the spatial layout of the old sanctuary. The outer court (the “Holy Place”) contained a “lampstand and the table with its consecrated bread” (v. 2). Beyond that, the inner court (the “Most Holy Place”) contained the altar of incense and the ark of the covenant. Above the ark were “the cherubim of the Glory” (v. 5), indicating that this was where the glorious presence of God resided on Earth.

The author of Hebrews reviews these details in order to point to their meaning as an “illustration for the present time” (v. 9). He names their limitations. First, they offered limited access to God’s presence. While the priests could enter the outer room regularly, only the high priest could enter the inner room, “and that only once a year” (v. 7). By this, the Holy Spirit was showing that “the way into the Most Holy Place had not yet been disclosed” (v. 8).

Second, while the high priest offered blood “for himself and for the sins the people had committed in ignorance” (v. 7), it provided only limited cleansing. Scripture tells us that “the gifts and sacrifices being offered were not able to clear the conscience of the worshiper” (v. 9). These were ultimately matters of “food and drink and various ceremonial washings” (v. 10), but not able to cleanse fully. Something more was needed.

### APPLY THE WORD

The old covenant provided only limited access to the Most Holy Place, but at Christ’s death, “the curtain of the temple was torn in two” (Matt. 27:51). The limited access of the former covenant has been expanded. We now have full access to the Father through Christ. As you pray today, give thanks for the access you have to His presence.

### PRAY WITH US

Praying for Moody Publishers, we thank God for all the readers whose lives were changed by Moody’s books and for sustaining this vital ministry of the printed word.

*He entered the Most Holy Place once for all by his own blood, thus obtaining eternal redemption.*

Hebrews 9:12

THURSDAY  
OCTOBER

18

## Redemption in Christ's Blood

A military wife waited six months for her husband to return from deployment. Although she could look at photographs of her spouse and even communicate through video chats, those were never fully satisfying. They only built stronger anticipation for the day when he would arrive in person.

Scripture tells us that, in a similar way, the old covenant worship really only built anticipation for something more to come. It is Christ who brings those “good things that are now already here” (v. 11). He is a “mediator of a new covenant” (v. 15) which is superior in several important ways.

First, unlike the priests of old who entered the earthly tabernacle, Christ “went through the greater and more perfect tabernacle that is not made with human hands” (v. 11). His work of redemption is made in the very presence of God, not on Earth. Second,

Christ's sacrifice was not made with the repeated blood of bulls and goats; “he entered the Most Holy Place once for all by his own blood” (v. 12). His sacrifice is perfect and complete, never to be repeated again. Christ our high priest entered a better tabernacle with a better sacrifice, and secured an “eternal redemption” (v. 12) and “eternal inheritance” (v. 15).

Third, Christ's redemption brought a better cleansing. The blood sacrifices of the old covenant “sanctify [the people] so that they are outwardly clean” (v. 13), but Christ's self-sacrifice accomplishes something more: it “cleanses our consciences from acts that lead to death” (v. 14). In other words, we are more than simply declared forgiven; we can also receive a change of heart as well, “so that we may serve the living God!” (v. 14). In Christ's “unblemished” sacrifice of Himself, we now have a redemption that is perfect in every way.

### APPLY THE WORD

Scripture tells us that Christ “has died as a ransom” to set us free from slavery to sin (v. 15). Christ is more powerful than our sin! Are there areas of your life that need Christ's liberating redemption? Have you tried to fight sin in your own strength? Ask for His grace to empower you; then commit those areas to Him.

### PRAY WITH US

Please include in your prayers today the ministry of Moody's Operations teams, asking for God's wisdom and guidance, as they undergird the work of Education and Media teams.

FRIDAY  
OCTOBER

19

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

Hebrews 9:22

## The Necessity of Christ's Sacrifice

In the Greek language, the word *diathēkē* can be translated as both “covenant” and “will” (as in a last will and testament). Understanding that double meaning helps us see the logic of the argument in today’s reading. Because the “new covenant (*diathēkē*)” established by Christ is also, in a sense, a last will (*diathēkē*) and testament, we can begin to see why Christ’s sacrifice was necessary.

As Scripture says, “In the case of a will (*diathēkē*), it is necessary to prove the death of the one who made it, because a will is in force only when somebody has died” (v. 16). In other words, it was Christ’s death that brought into effect the new *diathēkē*. To underscore the point, the author of Hebrews demonstrates that even in the old *diathēkē* under Moses, death was necessary: “Even the first covenant was not put into effect without blood” (v. 18). The scroll containing God’s Law, the

people themselves, the tabernacle, and “everything used in its ceremonies” (v. 21) had to be sprinkled with the “blood of the covenant” (v. 20). Why? Because “the law requires that nearly everything be cleansed with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness” (v. 22).

Following this biblical logic, the conclusion becomes apparent: the new covenant required “better sacrifices than these” (v. 23). And that is exactly what Christ’s offering was. Hebrews reminds us again of the superiority of Christ. He entered a heavenly sanctuary, not an earthly one; and He offered a single sacrifice, not repeated ones. As the author summarizes, “Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many” (v. 28).

Through the sacrifice offered by Christ Himself, we are able to participate in the new covenant with God.

### APPLY THE WORD

Hebrews has a multitude of images reflecting Christ’s saving work: rest, ransom, sacrifice, priesthood, covenant, and many more. Make a list of these word-pictures of Christ’s redemption, including brief descriptions. Use it as a daily reminder of the magnificence of Christ’s salvation for “those who are waiting for him” (v. 28).

### PRAY WITH US

Moody Radio’s Underwriting team will be grateful for your prayer support today. Uphold their outreach to the business and Christian communities as they secure sponsors for Moody Radio’s programming.

*We have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.*

Hebrews 10:10

## The Uniqueness of Christ's Sacrifice

A shadow is a mere silhouette of the person or object. From looking at the shadow we might be able to guess the object's shape and size, perhaps, but only when we turn to the object itself can we see it with clarity and in detail.

Scripture uses that same metaphor when talking about the old covenant: "The law is only a shadow of the good things that are coming—not the realities themselves" (v. 1). In particular, today's reading focuses on the uniqueness of Christ's sacrifice compared to the sacrifices under the law. They could never "make perfect those who draw near in worship" (v. 1).

While the old sacrificial system made forgiveness possible (see Lev. 4:35), its atonement was incomplete. There was no internal cleansing; one's sense of guilt remained. Moreover, those sacrifices had to be repeated again

and again, becoming "an annual reminder of sins" (v. 3). Scripture forcefully declares the inadequacy of that old system: "It is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins" (v. 4).

If that is the "shadow," what is the reality? Using Psalm 40, the author of Hebrews points to the answer: Christ and His perfect sacrifice. The psalm teaches that "Sacrifice and offering you did not desire" (v. 5). Although required by the Law, God's true desire was for a faithful heart to match the offering (see 1 Sam. 15:22). Only in the coming of Christ do we find a perfect sacrifice ("a body you prepared for me" [v. 5]), because only in Christ is there perfect obedience: "Here I am . . . I have come to do your will" (v. 7). Christ's sacrifice is unique; through it "we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" (v. 10).

### APPLY THE WORD

A sacrifice is only acceptable to God if it is accompanied by obedience in love. In Christ, we see a picture of that perfect sacrifice of love. And because of Christ's sacrifice, we are free to offer our lives in obedient love to God. How will you do that today? Where can you say with Christ: "Here I am . . . I have come to do your will"?

### PRAY WITH US

The team in the Office of the Treasurer carries the responsibility of overseeing Moody's finances. Would you praise God for blessing Moody with dedicated financial and prayer partners throughout its history and today?

SUNDAY  
OCTOBER

21

*Where these have been forgiven,  
sacrifice for sin is no longer necessary.*

Hebrews 10:18

## The Finality of Christ's Sacrifice

All the way back in Hebrews 5:11, the author introduced the topic of Jesus' priesthood and sacrifice and warned, "We have much to say about this." Indeed he did! Five chapters later, we have finally come to the end of that extended argument. Fittingly, it concludes with an emphasis on the finality of Christ's sacrifice.

Summarizing again the previous argument, the author of Hebrews reminds us of the contrast between the daily sacrifices of the old priestly system, "which can never take away sins" (v. 11), and Christ, who "offered for all time one sacrifice for sins" (v. 12). The finality of that sacrifice is made clear when, after the sacrifice, Christ "sat down at the right hand of God" (v. 12).

Christ's redemptive work is both finished and awaiting its final and future realization of that work. He still "waits for his enemies to be made his

footstool" (v. 13). Notice the verb tenses used in verse 14: we have been "made perfect forever" (past tense) and are still "being made holy" (present tense). This is the "already-not yet" paradox of the Christian faith and our call to be continually growing into our fulfillment and completion in Christ.

The author of Hebrews ends this section by reminding us that Christ's priesthood, sacrifice, and new covenant have addressed the root problem of sin. In Jeremiah 31, God declared: "I put my laws in their hearts, and I will write them on their minds" (v. 16) and "Their sins and lawless acts I will remember no more" (v. 17). Scripture highlights the finality of Christ's work with these words: "And where these have been forgiven, sacrifice for sin is no longer necessary" (v. 18). Christ's redemption is all we need. No other sacrificial system or any amount of self-effort can accomplish what Christ has done, once and for all.

### APPLY THE WORD

As you worship God with fellow believers, reflect on Scripture's message about Christ's priesthood and sacrifice. As you sing with your voice, listen with your ears, and pray with your mind and heart, let your Sunday worship be your own sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving in response to the finality of Christ's atoning sacrifice for you.

### PRAY WITH US

As we continue to ask for God's blessing on Moody's financial division, please pray for the Investments team today. Their faithful work is an example of Christian service that blesses others.

*Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful.*

Hebrews 10:23

MONDAY  
OCTOBER

22

## Faith, Hope, and Love

As one Christian teacher put it, the Bible tells us “what is true” and then tells us “what to do.” Theology is never an abstraction or mental exercise; it always includes an application to our lives. That is also true for the book of Hebrews.

Having laid out the great truth of Christ’s priesthood, sacrifice, and new covenant, Scripture now calls us to apply it to our lives. Three specific exhortations follow. First, we are told, “let us draw near to God” (v. 22). We should do this with “confidence” (v. 19) and “full assurance” (v. 22), not in ourselves, but in our “great priest” (v. 20). By His blood, our “new and living way” (v. 20), we have been purified and cleansed. As a result we now have permission “to enter the Most Holy Place” (v. 19), and *that* is what we are called to do—draw near to God in faith.

Second, we are told, “Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess” (v. 23). In addition to faith in God’s present salvation, we also look forward to a future hope. But again, our expectation rests not in ourselves, but in God, “for He who promised is faithful” (v. 23). It is *His* character that allows us to live in hope and profess it in our lives.

Third, we are told, “Let us consider how we may spur one another on” (v. 24). The Christian life is not just about faith and hope; it is also about love in a community of fellow believers. Given all that God has done for us, we are now told to encourage our Christian brothers and sisters toward “love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together” (vv. 24–25). As John Wesley famously said: “The Bible knows nothing of a solitary Christian.”

### APPLY THE WORD

Have you neglected the practice of gathering together with fellow believers in worship? Or maybe someone you know has drifted away from regular worship. The body of Christ is important for our Christian walk! Encourage that person (or yourself!) to renew your commitment to regular communal worship.

### PRAY WITH US

Please pray for Moody’s Media ministry today. May God continue to use our Radio and Publishing ministries in a powerful way to speak to both believers and unbelievers across the globe, cultures, and generations.

TUESDAY  
OCTOBER

23

*You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what he has promised.*

Hebrews 10:36

## A Warning to Persevere

Many areas of life require perseverance, such as completing a degree program, overcoming a challenge at work, or finishing an exercise routine. The Christian life is no different; Scripture calls each of us to persevere in the faith.

That call to perseverance is emphasized first by a negative example: recalling those who fell. In the old covenant, those who rejected God’s Law were punished. The conclusion: “How much more severely do you think someone deserves to be punished who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, who has treated as an unholy thing the blood of the covenant that sanctified them, and who has insulted the Spirit of grace?” (v. 29). Given all that Christ has done for us, a deliberate and persistent rejection of His grace and mercy leaves us in a very dire situation indeed.

Second, we are given a positive example: recalling those who endured.

In fact, the author of Hebrews reminds his readers of their *own* perseverance in the past. They had undergone “great conflict full of suffering” (v. 32), that involved public insult and persecution, imprisonment, and confiscation of personal property. In all of this, they had suffered “joyfully . . . because you knew that you yourselves had better and lasting possessions” (v. 34).

Finally, we are reminded of a future hope: “You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what he has promised” (v. 36). Using quotations from Isaiah and Habakkuk, the author reminds us that Christ’s return is imminent and we are called to live by faith (and in faithfulness) as we wait. Through perseverance in the faith, we belong “to those who have faith and are saved” (v. 39).

### APPLY THE WORD

When our spiritual perseverance wanes, we should remind ourselves of Christians around the world who face severe persecution. You can learn more online about the persecuted church today ([opendoorsusa.org](http://opendoorsusa.org)). Then pray for your suffering Christian brothers and sisters around the world, and be encouraged to persevere in faith yourself.

### PRAY WITH US

Please pray for Moody Radio’s administration team. May they find in God’s Word the strength, encouragement, and wisdom for their daily walk with Him.

*Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see.*

Hebrews 11:1

## A Call to Faith

At a sports league Hall of Fame, visitors can learn about the history of the sport, see memorabilia such as old balls and equipment, and acknowledge the accomplishments of the players and coaches who are honored for their exceptional achievements.

In a similar way, Hebrews 11 offers its own list of exceptional men and women of the Bible: the “Hall of Faith.” Previously, we were told that “the righteous will live by faith” (Heb. 10:38). Now we get both a definition of what faith is and some shining examples to imitate. “Faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see” (v. 1). Faith doesn’t require visibility; hope and confidence in the object of faith are what matters. When vision fails, faith steps in.

That brings our author to a list of biblical figures who are commended for their faith. Abel, Enoch, Noah,

Abraham, and Sarah—each in their own way—trusted in God, even when they could not see what He had promised or when their circumstances seemed to contradict it. Abraham, for example, trusted God’s leading, “even though he did not know where he was going” (v. 9); and Sarah (beyond childbearing age), “was enabled to bear children” (v. 11) because she trusted God’s promise.

Perhaps most important, each of these figures lived in expectation of something promised by God, but “they did not receive the things promised; they only saw them and welcomed them from a distance” (v. 13). While some experienced a partial fulfillment of God’s promises, they ultimately were looking forward to “a better country—a heavenly one” (v. 16). Though all of them died, Scripture tells us that they “were still living by faith when they died” (v. 13).

### APPLY THE WORD

**Biblical faith is built on the foundation of God’s Word. Since we have that confidence in Christ and Scripture, we too are encouraged to live by faith. What promises of God are particularly difficult for you to believe? Take those to Him in prayer and ask Him to strengthen your faith so that you might trust Him in all that He says.**

### PRAY WITH US

Moody Bible Institute uses the academic programs that train future Christian leaders at our Undergraduate School. Please pray for the leadership team today.

THURSDAY  
OCTOBER

25

*By faith Abraham, when God tested him, offered Isaac as a sacrifice.*

Hebrews 11:17

## More Heroes of Faith

Mother Teresa once said, “God does not demand that I be successful. God demands that I be faithful.” As we continue our walk through the “Hall of Faith” in Hebrews, notice the emphasis on examples of extraordinary *faith* rather than extraordinary *accomplishments*.

First, we see faith in times of trial. Abraham’s test may have been the most difficult of all when God asked him to offer Isaac as a sacrifice (see Genesis 22). Even though God’s instructions seemed baffling, Abraham was obedient to God’s call, believing “that God could even raise the dead” (v. 19). The Israelites faced a great trial in their Exodus from the Egyptians; yet by faith they “passed through the Red Sea as on dry land” (v. 29). Later, in the land of Canaan, they faced the mighty city of Jericho, but “by faith the walls of Jericho fell” (v. 30). Faith is tested most in moments of great trial.

Second, we see faith in times of fear. Moses’ parents refused to obey Pharaoh and kill their child because “they were not afraid of the king’s edict” (v. 23). Moses himself faced a fearful situation: leading the Israelites out of Egypt against the wishes of the mighty king. Moses could have enjoyed the pleasures of Egyptian life, but instead he “chose to be mistreated along with the people of God” (v. 25), and “by faith he left Egypt, not fearing the king’s anger” (v. 27). Faith overcomes fear.

Third, we see faith in times of uncertainty. Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph all embraced God’s promises about the future, even though they seemed uncertain at the time. Likewise, Rahab chose to embrace God’s people and plan, despite the seemingly unlikely Israelite victory to come. Faith remains strong even in times of uncertainty.

### APPLY THE WORD

Other Christian men and women in recent history—like Corrie ten Boom, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Mother Teresa, and others—have demonstrated faith in times of trial, fear, and uncertainty. Find a biography of one of these countless faithful Christians, and let your own faith be edified and renewed by their example.

### PRAY WITH US

Join us in prayer for Moody Theological Seminary. Pray that MTS would be a team united in spirit and focused on its mission of equipping people with the truth of God’s Word.

*Let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus.*

Hebrews 12:1–2

FRIDAY  
OCTOBER

26

## Christ: The Perfecter of Faith

Marathon runners know the challenge of enduring for 26.2 miles. The moment will come when lungs are burning, joints are aching, and muscles are failing. These athletes also know the power of encouragement from the great crowds cheering them on from the sidelines.

In chapters 11 and 12, the author of Hebrews is developing that image of runners being cheered. He continues the list of heroes in the faith, including men and women who endured great danger and torture and “faced jeers and flogging, and even chains and imprisonment” (11:36). Many were killed, often in gruesome ways. Others lived, but experienced poverty, persecution, mistreatment, and homelessness.

Why does the author of Hebrews mention all these? Because “these were all commended for their faith,” even if “none of them received what had been promised” (11:39). Moreover, these men

and women of faith are “a great cloud of witnesses” (12:1) now surrounding us as we run our own race in life. Imagining them cheering us on, we are encouraged to “throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles” and run “with perseverance” (12:1).

We do not run aimlessly. As in any race, we must look to the goal, and Scripture encourages us to run while “fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith” (12:2). Our focus is on Christ because He is the culmination of this “hall of faith,” the perfect example. In perfect faith, Christ “endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God” (12:2).

Christ is not just our model and source of faith; He is also the “perfecter” of faith, that is, the one who brings it to completion. In Him alone, we are brought to the finish line of faith.

### APPLY THE WORD

The Christian life involves focusing on Christ and rejecting sin, which Scripture describes as an entangling hindrance. Whether gossip, anger, lust, pride, or an excessive trust in material possessions, these sins are like heavy burdens, weighing you down. Ask God for the strength to throw them off and run with perseverance.

### PRAY WITH US

Despite numerous online channels of communication, we still rely heavily on phone connection to accomplish our ministry goals. Please pray for the Facilities team that maintains all phones on our campus in Chicago.

SATURDAY  
OCTOBER

27

*Endure hardship as discipline;  
God is treating you as his children.*

Hebrews 12:7

## The Purpose of Discipline

The earliest Christians knew the pain of persecution, and those who ultimately died for their faith were deemed martyrs. The author of Hebrews encouraged his congregation by reminding them: “You have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood” (v. 4). Still, the experience of hardship and suffering was difficult then, and continues to be challenging today. Our reading is a reminder about the character and purpose of adversity for God’s people.

First, Scripture tells us to “endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as his children” (v. 7). The analogy of parenting is helpful here. As the author of Hebrews notes, just as parents discipline their children out of love, so “the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and he chastens everyone he accepts as his son” (v. 6). In fact, the lack of discipline should be a concern:

“If you are not disciplined . . . then you are not legitimate, not true sons and daughters at all” (v. 8)! Since we respect our parents’ discipline and submit to them, “how much more should we submit to the Father of spirits and live” (v. 9).

Second, Scripture shows us the purpose of such discipline: it is “for our good” (v. 10). Just as good parents intend the best for their children, so our heavenly Father can use the discipline of adversity so “that we may share in his holiness” (v. 10). The author doesn’t pretend this is easy; “No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful” (v. 11). We often prefer the experiences of pleasure and happiness, but God may use the challenges of life to bring about “a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it” (v. 11). God can use the crucible of adversity to make us more like Jesus.

### APPLY THE WORD

With gentleness and love, encourage someone who is suffering with today’s message. God’s parental love remains even in adversity, and He can use that suffering to accomplish something for our good. If you are in the midst of suffering, persevere in the knowledge that God loves you and continues to hold you in His hand.

### PRAY WITH US

Biblical principles of good stewardship determine Moody’s financial policy. Please uphold in prayer our Stewardship department staff to fulfill their responsibilities with joy in this strategic ministry.

*Make every effort to live in peace  
with everyone and to be holy; without  
holiness no one will see the Lord.*

Hebrews 12:14

SUNDAY  
OCTOBER

28

## Life in the Heavenly Jerusalem

In Tolkien's *The Two Towers*, Strider employs his acute tracking abilities to pursue his two hobbit friends who have been captured by evil orcs. The pursuit takes days and requires his single-minded attention to navigate across vast terrain in order to find his friends.

That picture of an active pursuit of a goal is what the author of Hebrews has in mind when he uses the Greek word *dōkete*, translated as “make every effort” in English. The Christian life is an intentional striving “to live in peace with everyone and to be holy” (v. 14), because “without holiness no one will see the Lord” (v. 14; see Matt. 5:8–9). Avoidance of sin is also required. We must resist the root of bitterness, sexual immorality, and godlessness that seeks after temporary pleasures.

And the author also points us to something even greater: a vision of “Mount Zion, the city of the living God,

the heavenly Jerusalem” (v. 22). He contrasts Mount Zion with Mount Sinai in the old covenant. Whereas God's presence on Sinai produced fear and trembling, the new Jerusalem is a “joyful assembly” (v. 22). Likewise, Sinai was a reminder of God's inaccessibility: “If even an animal touches the mountain, it must be stoned to death” (v. 20). Yet, now in Christ, “the mediator of a new covenant” (v. 24), God is fully accessible; twice he says, “you have come” to God.

That picture of the heavenly Jerusalem is reminiscent of the heavenly worship scene in Revelation, where “God's dwelling place is now among the people” (Rev. 21:3). We should hold on to that vision of worship as we “make every effort” in our Christian journey. We have received “a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe” (v. 28).

### APPLY THE WORD

The early church father Augustine of Hippo said that God Himself “is the source of our bliss, He Himself is the goal of all our striving.” As you enter into worship this Sunday, let it all be an intentional striving for the God who is your joy, now accessible in Christ. Then keep that vision of worship before you in the week to come.

### PRAY WITH US

We'd like to thank God together for the ministry of Moody Radio's stations across the country. Today, join us in praying for the staff of WGNB in Michigan, one of Moody's 37 owned and operated radio stations.

MONDAY  
OCTOBER

29

*Keep on loving one another  
as brothers and sisters.*

Hebrews 13:1

## Final Exhortations: Love, Purity, Contentment

A recent poll asked people about their perceptions of Christianity. The leading negative impression cited was hypocrisy, the perception that Christians say one thing but live another way.

The danger of hypocrisy is not new, and the final chapter in the book of Hebrews offers a series of exhortations to encourage consistency between belief and practice. First, we are called to genuine and practical love. We must love our fellow Christians “as brothers and sisters” (v. 1), but we must also love those we do not know: “Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers” (v. 2). Opening our homes to those in need is a way to live out our identity as followers of Jesus. Finally, love must be demonstrated toward the vulnerable, those who are mistreated and imprisoned. Scripture likely has in mind fellow believers, and calls us to love them “as if you were together with them in prison” (v. 3).

Second, we are called to lives of sexual purity. In our day when the divorce rate is extremely high, even among Christians, Scripture’s exhortation is timely: “Marriage should be honored by all, and the marriage bed kept pure” (v. 4). Christians should not only value marriage but work hard to preserve it and encourage couples who are struggling. Strong Christian marriages can become a powerful witness to a world full of adultery, promiscuity, and sexual immorality.

Third, we are called to contentment: “Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have” (v. 5). A love of material possessions will only erode contentment. Scripture reminds us that God’s providential care will provide for our needs; we can rest assured of His presence and help, and we need not run after materialistic goods.

### APPLY THE WORD

Where is God calling your life into greater consistency with the gospel? Do you need to recommit your marriage to Christ? Can you simplify your possessions in order to focus more on God? Prayerfully consider these exhortations and ask God for strength to live out your Christian identity more consistently.

### PRAY WITH US

All of the Nashville area can now tune in to Moody Radio! FM 98.7 and AM 1200 joined WFCM-FM 91.7. Praise the Lord for this incredible opportunity to serve Music City USA!

*Jesus Christ is the same  
yesterday and today and forever.*

Hebrews 13:8

TUESDAY  
OCTOBER

30

## Final Exhortations: Focus on Jesus

The Greek philosopher Heraclitus once said, “The only thing constant is change.” Our experience and observation seem to validate his statement. From weather patterns, to political leaders, to our own bodies, life is constantly changing.

Scripture reminds us that at least one thing is perfectly constant: “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever” (v. 8). The eternal God who created the world lives today, and remains forever the anchor for the Christian life. By focusing on Him, our lives should bear fruits of loyalty, endurance, and worship.

One way that we are loyal to the truth is by imitating our faithful leaders. Because Jesus does not change, and the truth about Christ remains the same, we must stay loyal to it, resisting the pull of false teaching (v. 9). In an age when some Christians are wanting

to accommodate their teaching to the world’s values, Scripture reminds us that God’s truth does not change, and we must remain loyal to it.

Endurance is also required for us to focus on Jesus. Christ Himself offered the perfect sacrifice and “suffered outside the city gate to make the people holy through his own blood” (v. 12). That perfect and eternal sacrifice means we too must “go to him outside the camp, bearing the disgrace he bore” (v. 13). We can endure suffering because of the One who suffered for us.

Finally, we are called to a life of worship. In our corporate and private worship, we “offer to God a sacrifice of praise—the fruit of lips that openly profess his name” (v. 15). But Scripture also tells us that our whole life is an act of worship, and “with such sacrifices God is pleased” (v. 16).

### APPLY THE WORD

Some accuse Christians of being “so heavenly minded that they are no earthly good.” Today’s Scripture shows that focusing on Jesus must also produce a life that is full of practical commitment to Him and to others. Think of the tasks in your day and consider how you might make those earthly activities into acts of heavenly worship.

### PRAY WITH US

We thank God for those who help provide nutritious meals in our cafeteria, The Commons. Their Christian character is evident in their competent, productive work and in the encouragement they are to others!

WEDNESDAY  
OCTOBER

31

*I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.*

John 10:11

## Living under the Shepherd

Scotland has a population of some 5.3 million people—and 6.5 to 7 million sheep! Sheep farmers understand the importance of caring for their flock in all sorts of terrain and weather conditions.

That image of a watchful shepherd runs throughout our passage. The leaders of the church are called to “keep watch over you” (v. 17), which is the same verb employed for both shepherds and sentries. Clearly, one of the primary tasks of leaders in the church is to care for the spiritual well-being of Christ’s sheep, and one day they “must give an account” (v. 17) for their work.

Members of the flock also have responsibilities. They must respect their leaders and submit to them, and they must live in a way that their leaders’ work “will be a joy, not a burden” (v. 17). A flourishing church is one whose leaders and members work in cooperation, each being faithful to their own tasks.

Likewise, the entire congregation is called to prayer. The author of Hebrews has written this “word of exhortation” (v. 22) with “a clear conscience” (v. 18) and with obvious affection. He also requests that the community engage in prayerful intercession on his behalf. And the church today should pray not just for its own leaders but also for leaders in churches across the globe.

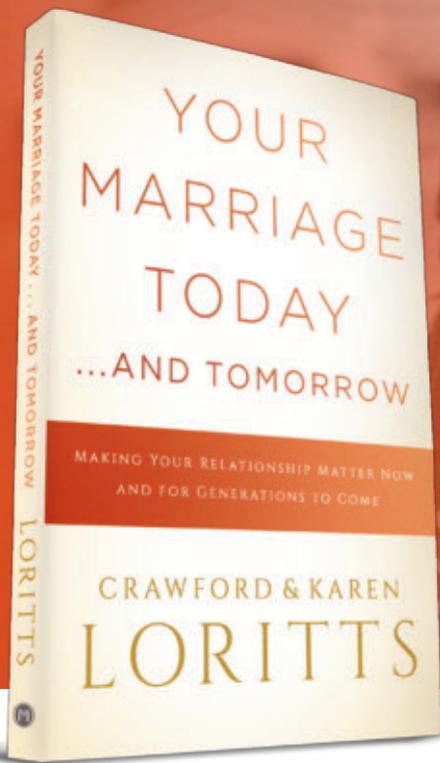
Finally, Scripture returns us to the shepherd imagery, and to the foundation for the entire letter: Jesus Christ, “that great Shepherd of the sheep.” Through Christ’s death and resurrection, we now have an “eternal covenant” (v. 20). The book of Hebrews ends where it started. Jesus Christ is the perfect sacrifice, priest, and mediator of the new covenant. In Him we are equipped “with everything good for doing his will” (v. 21).

### APPLY THE WORD

As both priest and offering, Christ has ushered in the new covenant and brought us into a new relationship with our God. As you reflect on our study this month, jot down one or two thoughts you will take with you from this exploration of the book of Hebrews. Then give thanks to God for His work in your life through Christ.

### PRAY WITH US

Today is a good time to reflect on the theme of this month’s study and use our time of prayer for thanksgiving. We are grateful that God meets our needs, carries our burdens, and provides us with the ability to thank Him in gratitude and joy.



## WHAT WILL YOUR MARRIAGE LEGACY BE?

Dr. Crawford and Karen Loritts have been married now for over 45 years. With God's help, they've built a marriage that shines as an example of Christ's love for their four children and eleven grandchildren, and that will leave a legacy for generations beyond. And they want to show you how to do the same.

Your marriage has the power to change the lives of countless generations. Whether that change is good or bad is up to you.



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# THE INSPIRED WORD

All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

2 Timothy 3:16–17

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