Crossroads International Church Singapore Dr. Rick Griffith

Title

20 October 2019 Message 60 of 66

NLT 60 Minutes

**Be Uncompromising**

***Book of Hebrews***

**Topic:** Compromise

**Subject:** Why should you be uncompromising in your faith in Jesus?

**Complement:** Jesus is your “go-to” mediator between you and God.

**Purpose:** Listeners will not compromise their faith in Jesus by seeing his high priesthood.

**Attribute:** We worship Jesus as High Priest

**Reading:** Heb 12:7-13

**Song:** Is He Worthy? By Faith, There is a Higher Throne, He Will Hold Me Fast (closing)

**Benediction:** Heb 12:28-29

# Introduction

### Interest: Who likes running? Who quit? The Christian life is a race but many believers sadly quit their spiritual race today.

Running

(2 slides)

#### Every one of us knows many people who used to walk with Jesus but does not do so now.

Christians

(2 slides)

#### We need to know what to think of them and also do what we can not to compromise our own faith in Christ.

### Need: Will you quit? Will you compromise your faith?

#### To answer this, we must answer this question: Why do people quit?

#### I’m convinced that the typical person acts in his or her own self-interest—so one abandons the faith to what they think is better for them than Jesus.

### Intro to MPI: Why should you be uncompromising in your faith in Jesus? Why should you NOT quit your belief in Christ—no matter how difficult it becomes to serve him?

Intro MP

### Background/Text: To learn better why we should press on, today we will survey the whole book of Hebrews. It addressed a Jewish community that believed in Jesus, but their later struggles made them doubt so they were considering going back to Judaism.

Press on

Go Back?

Title

#### We don’t know many things about this letter: author, recipients, origin, destination and date.

Unknowns

#### But I think they lived in Israel and found refuge in Jerusalem during the Jewish-Roman War of AD 66-73.

Maps

(2 slides)

#### This Hebrew community was known to the author and had already suffered some.

Stress

#### Yet these were believers as seen in many places in the letter.

Believers

#### They were in a serious situation where, as a group, they were considering abandoning their trust in Christ. Like us, they acted in what they considered their best interest—rightly motivated but wrong in substance.

#### The writer responded by telling them that they would be leaving something better for something worse. It’s the same for us today!

Better

### Preview: So today we’ll see *why* we should not compromise and then *what* to do instead.

Intro MP

(First, why should you be uncompromising in your faith in Jesus? This is because…)

MP

(2 slides)

# Jesus is better than anyone or anything (1:1–10:18).

Person

[Christ is superior to whoever or whatever you or anyone else can imagine.]

2:6-8a

## Christ is ***superior*** to Judaism’s prophets, angels, and Moses in***his person***(1:1–4:13).

Heb 1

### He is better than *the OT prophets*, so follow him (1:1-3).

Section

#### OT prophets ministered to Jews repeatedly and only as partial revelations of God (1:1).

1:1-2

#### Christ is the *final revelation* of God as his person exceeds that of the prophets (1:2-3).

##### Jesus is *God’s Son* speaking—which was never said of a prophet (1:2a).

##### Jesus is *heir* of the universe—but no prophet was destined to rule the world (1:2b).

##### Jesus is the *Creator* of the universe—but all prophets are created beings (1:2c).

1:3

##### Jesus is *God* since he exactly represents the Father—said of no prophet (1:3a).

##### Jesus is *Sustainer* of the universe by his word—but no prophet sustains the world (1:3b).

##### Jesus is *Atonement* for mankind’s sins—while prophets need his atonement (1:3c).

##### Jesus *completed* his ministry in a manner pleasing to the Father—but no prophet completely pleased God (1:3d).

### He is better than *the angels* as God and man, so respect him as Creator (1:4–2:18).

Section

#### Christ is greater than angels in *his deity*, so the readers should not return to their Jewish sect emphasizing angel ministry (1:4-14).

##### Jesus is God worthy of worship.

Jesus is God

1:8-9

##### God the Father calls him “God” (1:6-12).

Heb 2

#### Warning #1: Abandoning Jesus brings discipline (2:1-4).

##### This is the first of many exhortations in Hebrews (pp. 266e, 266p).

Warning 1

##### Here they are warned against drifting away.

2:1-2

#### Christ is greater than angels in *his humanity*, so the readers should trust Christ rather than angels (2:5-18).

Jesus is Man

##### Jesus is a man worthy to rule and God never promised angels authority to rule the world (2:5).

##### Psalm 8:4-6 promises man the privilege to rule the future world (2:6-8).

### He is better than Moses, so don’t forfeit Canaan in the millennial kingdom (3:1–4:13).

Section

Heb 3

#### Christ is superior to Moses in his glory and position, so the readers should follow Christianity instead of Judaism (3:1-6).

Superior to Moses

#### Warning #2: As believing Israel forfeited Canaan rest due to later unbelief, so we must obey to inherit the same Promised Land millennial kingdom rest (3:7–4:13).

Warning 2

##### Although all Christians will be saved, we will be partakers in his rule only if we are faithful (3:12-14).

3:12-14

##### Israel’s disinheritance of Canaan warns the Hebrew Christian readers (and us) of the same penalty for rejecting Christ (4:1-13; cf. 1 Cor. 3:11-15; pp. 266i-k).

Why Follow?

Heb 4

(4 slides)

## Christ is ***superior*** to Judaism in ***his high priestly work***(4:14–10:18)*.*

### He is better than Judaism’s *high priest*, so go to him (4:14–6:20).

Section

#### Christ’s superior *position* over Judaism’s high priest gives him victory over temptation so the readers can draw near to him rather than drift away (4:14-16).

##### Here the theme of the letter becomes clearer as Christ’s Superiority over Judaism as High Priest.

Theme

##### However, even in his greatness, Christ sympathizes with our weaknesses and provides free access to his throne of grace (4:15-16).

4:15-16

#### Christ’s superior *qualifications* over Judaism’s high priest make him even more worthy to follow (5:1-10).

Heb 5

(3 slides)

##### There were two basic qualifications of the Jewish high priest (5:1-4).

Two Required

###### He must be a man with human weakness (5:1-3).

5:4

###### He must be chosen by God (5:4; see p. 266l for his holy garments).

5:5

##### Jesus fulfilled both of these high priest qualifications even more than did the earthly high priest (5:5-10).

#### Knowing the dangers of reverting to Judaism and neglecting to press on to spiritual maturity can prevent apostasy and temporal judgment (5:11–6:20).

Heb 6

##### Warning #3: Spiritual immaturity shown in returning to Judaism would lead to an irreversible apostasy and judgment in Jerusalem’s fires (5:11–6:8).

Warning 3

###### The readers should be teachers, but their spiritual laziness required basic teachings on Christ instead of higher doctrines in righteousness (5:11-14).

###### This dangerous situation made them susceptible to wrongly emphasize the lifeless Old Testament rituals[[1]](#footnote-1)—not mature doctrines (6:1-3).

###### Apostasy by denying Jesus is an irreversible decision with recommitment to Christ impossible due to physical death (6:4-8).[[2]](#footnote-2)

Impossible

The impossibility is not an impossibility of being saved but the impossibility of repentance.

What danger?

Four main views exist on this but the best evidence is for death.

Lesser Mediator

Following a lesser mediator than Jesus can lead to death.

##### The writer exhorts spiritual maturity that his readers will not apostatize and be judged but will be faithful to Jesus until the end of their lives (6:9-20).

Heb 7

### He is better than *Abraham and Levi* as a Melchizedek Priest, so follow him (Heb 7).

Section

#### The great angel Melchizedek[[3]](#footnote-3) was greater than both Abraham and Levi (7:1-10).

Who Was He?

##### Melchizedek had such superior qualities that he must have been angel (7:1-3).

###### Melchizedek served as king of Salem, or ancient Jerusalem (7:1a).

###### Melchizedek was priest of God Most High (7:1b).

###### Melchizedek had such high stature that he blessed Abraham (7:1c).

###### Melchizedek received tithes from Abraham (7:2a).

###### Melchizedek’s name and title of righteousness and peace point to the Messiah (7:2b).

###### Melchizedek is timeless (7:3).

##### Melchizedek was greater than both Abraham and Levi (7:4-10).

#### Christ is Priest, Prophet & King, so a return to the old Levitical order is foolish and unnecessary (7:11-28).

Diagram

### He is better than *the old covenant* in his new covenant, so follow him (Heb 8).

Heb 8

#### Since Jesus in his priesthood supersedes the old priesthood, his new covenant also supersedes the old covenant (8:1-6).

8:6

#### Jeremiah 31:31-34 taught a future, new and better covenant, so this shows that the coming of the new covenant makes the old covenant obsolete (8:7-13).

New Cov

(2 slides)

Heb 9

(2 slides)

### He is better than *the tabernacle* by his sacrifice, so follow him (9:1–10:18).

Temporary (2 slides)

#### The tabernacle and sacrificial system were glorious but only *temporary* (9:1-10).

Permanent (2 slides)

#### Christ’s sacrifice saves us *permanently* compared to the old and transitory tabernacle sacrifices (9:11–10:18; cf. pp. 266o, 266u).

Subject

(So we have learned a key reason why we should be uncompromising in our faith in Jesus—that being that Jesus is better than anyone or anything! But if Jesus is better than anyone or anything, what should we do? The rest of the book tells us…)

MPI

# Don’t compromise but persevere by faith (10:19–13:25).

MP

Heb 10

[Don’t shrink back—press on instead!]

## Stubborn unbelief can even kill you—so press on (10:19-39).

Section

### Christ’s high priesthood gives us perseverance with God and man (10:19-25).

Section

Hall Faith

(9 slides)

Warning 4

(10 slides)

### Warning #4: Willful sin can lead to physical death in Roman fires[[4]](#footnote-4) if these believers reverted to a willful sin of disbelief (10:26-31).

### Past endurance in persecution by the readers is recalled to help them endure their present trials (10:32-39).

Heb 11

## Others faithfully endured before you to give you examples—so press on (11:1–12:3).

Section

### OT saints persevered before seeing God fulfill his promises just as the readers must endure before receiving all God promised (Heb 11; cf. pp. 266x-y).

### Jesus on the cross is the best example of endurance and reward to help the readers focus on Christ to continue being faithful (12:1-3; cf. p. 266bb).

Heb 12

(2 slides)

## God’s discipline grows righteousness, confidence and relationships—so press on (12:4-17).

### The result of enduring hardship from God as disciplined sons is righteousness and confidence (12:4-13).

Loving Discipline

### Each of us has been disciplined by the Lord for our good—please accept it as a sign of his love.

## Ignoring God invites his loving discipline of you—so press on (12:18-29).

Section

### The awesome God feared and avoided at Mt. Sinai at the giving of the old covenant has now brought believers into the new covenant as citizens of heaven (12:18-24).

Warning 5

### Warning #5: Refusing God has consequences (12:25-29; cf. p. 266dd).

Heb 13

## Many practical ways to serve God exist for you—so press on (Heb 13).

Section

### Show hospitality to all the saints, to strangers, and to prisoners (13:1-3).

Hospitable

### Realize that God is with you and so you don’t seek refuge in money by loving money (13:5-6).

Don’t Love Money

### Maintain doctrinal purity just as they were to separate from Judaism by leaving Jerusalem (13:9-17).

Leave the City

### A doxology of God’s enablement reminds them that only through God’s power could they please him (13:20-21).

Doxology

Intro MP

(The reason Hebrew believers should not compromise but rather endure by faith is because of Christ’s superiority to Judaism as High Priest. But what about us? Why shouldn’t we compromise our faith in Christ? What’s really so different about him? We also need a compassionate high priest since…)

# Conclusion

### Main Points: Who is Jesus and how should you respond?

MPI

#### Jesus is better than anyone or anything (1:1–10:18).

MPII

#### Don’t compromise but persevere by faith (10:19–13:25).

### Jesus is your “go-to” mediator between you and God (Main Idea). Christ is the only high priest you have to represent the sinful you to the sinless God.

MI

Where Press On?

### Exhortation: Where do you need to press on?

Prayer

### Prayer

Song

### “He Will Hold Me Fast” (Getty)

# Preliminary Questions

**Verses Questions**

# Context: What did the author record just prior to this passage?

### Well, no one knows, since no knows for sure who wrote Hebrews.

### If Paul wrote it, he probably had finished the Pastoral Epistles and was about to lose his head to Nero.

# Purpose: Why is this passage in the Bible?

### Every one of us knows many people who used to walk with Jesus but does not do so now.

### We need to know what to think of them and also do what we can not to compromise our own faith in Christ.

# Background: What historical context helps us understand this passage?

### The Hebrew community was known to the author and these believers were in a serious situation where, as a group, they were considering abandoning their trust in Christ.

### The sacrificial system was still in effect but about to disappear (8:13), so the date is likely about AD 67-68 when Jews fled to Jerusalem during the First Jewish War Against Rome (AD 66-73).

# Questions

### How should we understand the five warning passages in Hebrews?

### What does it mean for Jesus to be our high priest?

# Tentative Main Ideas

Press On

Trust Jesus as your High Priest

# Illustrations That Apply

### Runners quit their race

# New Testament Survey Notes

**Hebrews**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Christ's Superiority over Judaism as High Priest** | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Do Not Compromise Since Jesus is Better** | | | | | | | **Endure by Faith** | | | | |
| **Superior in His**  **Person to…** | | | **Superior in His**  **Priestly Work to…** | | | | **Each Decision has Huge Results** | | | | |
| **1:1–4:13** | | | **4:14–10:18** | | | | **10:19–13:25** | | | | |
| Prophets  1:1-3 | Angels  1:4–2:18 | Moses  3:1–4:13 | Aaron  4:14–6:20 | Melchi-zedek  7 | Old Covenant  8 | Tabernacle & Sacrifices  9:1–10:18 | Willful Sin  10:19-39 | Models  11:1–12:3 | Don’t Despise Discipline  12:4-17 | Don’t Ignore God  12:18-29 | Press on!  13 |
| **Christ’s Majesty** | | | **Christ’s Ministry** | | | | **Christian’s Manifestation** | | | | |
| **Theology** | | | | | | | **Practice** | | | | |
| **Unknown Author, Recipients, Date, Origin, and Destination!** | | | | | | | | | | | |

**Key Word: Superiority**

**Key Verse: “Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him, endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God” (Hebrews 12:1-2).**

**Summary Statement: The reason believers should not compromise but rather endure by faith is because of Christ’s superiority to Judaism as High Priest.**

**Application: Despite the perceived advantages, never, ever let difficulties convince you to return to the religion you embraced before you were saved! See page 266t.**

**Hebrews**

**Introduction**

**I. Title** The Greek title (Pro.j vEbrai,ouj *To the Hebrews*) does not follow the standard practice to name General Epistles after their authors. In this case the name identifies the Jewish recipients.

**II. Authorship**

A. External Evidence: The author of the Book of Hebrews is not stated in the book, but 13:18-24 shows that its original readers knew the writer. Many different authors have been suggested throughout church history. Even early church tradition divided over the authorship:

1. In Alexandria (Egypt) and in the Eastern Church the author was deemed to be **Paul**.

2. North African early church fathers (e.g., Tertullian of Carthage) said **Barnabas** wrote it.

3. In Italy and Western Europe authorship was **initially debated**. Paul’s authorship was originally rejected by Hippolytus (*ca.* 160-235), Caius (cited by Eusebius), and Irenaeus (*ca.* 140-203). Hebrews was not in the Muratorian Canon (AD 170), but Jerome (AD 340-420) and Augustine (AD 354-430) eventually convinced the Western Church to accept the Eastern Church view of authorship by **Paul**. This officially became Catholic dogma at the Council of Trent (AD 1546).

4. Reformation Protestants such as Calvin rejected the Catholic adherence to Pauline authorship. Luther and Erasmus attributed the epistle to **Apollos**.

5. Modern scholarship remains equally baffled by the authorship question. Additional suggestions include **Luke**, **Clement**, **Silas**, **Priscilla**, and **Philip the Evangelist**. Therefore, the external evidence is inconclusive.

B. Internal Evidence: In some respects the letter seems non-Pauline, but the best evidence may indicate Pauline authorship.

1. The internal evidence (i.e., in the letter itself) may point to Paul as author:

a. Timothy is mentioned in 13:23, likely as a traveling companion.

b. The author seems to be in prison (13:19) and the closing benediction sounds like Paul (13:20-21), including a greeting from Italian believers (13:24). This may show that Paul could have written it during one of his two imprisonments in Rome (AD 60-62 or 67-68).

c. It emphasizes Pauline themes of faith (Heb 11), the New Covenant (Heb 8), Israel's example (Heb 4), gifts and power (2:4) and the person of Christ (Heb 1–10).

d. Paul may have purposely omitted his name due to the hatred Jews had for him (they thought he maligned the temple and “apostatized” from Judaism to Christianity).

2. Yet many other internal observations may oppose Pauline authorship:

a. The Greek style is more polished and classical than in Paul's epistles. OT quotations are from the Septuagint (Greek), not the Hebrew text expected of one trained formally as a Jew like Paul. (But Paul does use both translations in his writings.)

b. No customary Pauline salutation appears at the beginning.

c. It seems that 2:3-4 indicates a second-generation author who received the gospel from the disciples of Jesus. Paul did not describe himself in this way (Gal 1–2).

d. While Paul’s writings emphasize the death and resurrection of Christ, Hebrews emphasizes the priesthood of Christ and his present work.

3. Any objective inquisitor of the epistle’s author must confess with the third century church father Origen who said, “Who it was that really wrote the Epistle, God only knows.”

4. Being anonymous does not affect its canonicity since the early church held to its authority.

**III. Circumstances**

A. Date: The date is not expressly stated in the book so must be determined by internal and external evidence. However, the following facts can be summarized:

1. Clement of Rome quoted the letter in AD 95-96 which rules out a second century date.

2. The lack of reference to the destruction of the Jerusalem temple points to a date before AD 70, especially since the sacrificial system was still in operation (cf. 8:4-5, 13: 9:6-9; 10:1-3, 11) and was “obsolete and aging” and would “soon disappear” (8:13).

3. The readers had “not yet resisted to the point of shedding blood…” (12:4), perhaps showing a date before Nero’s persecutions (AD 64-68). But this assumes persecution by the Romans (e.g., Nero), which may not have been the case had the readers lived in the Judean desert. Also, no reputable scholars date the book before AD 64.

4. Assuming Pauline authorship, the best date may be during his second imprisonment at Rome (AD 67-68), placing it during the Jewish revolt in Israel (AD 66-73).

B. Recipients: The readers were Jews due to the many allusions to and quotes from the OT that would have needed explanation if a Gentile audience was in view. This finds support in that “To the Hebrews” is the oldest and most reliable title.

These Jews, however, were second-generation (2:1-4) believers (3:1; 4:14-16; 10:19-22, 32-34; 12:7; 13:1, 20-22) who should have matured beyond their present immature state in Christ (5:11-14). They were immature, but they were true believers, not simply professing Christians. They were in danger of lapsing back into Judaism, perhaps due to persecution for Christ (although the precise nature of their temptation is not explicitly stated). A problem with dabbling in OT rites is hinted at in 7:11, 26-28; 8:4-5; 9:1–10:18.

But this letter was not a general address. It appears that these Jewish Christians composed a specific community:

1. The author knew their history, including their conversion (2:3), ministry to other Christians (6:10), sufferings for the gospel (10:32-34), and present state of spiritual maturity (5:11ff.).

2. The writer had already visited them once and desired to revisit them (13:19, 23). The readers apparently had a concern for Timothy as well (13:18).

3. The readers may have composed the leadership of a larger community since it is unlikely that the writer would expect the entire church to be teachers (5:12).

C. Origin: The letter apparently was sent from Italy (13:24, “those from Italy greet you”) to its recipients in another place. Yet Italy itself may also have been the destination since the Italians of 13:24 may have been with the author sending their greetings to their countrymen in Italy.

D. Destination: The Jewish Christians who first read the letter lived in a specific geographical location that probably was away from Jerusalem (i.e., in a mission field) since they were not among those who personally saw the Lord (2:3). Many destinations have been suggested: the Lycus Valley in Asia Minor, Rome, Cyprus, Cyrene, and the Qumran Community near the Dead Sea (see “Occasion” below). If Barnabas authored it, evidence may point to Cyrene (his home area) as the destination. The author evidently ministered in Rome at the time of writing and a relationship may have existed between Italian Christians and believers at Cyrene through Barnabas' contact with Simeon called Niger (a black) and Lucius of Cyrene (cf. Acts 13:1). No one really knows the origin or destination, but Jewish Christians in the Diaspora mixed with Gentile believers, as in Ephesus, Corinth, and Rome. In contrast, the Jewish recipients of this letter seemed to be a separate community, so a location in Israel is most likely.

E. Occasion: The admonishment not to stop meeting together (10:25) may show that the readers had sectarian tendencies, possibly separating themselves from their original, larger group. Perhaps they were believers saved from the Jewish Qumran Community who identified with a church, experienced persecution from unbelieving Jews, and then separated with the thought of a possible return to the Community and Judaism. The Dead Sea Scrolls note that the Qumran Community believed that Michael and his angels would be the rulers of the coming age. If the recipients were saved out of this background, persecution may have tempted them to again emphasize angels—so the writer began by showing how Jesus surpassed angels (1:4–2:18). No one knows the exact historical situation, but the writer had clear prophetic knowledge that the temple and sacrificial system would soon end (8:13), which happened in AD 70. He warned these believers that if they returned to Judaism, the fires of Rome would judge all involved in the Jewish revolt—believer and unbeliever alike. Thus the “raging fire that will consume the enemies of God” (10:27; cf. 6:8) refers not to eternal hellfire but to fires that burned Qumran, Jerusalem and all other cities resistant to Rome (p. 266c). See the excellent support of this view by Randall C. Gleason, “The Old Testament Background of the Warning in Hebrews 6:4-8,” *Bib Sac* 155 (Jan-Mar 1998): 62-91; idem., “The Old Testament Background of Rest in Hebrews 3:7-4:11,” *Bib Sac* 157 (July-Sep 2000): 281-303. Also see his articles in Herbert W. Bateman IV, ed., *Four Views on the Warning Passages* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel, 2007), as well as Joseph C. Dillow, *Final Destiny: The Future Reign of the Servant Kings*, 4th ed. (Monument, CO: Paniym Group, 2012).

Whoever these Jewish Christians were, the writer saw them in a very serious situation. Five severe warnings (2:1-4; 3:7–4:13; 5:11–6:8; 10:19-39; 12:18-29) admonish them not to reject Christianity for Judaism. The recipients had suffered persecution (10:30-32), but perhaps not actual martyrdom (12:4). They desperately needed endurance (10:36), for they were dull of hearing (5:11) and in danger of drifting away from their moorings in Christ (2:1; 3:12).

**IV. Characteristics**

A. Hebrews perplexes scholars as to its authorship more than any book in Scripture. The recipients, place of writing, and destination are equally baffling!

B. The five warning passages in Hebrews have caused much debate. The main issue is whether they address professing “Christians” (= non-Christians) in danger of eternal damnation, actual Christians in danger of loss of salvation, or Christians in danger of loss of reward or temporal judgment in the fires of Jerusalem. See page 266c that contrasts these views in detail.

C. Hebrews has the greatest information in Scripture on many doctrines: the “rest” for the believer (pp. 266g-k), the Melchizedek Priesthood (p. 266m), the High Priesthood of Christ (p. 266u), the New Covenant (p. 266o, 266v), and the typology of the offerings and feasts in Leviticus.

D. Hebrews lacks a salutation at the beginning, reading “more like a sermonic essay than a letter… [In fact,] only 13:18-25 sounds like a real epistle” (*TTTB*, 457).

E. The Greek style may be the most elegant in the NT. It has at least 157 words found nowhere else in Scripture.

F. It has over 86 OT quotes and so many allusions that it has over 100 references from 21 OT books (pp. 266m, 266aa)! This includes the longest quote in the NT (Heb. 8:8-12 quotes Jer. 31:31-34 on the new covenant).

G. Hebrews 11 is the Church’s most loved chapter in the Bible on faith (pp. 266x-z).

H. Hebrews has been called the fifth Gospel. The four Gospels relate what Christ did *on earth then*, but Hebrews supplements them by explaining his role *in heaven now*.

I. Romans shows the *need* for Christianity but Hebrews shows the *superiority* of Christianity.

J. Six key words repeated in the book affirm the superiority of Christ as the perfect and eternal high priest in heaven and thus better than Judaism (Harold L. Willmington, *Willmington’s Guide to the Bible* [Wheaton: Tyndale, 1991], 516):

1. “Priest, high priest” Used 32 times

2. “Heaven” Used 17 times

3. “Eternal, forever” Used 15 times

4. “Perfect” Used 14 times

5. “Better” Used 13 times

6. “Partakers” Used 9 times

K. Now fill in the “Brain Twister” crossword to see if you know the basics of Hebrews (p. 266ee).

**Argument**

Hebrews is a logical but passionate and stern declaration to rescue a group of persecuted Jewish Christians from abandoning Christianity by returning to Judaism. The writer affirms the superiority of Christ in a rational style, beginning first with his person and then his work. He explains Jesus’ preeminence over the prophets, angels, Moses, Aaron, the Old Covenant, the tabernacle, and the sacrifices to convince the readers that abandoning *Christ* for only *types* of him makes no sense and receives sure judgment. Five warning texts emphasize how forsaking the substance for the shadow is clearly a tragic mistake. The letter then progresses with an exhortation to endure in faith, citing the examples of many who have successfully gone before the suffering recipients of the epistle. The final chapter exhorts the church to love in both the social and religious realms, concluding with a request for prayer, a benediction, and personal greetings.

The author wrote to keep his hearers from deserting the faith by lapsing back to Judaism. He did this by showing how Christianity (and Christ specifically) is better than Judaism in many ways:

1. Christ is the final revelation of God and is God Himself (1:1-8).

2. Christ is superior to: (a) angels (Heb 1–2), (b) Moses (Heb 3–4), and (3) Aaron, the old covenant, the sanctuary, and the sacrifices (Heb 4–10).

3. The word “better” occurs 13 times (1:4; 6:9; 7:7, 19, 22; 8:6a, 6b; 9:23; 10:34; 11:16, 35, 40; 12:24; p. 266f) along with emphases in Christology and Soteriology. Each time “better” contrasts Christ with the old order.

4. Five passages warn against despising the new order by returning to the old (2:1-4; 3:7–4:13; 5:11–6:8; 10:19-39; 12:18-29).

**Synthesis**

**Christ's superiority over Judaism as high priest**

**1:1–10:18 Do Not Compromise Since Jesus is Better**

**1:1–4:13 Superior in his person to…**

1:1-3 Prophets (theme)

1:4–2:18 Angels

1:4-14 Due to deity

2:1-4 #1–Drifting away #= five warning passages

2:5-18 Due to humanity

3:1–4:13 Moses

3:1-6 Glory/position

3:7–4:13 #2–Unbelief

**4:14–10:18 Superior in his priestly work to…**

4:14–6:20 Aaronic priesthood

4:14-16 Due to deity

5:1-10 Due to Melchizedek order

5:11–6:20 Maturity

5:11–6:8 #3–Immaturity warned

6:9-20 Maturity exhorted

7 Melchizedek

8 Old covenant

9:1-10 Tabernacle

9:11–10:18 Sacrifices

**10:19–13:25 Endure by faith**

10:19-39 #4–Willful sin

11:1–12:3 Models of faithful endurance

12:4-13 Endurance as sons

12:14-17 Ethics of endurance

12:18-29 #5–Ignoring God's voice

13:1-25 Exhortations to love/conclusion

**Outline**

**Summary Statement for the Book**

**The reason Hebrew believers should not compromise but rather endure by faith is because of Christ’s superiority to Judaism as High Priest.**

# The reason the Hebrew believers should not compromise in their faith is because Christ is superior to Judaism (1:1–10:18).

## The readers should not return to Judaism because Christ is ***superior*** to Judaism’s prophets, angels, and Moses in***his person***(1:1–4:13).

### Since Christ is *superior to the OT prophets*, the readers should follow Christ (1:1-3).

#### OT prophets ministered to Jews repeatedly and only as partial revelations of God (1:1).

#### Christ is the *final revelation* of God as his person exceeds that of the prophets (1:2-3).

##### Jesus is *God’s Son* speaking—which was never said of a prophet (1:2a).

##### Jesus is *heir* of the universe—but no prophet was destined to rule the world (1:2b).

##### Jesus is the *Creator* of the universe—but all prophets are created beings (1:2c).

##### Jesus is *God* since he exactly represents the Father—said of no prophet (1:3a).

##### Jesus is *Sustainer* of the universe by his word—but no prophet sustains the world (1:3b).

##### Jesus is *Atonement* for mankind’s sins—while prophets need his atonement (1:3c).

##### Jesus *completed* his ministry in a manner pleasing to the Father—but no prophet completely pleased God (1:3d).

### Christ is *superior to the angels* as God and man, so we should not respect created angels more than Christ, the Creator himself (1:4–2:18).

#### Christ is greater than angels in *his deity*, so the readers should not return to their Jewish sect emphasizing angel ministry (1:4-14).

##### Christ has a *better name* than angels since he is called God’s son (1:4-5).

##### Angels eternally *worship* Christ as God and the Father calls him “God” (1:6-12).

##### Christ has *completed* his work whereas the angels continue working (1:13-14).

#### Warning #1: Christ surpasses angels, so the Christian readers would be punished if they discarded their faith and drifted back into Judaism (2:1-4).

*No penalties are listed here, but they can’t include hell as the writer also could “drift away.” This is the first of many exhortations in Hebrews (pp. 266e, 266p).*

#### Christ is greater than angels in *his humanity*, so the readers should trust Christ rather than angels (2:5-18).

##### God never promised angels authority to rule the future world (2:5).

##### Psalm 8:4-6 promises man the privilege to rule the future world (2:6-8).

##### Many Scriptures prophesied that Jesus would become a man with authority to rule due to his atoning death (2:9-13).

##### Other wonderful results of Christ’s humanity make him more worthy of worship than any angel (2:14-18).

###### As a man, Christ has been able to defeat Satan’s grip on other men (2:14-16).

###### As a man, Christ atoned for man’s sin as a compassionate high priest (2:17).

###### As a man who was victorious in his suffering, Christ can help people now who suffer temptation (2:18).

### Christ is superior to Moses, so as unbelief under Moses forfeited inheriting Canaan, a return to Judaism will forfeit inheriting Canaan in the future kingdom era (3:1–4:13).[[5]](#footnote-5)

#### Christ is superior to Moses in his glory and position, so the readers should follow Christianity instead of Judaism (3:1-6).

##### Christ is greater than Moses in his ***glory*** because the offices of apostle (cf. Moses) and high priest (cf. Aaron) combine in Jesus (3:1-4).

##### Christ is greater than Moses in his ***position*** because he was not *in* “God’s house” (all the redeemed) as a *servant*, but *over* the house as a *son* (3:5-6).

#### Warning #2: As believing Israel forfeited Canaan rest due to later unbelief, so we must obey to inherit the same Promised Land millennial kingdom rest (3:7–4:13).

##### This warning applies Israel’s Psalm 95:7-11 disinheritance of Canaan to Christians now who reject Jesus, who was above Moses (3:7-19).

###### Psalm 95:7-11 parallels Israel's wilderness unbelief disinheriting them from Canaan to the same unbelief at the time of the psalmist (3:7-11).

###### Psalm 95:7-11 shows the readers that daily mutual encouragement could help them prevent such an unbelieving and hardened heart (3:12-15).

###### As Israel’s disbelief in gaining Canaan was due to rebellion and sin, so the readers needed to see the seriousness of their own situation (3:16-19).

##### Israel’s disinheritance of Canaan warns the Hebrew Christian readers (and us) of the same penalty for rejecting Christ (4:1-13; cf. 1 Cor. 3:11-15; pp. 266i-k).

## The readers should not return to Judaism because Christ is ***superior*** to its priestly system in ***his high priestly work***(4:14–10:18)*.*

### Since Christ is *superior to Judaism’s high priest* in his position and qualifications, the readers should follow Jesus (4:14–6:20).

#### Christ’s superior *position* over Judaism’s high priest gives him victory over temptation so the readers can draw near to him rather than drift away (4:14-16).

##### Judaism’s high priest entered the Holy of Holies *room annually*, but Jesus passed through the *heavens forever* as the unequaled high priest (4:14).

##### However, even in his greatness, Christ sympathizes with our weaknesses and provides free access to his throne of grace (4:15-16).

#### Christ’s superior *qualifications* over Judaism’s high priest make him even more worthy to follow (5:1-10).

##### There were two basic qualifications of the Jewish high priest (5:1-4).

###### He must be a man with human weakness (5:1-3).

###### He must be chosen by God (5:4; see p. 266l for his holy garments).

##### Jesus fulfilled both of these high priest qualifications even more than did the earthly high priest (5:5-10).

###### God chose Christ like he chose the Aaronic high priest, but Jesus was of the higher Melchizedek priesthood as God’s Son (5:5-6).

###### Christ became human but submitted above any man in his prayers and learning obedience, qualifying him to the Melchizedek priesthood (5:7-10).

#### Knowing the dangers of reverting to Judaism and a pressing on to spiritual maturity can prevent the readers from apostasy and temporal judgment (5:11–6:20).

##### Warning #3: Spiritual immaturity shown in returning to Judaism would lead to an irreversible apostasy and judgment in Jerusalem’s fires (5:11–6:8).

###### The readers should be teachers, but their spiritual laziness required basic teachings on Christ instead of higher doctrines in righteousness (5:11-14).

###### This dangerous situation made them susceptible to wrongly emphasize the lifeless Old Testament rituals[[6]](#footnote-6)—not mature doctrines (6:1-3).

###### Apostasy by denying Jesus is an irreversible decision with recommitment to Christ impossible and physical death inevitable (6:4-8).[[7]](#footnote-7)

##### The writer exhorts spiritual maturity that his readers will not apostatize and be judged but will be faithful to Jesus until the end of their lives (6:9-20).

### Since Christ is *superior to Abraham and Levi* by being of the Melchizedek Priesthood, the readers should follow him (Heb 7; cf. Contrasting the Priesthoods at p. 266r).

#### The great angel Melchizedek[[8]](#footnote-8) was greater than both Abraham and Levi (7:1-10).

##### Melchizedek had such superior qualities that he must have been angel (7:1-3).

###### Melchizedek served as king of Salem, or ancient Jerusalem (7:1a).

###### Melchizedek was priest of God Most High (7:1b).

###### Melchizedek had such high stature that he blessed Abraham (7:1c).

###### Melchizedek received tithes from Abraham (7:2a).

###### Melchizedek’s name and title of righteousness and peace point to the Messiah (7:2b).

###### Melchizedek is timeless (7:3).

He was not born to a father or mother (7:3a).

He had no human ancestors (7:3b).

He was never born, nor did he ever die (7:3c).

His priesthood is eternal like that Jesus (7:3d).

##### Melchizedek was greater than both Abraham and Levi (7:4-10).

###### Both tithed to him (7:4-6a).

###### Melchizedek blessed both of them (7:6b-7).

###### Levi also paid Melchizedek tithes through Abraham (7:8-10).

#### Christ is high priest in the order of Melchizedek and thus better than Levitical priests, so a return to the old Levitical order is foolish and unnecessary (7:11-28).

##### God established the indestructible order of Melchizedek over the weak order of Levi based on heredity (7:11-19; cf. Prophet, Priest, & King at p. 266q).

###### God established the order of Melchizedek because the priesthood of Levi could never bring perfection (7:11).

###### The indestructible order of Melchizedek replaced the weak order of Levi based on heredity (7:12-19).

##### God recognized Jesus as high priest by oath whereas other priests do not obtain office with an oath (7:20-22).

##### Jesus is a permanent priest (as he is the eternal Savior and intercessor) while other priests all die in office (7:23-25).

##### Jesus is perfect and died for our sins once while other priests were sinners who had to repeatedly offer sacrifices for their own sins (7:26-28).

### Since Christ is superior to the old covenant in that he established the new covenant, the readers should follow him (Heb 8).

#### Since Jesus in his priesthood supersedes the old priesthood, his new covenant also supersedes the old covenant (8:1-6).

#### Jeremiah 31:31-34 taught a future, new and better covenant, so this shows that the coming of the new covenant makes the old covenant obsolete (8:7-13).

### Since Christ is *superior to the tabernacle* by his sacrifice, we must follow him (9:1–10:18).

#### The tabernacle and sacrificial system were glorious but only temporary (9:1-10).

##### The old covenant with its earthly tabernacle and furniture truly had God’s glory (9:1-5; cf. pp. 266n, 266v).

##### Yet the daily sacrifices of the priests and annual atonement by the high priest could not cleanse anyone’s conscience (9:6-10).

#### Christ’s sacrifice saves us permanently compared to the old and transitory tabernacle sacrifices (9:11–10:18; cf. pp. 266o, 266u).

##### Christ *passed from earth to heaven* after his atonement for man—not simply from the tabernacle Holy Place to the Holy of Holies (9:11; cf. p. 266s).

##### Christ *shed his own human blood*—not just the blood of animals (9:12).

##### Christ *purifies our consciences*—not just provides ceremonial cleansing (9:13-14).

##### Christ *mediates a new covenant* that frees us from sin committed under the old covenant (9:15).

##### Christ shed his own blood for us because *forgiveness under a covenant comes only through death* (9:16-22).

##### Christ *entered heaven itself* following his sacrifice to show that his sacrifice was the one perfect, permanent, and final sacrifice (9:23–10:18).

###### He purified us in heaven through his sacrifice (9:23-24).

###### He entered heaven for our redemption only once (9:25-28a).

###### He will return to complete our salvation (9:28b).

###### He permanently cleansed us from sin and guilt that bulls and goats could never do (10:1-4).

###### He fulfilled Psalm 40’s prophecy that he would please God by offering his body (10:5-9a).

###### He cancelled the Mosaic covenant (10:9b).

###### He made us holy once for all time (10:10-18).

# The result of Christ being superior to Judaism should be to persevere by faith rather than shrink back (10:19–13:25).

## The danger of willful sin where believers lose their lives highlights the need to persevere in faith despite obstacles (10:19-39).

### Christ’s high priesthood gives us perseverance with God and man (10:19-25).

#### His superiority exhorts us to draw near to him (10:19-22).

#### His faithfulness exhorts us to hold fast to true doctrine (10:23).

#### His soon return moves us to regularly meet together to love one another in good deeds (10:24-25; cf. pp. 266ff-gg).

### Warning #4: Judgment by death in Roman fires[[9]](#footnote-9) would result if these believers reverted to a willful sin of disbelief (10:26-31; cf. Parallels Between Heb 6 & 10 on p. 266w).

### Past endurance in persecution by the readers is recalled to help them endure their present trials (10:32-39).

## Others who faithfully endured should encourage the persecuted readers to see that their perseverance also must precede their reward (11:1–12:3; cf. p. 266z).

### OT saints persevered before seeing God fulfill his promises just as the readers must endure before receiving all God promised (Heb 11; cf. pp. 266x-y).

### Jesus on the cross is the best example of endurance and reward to help the readers focus on Christ to continue being faithful (12:1-3; cf. p. 266bb).

## Those enduring God’s discipline experience righteousness, confidence and relationships (12:4-17).

### The result of enduring hardship from God as disciplined sons is righteousness and confidence (12:4-13).

#### All spiritual “sons” (children) of God must endure discipline to become righteous just as human sons are trained by their earthly fathers (12:4-11).

#### As a result of responding correctly to God’s discipline, the Hebrews could be strong and confident (12:12-13).

### Endurance must be done in the context of right relationships with others since even perseverance can be done with bad attitudes and improper motives (12:14-17).

#### God requires peace with others if we are to be truly holy (12:14).

#### God requires sanctification in relationships to prevent the spread of bitterness (12:15).

#### God requires purity in lifestyle to prevent sexual sin and greed like Esau (12:16-17).

## Warning #5: Don’t ignore God since he disciplined believing Jews who later rejected the Sinai covenant and will also discipline new covenant saints with even greater blessings (12:18-29).

### The awesome God feared and avoided at Mt. Sinai at the giving of the old covenant has now brought believers into the new covenant as citizens of heaven (12:18-24).[[10]](#footnote-10)

#### We come not to the unapproachable God feared in fire and smoke at Sinai under the old covenant (12:18-21; cf. Exod 19:10-25; Deut 4:11-12; 5:22-26; p. 266cc).

#### We come to the living God who made us new covenant citizens of heaven (Mt. Zion) with God, angels, OT saints, and Jesus (12:22-24; cf. Rev. 14:1; Ps. 2:6; 48:1-2, 8).

### Never reject God when he speaks from heaven now since this will invite even more severe judgment than Israel had in Moses' time (12:25-29; cf. p. 266dd).

#### If God judged Israel for rejecting him in the desert, then rejecting him now will bring even more judgment (12:25).

#### God judged Sinai by shaking only the area near the mountain, but in the future [after the millennium] he will judge the entire earth and sky by removing them (12:26-27).

#### Thank God and worship him due both to his grace in providing heaven permanently and his holiness shown in judgment (12:28-29).

## The epilogue has practical ways believers can continue to *press on* to serve God and others (Heb 13).

### Exhortations to love show Christ’s supremacy (13:1-17).

#### *Love for people* shows the supremacy of Christ (13:1-6).

##### Show hospitality to all the saints, to strangers, and to prisoners (13:1-3).

##### Be sexually pure in marriage to avoid God’s judgment (13:4).

##### Realize that God is with us so we don’t seek refuge in money (13:5-6).

#### *Love for God* shows the supremacy of Christ (13:7-17).

##### Honor church leaders because they teach and live out God’s word, which is as changeless as Christ (13:7-8).

##### Doctrinal purity will result from separation from Judaism by leaving Jerusalem and obedience to church leaders (13:9-17).

### The personal conclusion tempers the strong exhortations in the body of the letter (13:18-25).

#### The author requests prayer, especially that he could join the Hebrews soon to exhort them face-to-face (13:18-19).

#### A doxology of God’s enablement reminds them that only through God’s power could they please him (13:20-21).

#### Concluding remarks, especially greetings from those with him in Italy, end the letter on an affectionate note (13:22-25).

**Be Uncompromising**

***Book of Hebrews***

**Exegetical Outline (Steps 2-3)**

# *Exegetical Idea*: The reason Hebrew believers should not compromise but rather endure by faith is because of Christ’s superiority to Judaism as High Priest.

# The reason the Hebrew believers should not compromise in their faith is because Christ is superior to Judaism (1:1–10:18).

## The readers should not return to Judaism because Christ is ***superior*** to Judaism’s prophets, angels, and Moses in***his person***(1:1–4:13).

### Since Christ is *superior to the OT prophets*, the readers should follow Christ (1:1-3).

### Christ is *superior to the angels* as God and man, so we should not respect created angels more than Christ, the Creator himself (1:4–2:18).

### Christ is superior to Moses, so as unbelief under Moses forfeited inheriting Canaan, a return to Judaism will forfeit inheriting Canaan in the future kingdom era (3:1–4:13).

## The readers should not return to Judaism because Christ is ***superior*** to its priestly system in ***his high priestly work***(4:14–10:18)*.*

### Since Christ is *superior to Judaism’s high priest* in his position and qualifications, the readers should follow Jesus (4:14–6:20).

### Since Christ is *superior to Abraham and Levi* by being of the Melchizedek Priesthood, the readers should follow him (Heb 7).

### Since Christ is superior to the old covenant in that he established the new covenant, the readers should follow him (Heb 8).

### Since Christ is *superior to the tabernacle* by his sacrifice, we must follow him (9:1–10:18).

# The result of Christ being superior to Judaism should be to persevere by faith rather than shrink back (10:19–13:25).

## The danger of willful sin where believers lose their lives highlights the need to persevere in faith despite obstacles (10:19-39).

### Christ’s high priesthood gives us perseverance with God and man (10:19-25).

### Warning #4: Judgment by death in Roman fires would result if these believers reverted to a willful sin of disbelief (10:26-31).

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## Others who faithfully endured should encourage the persecuted readers to see that their perseverance also must precede their reward (11:1–12:3; cf. p. 266z).

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### Jesus on the cross is the best example of endurance and reward to help the readers focus on Christ to continue being faithful (12:1-3; cf. p. 266bb).

## Those enduring God’s discipline experience righteousness, confidence and relationships (12:4-17).

### The result of enduring hardship from God as disciplined sons is righteousness and confidence (12:4-13).

### Endurance must be done in the context of right relationships with others since even perseverance can be done with bad attitudes and improper motives (12:14-17).

## Warning #5: Don’t ignore God since he disciplined believing Jews who later rejected the Sinai covenant and will also discipline new covenant saints (12:18-29).

### The awesome God feared and avoided at Mt. Sinai at the giving of the old covenant has now brought believers into the new covenant as citizens of heaven (12:18-24).

### Never reject God when he speaks from heaven now since this will invite even more severe judgment than Israel had in Moses' time (12:25-29).

## The epilogue has practical ways believers can continue to *press on* to serve God and others (Heb 13).

### Exhortations to love show Christ’s supremacy (13:1-17).

### The personal conclusion tempers the strong exhortations in the body of the letter (13:18-25).

**Purpose or Desired Listener Response (Step 4)**

The listeners will not compromise their faith in Jesus by seeing his high priesthood.

**Homiletical Outline** (Cyclical inductive form)

# Introduction

### Interest: Many believers sadly quit their spiritual race today.

### Need: Will you quit? Will you compromise your faith?

### Intro to MPI: Why should you be uncompromising in your faith in Jesus?

### Background/Text: Hebrews addressed a Jewish community that believed in Jesus, but their later struggles made them doubt so they were considering going back to Judaism.

### Preview: Today we’ll see *why* we should not compromise and then *what* to do instead.

(First, why should you be uncompromising in your faith in Jesus?)

# Jesus is better than anyone or anything (1:1–10:18).

## Christ is ***superior*** to Judaism’s prophets, angels, and Moses in***his person***(1:1–4:13).

### He is better than *the OT prophets*, so follow him (1:1-3).

### He is better than *the angels* as God and man, so respect him as Creator (1:4–2:18).

### He is better than Moses, so don’t forfeit Canaan in the millennial kingdom (3:1–4:13).

## Christ is ***superior*** to Judaism in ***his high priestly work***(4:14–10:18)*.*

### He is better than Judaism’s *high priest*, so go to him (4:14–6:20).

### He is better than *Abraham and Levi* as a Melchizedek Priest, so follow him (Heb 7).

### He is better than *the old covenant* in his new covenant, so follow him (Heb 8).

### He is better than *the tabernacle* by his sacrifice, so follow him (9:1–10:18).

(So if Jesus is better than anyone or anything, what should we do?)

# Don’t compromise but persevere by faith (10:19–13:25).

## Stubborn unbelief can even kill you—so press on (10:19-39).

## Others faithfully endured before you to give you examples—so press on (11:1–12:3).

## God’s discipline grows righteousness, confidence and relationships—so press on (12:4-17).

## Ignoring God invites his loving discipline of you—so press on (12:18-29).

## Many practical ways to serve God exist for you—so press on (Heb 13).

# Conclusion

### Jesus is your “go-to” mediator between you and God (Main Idea).

### Main Points: Who is Jesus and how should you respond?

#### Jesus is better than anyone or anything (1:1–10:18).

#### Don’t compromise but persevere by faith (10:19–13:25).

### Exhortation: Where do you need to press on?

### Prayer

### “He Will Hold Me Fast” (Getty)



**Rick Griffith**

20 October 2019

Message 60 of 66

**Be Uncompromising**

***Book of Hebrews***

# Introduction

### Many quit trusting Jesus, so why be \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in your faith in Jesus?

### A Jewish community trusted Jesus but later thought about returning to Judaism.

# Jesus is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ than anyone or anything (1:1–10:18).

## Christ is ***superior*** to Judaism’s prophets, angels, and Moses in***his person***(1:1–4:13).

### He is better than *the OT prophets*, so follow him (1:1-3).

### He is better than *the angels* as God and man, so respect him as Creator (1:4–2:18).

### He is better than Moses, so don’t forfeit Canaan in the millennial kingdom (3:1–4:13).

## Christ is ***superior*** to Judaism in ***his high priestly work***(4:14–10:18)*.*

### He is better than Judaism’s *high priest*, so go to him (4:14–6:20).

### He is better than *Abraham and Levi* as a Melchizedek Priest, so follow him (Heb 7).

### He is better than *the old covenant* in his new covenant, so follow him (Heb 8).

### He is better than *the tabernacle* by his sacrifice, so follow him (9:1–10:18).

# Don’t compromise but \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ by faith (10:19–13:25).

## Stubborn unbelief can even kill you—so press on (10:19-39).

## Others faithfully endured before you to give you examples—so press on (11:1–12:3).

## God’s discipline grows righteousness, confidence and relationships—so press on (12:4-17).

## Ignoring God invites his loving discipline of you—so press on (12:18-29).

## Many practical ways to serve God exist for you—so press on (Heb 13).

# Conclusion

### Jesus is your “go-to” \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ between you and God (Main Idea).

### Exhortation: Where do you need to press on?

Download this sermon PPT and notes for free at BibleStudyDownloads.org/resource/new-testament-preaching/

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**Hebrews**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Christ's Superiority over Judaism as High Priest** | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Do Not Compromise Since Jesus is Better** | | | | | | | **Endure by Faith** | | | | |
| **Superior in His**  **Person to…** | | | **Superior in His**  **Priestly Work to…** | | | | **Each Decision has Huge Results** | | | | |
| **1:1–4:13** | | | **4:14–10:18** | | | | **10:19–13:25** | | | | |
| Prophets  1:1-3 | Angels  1:4–2:18 | Moses  3:1–4:13 | Aaron  4:14–6:20 | Melchi-zedek  7 | Old Covenant  8 | Tabernacle & Sacrifices  9:1–10:18 | Willful Sin  10:19-39 | Models  11:1–12:3 | Don’t Despise Discipline  12:4-17 | Don’t Ignore God  12:18-29 | Press on!  13 |
| **Christ’s Majesty** | | | **Christ’s Ministry** | | | | **Christian’s Manifestation** | | | | |
| **Theology** | | | | | | | **Practice** | | | | |
| **Unknown Author, Recipients, Date, Origin, and Destination!** | | | | | | | | | | | |

**Key Word: Superiority**

**Key Verse: “Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him, endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God” (Hebrews 12:1-2).**

**Summary Statement: The reason believers should not compromise but rather endure by faith is because of Christ’s superiority to Judaism as High Priest.**

**Application: Despite the perceived advantages, never, ever let difficulties convince you to return to the religion you embraced before you were saved!**

1. These rituals of the old order needed to be abandoned for the new and living way. Of particular importance are the "instructions about washings." This is not a reference to New Testament baptism since the plural form is never used of baptism and the word here (baptismo,ς, "ceremonial washings") is wholly different from the normal word for baptism (ba,ptisma, "baptism"). If the letter addressed converts from the Qumran Community, this reference would have special significance due to the many ablutions in this community. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Hebrews 6:4-8 is interpreted in several ways: (1) a Christian who loses his salvation, (2) a hypothetical, impossible situation which a Christian could never find himself, (3) a profession which really was not genuine and thus results in eternal damnation, and (4) a Christian who is disqualified for Christian service and will never again return to Christian commitment. The first view must be rejected due to the clear scriptural testimony to eternal security as totally God's responsibility (cf. John 3:16; 10:28-29; Eph. 1:14; 1 John 5:11-13). The second view finds no support in the text in that a conditional element does not appear in the Greek (although many translations add "if…") and the writer speaks as if he did know some examples. The third view cannot be supported since true believers (not professing believers who are actually non-Christians) are always in view in parallel passages which use the phrases "enlightened" (cf. 2 Cor. 4:3-6), "tasted the heavenly gift" ("tasted" refers to full participation; cf. John 4:10; Rom. 6:23; James 1:17-18), and "who have shared in the Holy Spirit" (cf. 1:9; 3:1, 14). The fourth view has the best evidence. The "falling away" refers to Christians who have left the faith in apostasy. They would be judged with fire (6:8; 10:27)—not eternal hellfire but the temporal fire of the Jewish revolt against the Romans from AD 66-73 (see occasion on p. 257). The result of such disobedience was that "it is impossible to renew them to repentance" (v. 6a). Note that the text says "repentance," not "it is impossible to renew them to *salvation*." The issue here was a real one where Christians could drift away from Christ not to eternal damnation, but to never being renewed to commitment to Christ as they would be judged by physical death with unbelievers (10:27). The same penalty of early physical death happens today to believers who so reject Jesus that they are brought to heaven early without reward. The NT often speaks of God disciplining believers with loss of life and/or loss of reward (1 Cor 3:15; 5:5; 11:30; 1 John 5:16-17; 2 John 8; Rev 2:5, 23). [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Melchizedek was "without father or mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like the Son of God, he abides a priest perpetually" (7:3). The nature of these attributes suggests that he could be either an angel or a theophany (the preincarnate Christ). Supporting the angelic interpretation is that this status would not elevate him to Christ's level of stature (cf. Heb 1–2) and he would not be comparing an OT and NT Christ. Both interpretations fit the context, but evidence of Melchizedek being regarded an angelic being in the Qumran Community may support the angelic view if this epistle was originally sent to believers tempted to return to the Community. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. This context as in 6:4-8 (see footnote there) refers to believers since the author includes *himself* among those who could possibly sin to this extent (10:26) and since he had just encouraged these people as *believers* to hold to their confession and to mutually build one another up in the faith (10:23-25). The NT teaches eternal security (cf. John 3:16; 10:28-29; Eph. 1:14; 1 John 5:11-13; cf. pp. 266a-b), so the fire judgment referred to here (10:27) must not mean hell, but a judgment for believers—most likely temporal fire that soon engulfed Jerusalem’s unbelieving Jews (see “Occasion,” p. 257 and pp. 266c-d). [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Of at least seven interpretations of the "Sabbath-rest for the people of God" (Heb 4:9), the millennial kingdom view may have the most to commend it. This view sees the rest as future, which is consistent with verse 11 and accounts for the different (*hapax legomena*) Greek word translated "Sabbath-rest." As a Sabbath-rest in the Old Testament was a literal 24-hour day, so the kingdom rest will be limited in time to 1000 years (Rev. 20:1-6). This rest is not yet fully realized also (v. 1). The concept of rest in the kingdom age also accurately parallels the Old Testament reference to an inheritance that the Jews in the wilderness sought to attain (v. 11a) but some missed out due to their disobedience (vv. 6, 11b) stemming from lacking a walk of faith (v. 2). Likewise, only obedient believers will rule in the millennium, but believers who simply enter without reward will not. The Sabbath-rest in the passage is deemed "another day" (v. 8)––a day yet future from Joshua's time that was distinct from the 24-hour Sabbath day of Judaism. Finally, in that the Old Testament rest concerned the possession of an actual land (Canaan), the millennial interpretation likewise speaks of inheriting an actual dominion here on earth. There is no need to spiritualize this passage. See the comparison of views on the Sabbath rest on pages 266g-k. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. These rituals of the old order needed to be abandoned for the new and living way. Of particular importance are the "instructions about washings." This is not a reference to New Testament baptism since the plural form is never used of baptism and the word here (baptismo,ς, "ceremonial washings") is wholly different from the normal word for baptism (ba,ptisma, "baptism"). If the letter addressed converts from the Qumran Community, this reference would have special significance due to the many ablutions in this community. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Hebrews 6:4-8 is interpreted in several ways: (1) a Christian who loses his salvation, (2) a hypothetical, impossible situation which a Christian could never find himself, (3) a profession which really was not genuine and thus results in eternal damnation, and (4) a Christian who is disqualified for Christian service and will never again return to Christian commitment. The first view must be rejected due to the clear scriptural testimony to eternal security as totally God's responsibility (cf. John 3:16; 10:28-29; Eph. 1:14; 1 John 5:11-13). The second view finds no support in the text in that a conditional element does not appear in the Greek (although many translations add "if…") and the writer speaks as if he did know some examples. The third view cannot be supported since true believers (not professing believers who are actually non-Christians) are always in view in parallel passages which use the phrases "enlightened" (cf. 2 Cor. 4:3-6), "tasted the heavenly gift" ("tasted" refers to full participation; cf. John 4:10; Rom. 6:23; James 1:17-18), and "who have shared in the Holy Spirit" (cf. 1:9; 3:1, 14). The fourth view has the best evidence. The "falling away" refers to Christians who have left the faith in apostasy. They would be judged with fire (6:8; 10:27)—not eternal hellfire but the temporal fire of the Jewish revolt against the Romans from AD 66-73 (see occasion on p. 257). The result of such disobedience was that "it is impossible to renew them to repentance" (v. 6a). Note that the text says "repentance," not "it is impossible to renew them to *salvation*." The issue here was a real one where Christians could drift away from Christ not to eternal damnation, but to never being renewed to commitment to Christ as they would be judged by physical death with unbelievers (10:27). The same penalty of early physical death happens today to believers who so reject Jesus that they are brought to heaven early without reward. The NT often speaks of God disciplining believers with loss of life and/or loss of reward (1 Cor 3:15; 5:5; 11:30; 1 John 5:16-17; 2 John 8; Rev 2:5, 23). [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Melchizedek was "without father or mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like the Son of God, he abides a priest perpetually" (7:3). The nature of these attributes suggests that he could be either an angel or a theophany (the preincarnate Christ). Supporting the angelic interpretation is that this status would not elevate him to Christ's level of stature (cf. Heb 1–2) and he would not be comparing an OT and NT Christ. Both interpretations fit the context, but evidence of Melchizedek being regarded an angelic being in the Qumran Community may support the angelic view if this epistle was originally sent to believers tempted to return to the Community. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. This context as in 6:4-8 (see footnote there) refers to believers since the author includes *himself* among those who could possibly sin to this extent (10:26) and since he had just encouraged these people as *believers* to hold to their confession and to mutually build one another up in the faith (10:23-25). The NT teaches eternal security (cf. John 3:16; 10:28-29; Eph. 1:14; 1 John 5:11-13; cf. pp. 266a-b), so the fire judgment referred to here (10:27) must not mean hell, but a judgment for believers—most likely temporal fire that soon engulfed Jerusalem’s unbelieving Jews (see “Occasion,” p. 257 and pp. 266c-d). [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Scholars debate whether by “Mt. Zion” (v. 22) the author means the literal Mt. Zion (Jerusalem, or the hill on its southeast portion also called the Ophal) or if he refers to Mt. Zion as symbolically representing heaven. Favoring the literal view is the earlier discussion of entering Canaan rest in the literal land of Israel (Heb 4) and the fact that he does call Mt. Zion a city here. However, it probably is better to argue for a figurative interpretation since the believers’ entrance to “Mt. Zion” is already accomplished (“you have come”) and the city is designated as the “heavenly Jerusalem” (v. 22). [↑](#footnote-ref-10)