

Hebrews 6:1-12

by Don McClure

The sermon emphasizes the importance of moving beyond basic teachings to achieve spiritual maturity through God's power and community support.

Duration: 39:02

Scripture: Luke 10:37, Luke 22:21, John 13:27, Hebrews 5:11-14, Hebrews 6:7-12

Topics: "Biblical Context", "Spiritual Complacency"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of interpreting Bible verses in their proper context. He shares a humorous story about someone randomly opening the Bible and getting a verse about Judas hanging himself, highlighting the potential dangers of cherry-picking verses without considering the overall message. The preacher also discusses the tendency for people to make commitments and set standards in their relationship with God, but often fall into spiritual complacency. He encourages listeners to seek a deeper understanding of God's will and plan for their lives by studying the Bible as a whole.

Transcript

Therefore, leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on to perfection, laying again the foundation of repentance, of dead works, of faith towards God, and of the doctrine of baptisms, of the laying on of hands, of the resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment. For this will we do, if God permit. For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, who have tasted of the heavenly gift and who were made partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted of the good word of God, and of the powers of the world to come, that if they shall fall away, to renew them again under repentance, seeing they crucified to themselves the Son of God afresh, and they put Him to an open chain.

For the earth which drinketh in the rain, that cometh upon it, and it bringeth forth herbs, meet for them by whom it is dressed, receive its blessing from God. But that which beareth thorns and briars is rejected, and nigh unto cursing, whose end is to be burned. But, beloved, we are persuaded, better things for you, the things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak.

For God is not unrighteous to forget you, or your work, and your labor, and your love, which you have showed towards His name, and that you have ministered to the saints, and do minister. For we desire that every one of you do show the same diligence, under the full assurance of the hope unto the end, that ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises. Father, as we

open your word this morning, as we look at this particularly difficult passage, one of which there's been endless debate, and certainly won't be solved today, but Lord, as we look at it, we ask that you would take out of it a message that, for each one of us, for our heart, and our life, and our walk with you, Lord, as we continue through this wonderful book of Hebrews, will you teach us, and strengthen, and encourage each and every one of us.

For, Father, we ask it in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen.

Well, here as we've been going through Hebrews, which I have loved doing, I love the book of Hebrews. I seem to be one of these guys that whatever book I'm in, it becomes a favorite. I suppose that's good.

But I've always had this particular love for Hebrews, because I think it has so many tremendous things just about Jesus to teach us over and over. But as we come to this very difficult passage, one of which there's been a tremendous amount of controversy through the years, and as I mentioned even in prayer, and I don't know that I'm going to solve a lot of that today particularly, there's been a lot of division on how this particular scripture is interpreted. Bible scholars through the years, they take different positions on it, and different interpretations on the passage, and just to give you a few of them, is that this passage, by many scholars, they believe that it describes simply the sin of apostasy, which means essentially that Christians lose their salvation.

That's a very, very strong and popular one. Secondly, it deals with people who were very close, perhaps, to personal salvation, but yet then they ended up backing away from it without actually fully and truly receiving Christ, and it would speak to them. Another is that it describes a particular sin that these Jewish believers, essentially who were born and raised in Judaism, were perhaps on the threshold of actually committing themselves.

We'll be explaining a little more of that. But it's a message as well that some look at and say it's to all of them, in a sense. My own personal persuasion on this, which I don't think it's all that important that anybody, there are many things that as we look at, go through scripture, it isn't important to me that everybody agrees with me on everything.

That's certainly, that ought to be the way every Christian ought to think. I think that there are some things that are non-debatable within the Christian, that we are completely inflexible on. You know, whether you want to look at the virgin birth of Christ, you want to look at the atonement of the cross, you want to look at the need to be saved, you want to look at the realization that Jesus Christ is coming again for us.

There's a lot of things of which, to me, there's no discussion, there's no flex, you might say on it. And then there's other things that you just kind of interpret and look at and say, well, this is how I happen to see this. And now one of the things that, and I think this is kind of one of those particular times.

So as I said, it isn't important to me fully that you agree with me right down on the line on this. And besides, it talks about patience here, and I'm a very patient person, I can wait till we get to heaven, and you'll all agree with me then. So anyway, one of the things also I'd mention here before we even get into it, that I do appreciate is that when I went to seminary, there's a lot of courses I didn't think an awfully lot of.

But one of which was a course called hermeneutics. Hermeneutics essentially are the laws as they define them of interpreting scripture. And one of the things that in hermeneutics you're taught, that the Bible teachers really throughout history, from the early church on, that they had principles of hermeneutics or

the interpretation of scripture, and that is, is that first of all, even before you ever look at a particular verse in the Bible, you look at the book itself.

You look at the author, you look at the message of the book before you ever turn to a chapter or a verse and you say, what does this mean? You start in the broad sense, in the sense of saying who wrote it, and to whom did they write it? What was the occasion of the writing? What were they trying to say? What was the whole overall message? Before you come down and look at one particular verse within it. And that is very, very important in interpretation. Perhaps you heard the story of the fellow who wanted to know, he needed a word from the Lord on what God wanted for his life.

He didn't know the Bible very well, didn't really even want to take the time to get the whole picture of what God's will for somebody's life was, what God's plan, just heard that it was in there. And so he decided, God, I need your help. I don't know the Bible, but speak to me.

And so he decides just to open his Bible, put his finger in, and so that asked God to show it to him. And so he opens his Bible, puts the finger in, and then puts down to see what the verse is. And the verse says that Judas went out and hanged himself.

Well, he didn't like that one. So he closes his Bible, thinks about it, prays a minute again. He says, now, God, please, I really need some help on this.

And I need to know your plan. And so he opens the Bible again, sticks his finger in. And the next verse he looks at, says, go and do that likewise.

And then he closes up, and he's all the frustrated again. I'm going to give this one more chance. Opens his Bible, puts it in, and says, what thou doest, do quickly.

But you can get in trouble when you just simply go to a verse. When you just simply start with it and what you think it may be saying. If you don't take it in context, you can be in great trouble.

This is one of those personal, you know, personally to me, in a sense. Now, as we do look at this, and you'll find out how I feel personally on this, I suppose, as we kind of get into it. But the first thing that I think is most important about this book, and sometimes about this chapter, is that sometimes we can lose the greater message trying to look at some particularly doctrinal position on this thing.

And the first thing that is really important here is that there's a tremendous exhortation here to go on. For every one of us to, you know, rather than trying to figure out if I have gone back, or if I've gone back so far, or have I lost my salvation, the issue is, is the first message here is to go on. It tells us chapter six, verse one.

It says, therefore, leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection, not laying again. There, the foundation, the repentance of dead works, and of faith towards God, of doctrine of baptism, of laying out of hands, resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment. But he looks there, and he says, well, when he's talking to us, he says, his exhortation here is, I want to see you go on ahead into, as he calls it, perfection, or maturity, or you may have in your translation, sanctification.

We ought, he's looking there, and he said, we need to be evaluating, am I going on? Am I somebody that when I, you know, come before the Lord, as I'm looking at my life, the way I'm living day by day, am I going on? Am I continuously wanting to grow spiritually? The writer of Hebrews had just finished in the

previous verses, kind of nailing them very hard just to back up and to read chapter five, verse 11, just the previous verses here. He says, of whom we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing that you are dull of hearing. For when in times you ought to be teachers, you have need of one to teach you again of the first principles of the oracles of God.

You become such as need of milk and not of strong meat. For everyone that uses milk, he's unskillful in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. He's looking there, he's just giving them a great exhortation about their dullness, about their dullness of hearing, as he put it, their spiritual dryness, and the dullness, and essentially within their own life.

And he says, we've got to go on. Don't ever allow yourself just to be caught in the spiritual place of dull. The word dull of hearing in the Greek, it means sluggish, lazy, slothful.

And points there to the tendency that we all have, the human tendency of every one of us for spiritual slothfulness or laziness, dullness that can settle in so easily that causes us not to go on seeking maturity. And that day by day, God wants us to be ones that go on and on. And this is the main theme of this book.

Of course, it's the main theme of the Bible, I suppose, isn't it? To go on growing in the Lord. To constantly want more and more to never be satisfied with where we're at. We'll never have arrived.

We will not have arrived until seeing Him. We're like Him. We're conformed to His image.

And until then, we ought to be ones that are saying, Lord, take me on, take me on, take me on. One of the great struggles that every Christian ought, if we're honest, we ought to realize there that the main theme, essentially, of our life as a Christian is the Lord, how do you keep me going? We have this tendency to get dry, this tendency to get swathful, this tendency within us in our human nature to fall on into a spiritual complacency. And we all need to be reminded constantly of this.

If there's any of you that just wake up naturally every day, spiritual, quoting scripture as you roll out of bed, singing hymns, marching through the day without any sense, you're just like eating, drinking, being perfect. If that's how you are, well, God bless you. I don't know what in the world you need to be here for.

But otherwise, we all have this tendency towards complacency. It just seems to be kind of a first law of the life in which we live. Sometimes, I mean, it's like me trying to maintain my weight.

I mean, these guys, they spent the last 30 years, at least 30 years on a diet, constantly. I'm on a diet, you know, and there's just something about my body. It just has this, it's always just looking.

It looks in the air, anywhere for calories. It finds them constantly. It's just part of my nature somehow or another.

I've got, you know, and the moment I stop watching my weight, the moment I stop, the moment my body even senses, I think he stopped looking or watching his weight just immediately, 10 pounds. It just finds it, you know, somewhere, just naturally. I don't know how it does it, but it does it.

All I need to gain weight is water and oxygen, and I can do it somehow or another. Jack, you're the skinniest guy in the church. This isn't funny to me.

But anyway, but this tendency that at least some of us have, maybe some of you don't. Well, God bless you. I hope some terrible thing happens to you later.

But anyway, but when it comes to just trying to do it, I just realized I have this body that that's the way it is, constantly on a diet. In fact, I've been on a diet for so long, I'm actually thinking of writing a diet book. I'm seriously considering it because number one, I consider myself a tremendous authority on dieting.

I figure during my lifetime, I have already lost well over 4,000 pounds in things. And my only problem is that I've gained 4,030, you know, or something. It's just this constant sort of a battle that goes on.

And then every time I seem to purpose that I don't want to change it, it doesn't work. There's all these forces. Jean has gone this weekend to Florida, and I thought, great.

You know, I have a great time. I'm going to kind of go on this little diet. And I started it Friday.

I was really proud of myself. She left Friday. Friday started, and then Friday afternoon, my brother-in-law calls.

Hey, why don't you guys join us for dinner? I said, oh, Jean went to Florida. He says, okay, never mind, goodbye, hung up. And so, calls back and says, well, your sister says we ought to take you anyway.

And so, okay. You know, I mean, I was thinking, okay, so I go to dinner, purposing all the way. I mean, you know, you know, what a joke.

But anyway, you know, so you go through this, and then you come home Saturday. Okay, that's it. I'm serious.

And I'm doing pretty good yesterday. I really was doing pretty good. But then, here I am studying, getting ready.

And Greg Laurie, he calls me last night. What are you doing? I'm studying. How far are you? I'm pretty good.

And he says, I'm pretty well done. Let's go to dinner. I said, no, Jean's gone.

He hung up. I said, never mind. Calls back, and he says, Kathy said we should feed you.

But anyway, and so, we go out to dinner. And then, I'm sitting there, and all this stuff, it just fell in front of me. You know, somehow or another.

And then, I usually don't have desserts. They said, let's get a dessert. I said, no, I don't want a dessert.

Kathy says, I've got a great dessert here. I don't want a dessert. You get one if you want, but I don't want it.

Well, she got one. And I'm looking at that thing. It's a big bowl of hot chocolate sauce with banana stuff.

You dip in it or something. And I'm looking at that thing. That's for you.

You guys have it. Well, I'll just have a little. Next thing I know, it's all over my face.

It's down in front of me. But what is this tendency? You know, and it's not just simply it's one thing, I suppose, when it's in that dimension, but we also have the same thing in our relationship with the Lord. We also have this great ability to make commitments, to set standards, to have desires, this is what I want.

And we live in a world of spiritual complacency so easily. And it's a great struggle, not just simply that you have or I have, but it's the world. It's the Bible.

It's all of God's children through all of the ages. This is what this book is constantly speaking to us. They're saying, go on, go on.

Let's go on. Let's refocus. Let's set our hearts, our desires, our affections on things that are above.

Reminder after reminder, you can already pick up a chapter in the New Testament without having exhortations in it of continuously seeking the Lord. But the wonderful thing here is, though, is that about this, as it says there in verse one, it says, therefore, leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection. That word there, when it says there, it's not clear in the King James in there when it says, let us go on.

But that word there, let us go on or to go on, it's literally to bear or to be brought forth and would be better translated, let us be born or let us be carried on. And the emphasis here, the actual word that is used there in the Greek there, as it means, as I said, to bear or to be brought forth. It's the same word used in the first chapter of this book in Hebrews one, three, when it talks about where it says Jesus, who when it says who is the brightness of his glory, the express image of his person.

And it says in upholding all things by the word of his power. When it says go on, it's the same word that is used in upholding all things further. He upholds all things by his power.

And what the writer of Hebrews is saying here when he's saying, let us go on, he's saying to let us be carried on, just like the same dimension in Hebrews one there where it says that Jesus holds all things by his word. He upholds everything. It's his power, his strength.

Long before there was ever man, he set the universe into existence. The sun, moon, stars, everything rotates, functions flawlessly, gloriously. And who does it? He does it.

He bears it up. He carries it on. He upholds it.

And now he tells you and me as a Christian, he says, let him do for you what he does for the universe. Let him do. Let him uphold you.

Let him bear you up as he bears all the rest of creation. Just what he is so powerful of doing, holding you together is nothing compared to, you know, at all. When you would look at everything else that he holds together, it's such a wonderful thing to understand in the sense that he says, I will do this.

You don't need to do this. Nowhere has God suggested, go on, go on, go on. I get it together on your own strength or your own power.

He's telling me, he says, I want you to realize a fresh. And hopefully when you and I, when we would meet here, if we have really been in church, the word church comes from a word ecclesia, it means the called up ones. Hopefully when we walk in the doors here, it's also something where in our heart we're being called up or the body of Christ that we're constantly ones are being, you know, lifted up, called up into God's presence where he will uphold us.

Hopefully when we come in here day by day and we would meet or you even as the church wherever two or three gathered together in my name, Jesus, there's the church meeting. But, and on how that we would

just realize I can't hold my life together. I can't get it together, but I do serve a Lord that creates and holds all things together by his power.

And when I come in, therefore, Lord, you bear me up. I can yield to this. I can respond to this.

I can desire this. I can long for this. And here, the wonderful thing is, is that hopefully as we gather together, we would realize that afresh, but the temptation that the children of Israel here at, or that the writers, pardon me, the Jewish believers here had, you know, uh, instead of resting in the person and the power of Christ, instead of letting him uphold them, the writer of Hebrews is saying, instead of depending fully upon him, he says, I'm concerned about you that you would lay again, the foundations of repentance of dead works and of faith towards God, the doctrine of baptisms, the laying out of hands, the resurrection of the dead and eternal judgment.

He said, gives him a list here. And he says, there are some things that you grew up in foundationally, uh, foundational aspects to your relationship with God hanging anywhere with me, because this is critical. I think if we understand it, I think it's very liberating in a sense, but to our understanding, he said, you became a Christian because of the fact that there was a foundation laid that told you of your need for Christ, prepared you for it.

It was called Judaism. And in Judaism, they had an awfully lot of different things that, you know, about Judaism, uh, that were there, of which he gives a list here that were foundational, repentance of dead works, faith towards God, doctrine of baptisms, laying on of hands, resurrection of the dead, eternal judgment. Here, anybody raised in Judaism, they were foundationally taught all of these things.

They were foundational to them. Number one, you need to repent. The message of all the old Testament prophets, repent, repent, repent.

You need to come into a relationship with God. Judaism was the messengers of the world that man needed to repent and get right with God. Repent from dead works, have faith towards God that you need to be able to turn to God and you're going to have to put your faith in him of the doctrine of baptisms.

That word baptisms is a bad translation there because it's really one. The doctrine of washings is what it is and meaning there all the way through the old Testament and all the way through the sacrifices and the offerings and the ministry of the high priest or the priesthood in the old covenant was that people realize I'm unclean. I needed to repent from my dead works.

I need to have faith towards God and I need to be washed. And then they would come with their offerings and their sacrifices and all of these things to come and say, cleanse me, forgive me, and all these doctrines on how to get right with God and the laying on of hands. This is a reference to Leviticus 16:21 when it says an errand shall lay both of his hands upon the head of the goat and confess over him all of the iniquities of the children of Israel, all their transgressions, their sin, putting on them on the head of the goat and they shall send him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness.

And here we have an escape goat. When the laying on of hands was now wonder where all the sins of the people with the high priest, when he put his hands on the head of that goat and he was sent off as a scapegoat into the wilderness that now if they had repented of their sins, they had faith towards God. They long to be washed and be made clean.

Now as the high priest, the laying on of hands, the scapegoat going off, they were now be made cleansed and forgiven. The doctrines of the resurrection of the dead and of eternal judgment, fundamental to Jewish belief and Hebrew belief was the resurrection of the dead and that one day everyone will stand before God. All of these things were preparatory to coming to Christ.

All of these things were foundational and here the writer of Hebrews is saying here to these Jewish believers who now in the book of Hebrews were being tempted and under pressure to go back to Judaism. The Jews as we have mentioned a number of times were coming to all these Jewish believers and say, wait a minute, you want to tell us that you're leaving the temple, you're leaving the priesthood, you're leaving the sacrifices, you're leaving the law, you're leaving Moses, didn't God give us all of this? They said, well, yeah, he did. You can't leave it and they were being pressured to come back into it but now the writer of Hebrews is wanting to tell them, listen to me, yes, these were from God, every one of them and yes, they were true and yes, they were foundational but I also want you to know that now once Jesus Christ has come who is the fulfillment of all of these things, that he, what he did fulfilled every one of those things.

He said, I now want you to know that it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, have tasted of the heavenly gifts and have been made partakers of the Holy Spirit, have tasted of the good word of God and the powers of the word to come that if they shall fall away to renew them again under repentance, seeing they crucify Christ afresh. Now the writer of Hebrews, presumed to be Paul by most, looks and he says, listen, all of these things once saved you. All of these things, they pointed you to Christ.

All the Old Testament saints when they came in, you know, they're into the temple and they said, I've sinned, I want to repent of my dead works, I want to have faith towards God, I want to be washed, I want to be atoned and forgiven, I want to know God loves me and he forgives me, I know that I have failed and they were the countless hundreds of thousands of tens of millions of times that they came in and out and in and out and each one believing this by faith. They were now looking forward to one day the Lamb of God coming into the world of which all these were pictures and types and symbols of and that they were atoned, they were forgiven because of that. They look there in the Old Testament, they look forward to Christ, you know, they didn't see him and understand him like we do, but through all these types and pictures and symbols there they looked that one day a Messiah would come, an atonement would come for them of which all of this was a picture of and it worked, it saved them.

But now the writer of Hebrews says, listen, if now you have tasted the heavenly gift, now you realize Christ has come, now it is complete, it is done, you have been presented to him and you have come to him, now I want you to know if now you go back to those things that once saved you, they'll never save you again. They will never work again. They worked by faith when it was in part, but now when that which is perfect has come, that which is in part is done away.

Now you go back and you want to sacrifice a lamb, you're crucifying Christ afresh. Now you want to go back to the priest and you want to go through the ceremonies and the washing and getting right with God through these things and go back into the temple, it won't work ever again. Because now that which is perfect is come.

It once worked, never will again. Now you're actually crucifying Christ afresh when you offer a sacrifice again, because now you're denying that he has done it and that his work is sufficient. In a sense, and so what he is trying to do here is saying we've got to go on, but the great tendency, the great tendency of

human nature when we want to go on is that we put ourself under law or put ourself under some new pressure or responsibility, Lord, I'm not right.

I'm not, I'm not where I ought to be. I'm not perfect. I've got, you know, and I do need to go on and I know what I'm going to do.

I'm going to be better. I'm going to try harder. I'm going to make a whole new set of promises.

That's what I'm going to do, God. And I'm going to, I'm going to go and I'm going to read like I've never read before. And then I'm also going to go and I'm going to be in church more than I've ever been before.

And then I'm going to do this. I'm going to do this. I'm going to do this.

And it's all, I am going to go through these sorts of things. But here the writer of Hebrews says, no, what upholds you isn't your commitment, laying the foundations of these things again. What upholds you is Christ.

When you can simply come into his presence and simply there say, Lord, would you please carry me? Would you please, I, you can walk out of here today filled with absolute guilt, but I don't read enough. I don't pray enough. I'm not a good enough person.

I don't keep my mouth shut when I ought to keep it shut. I say stuff I shouldn't say. I do stuff.

I try hard. I'm just not trying hard enough. I've got to try harder.

I'm a terrible Christian. I'm a miserable, terrible Christian. I'm pathetic, but I'm going to try harder.

Well, God bless you. Go ahead and try as you will there. I don't know a verse in the Bible that says, try, try.

I had a person one time to come to me and did, went through this kind of whole little routine that I just put you through. Then they said, I am trying so hard and I'm just not, it didn't work for me. I'm trying with all my heart.

I said, would you do me a favor? I had my Bible because would you find me one verse in there that says that you're supposed to try to be Christian? And they just stared at me like, isn't it full of them? You know, or something almost this is what we're supposed to do. I said, where in the world does the Bible tell us to try to be a Christian? You've invited the greatest Christian who ever lived into your heart and life. And now you want to just sit there and have him sit out in a seat while you go try to be like him.

You don't need two Christians in one body once enough. If you've invited the greatest one that's ever lived. Now the issue is how do I just simply let you be you without setting laws and rules and standards? And this is what the writer of Hebrews saying, if we've got to, we want, let us go on.

Let us be lifted up, resting in his sufficiency, resting in his power, not making all these commitments and all of these promises, all of these things that we are going to attempt to do. And he says, very simply, the way that this is done is through repentance. What God wants from you and what he wants from me with the great key word, I suppose, almost in this whole chapter to me is that he tells us there down in verse six, he says, for somebody falls away, if they fall away, it's impossible there to renew them again under repentance, seeing that they crucify under themselves the son of God afresh.

And they put him to an open shame. Here he is. He looks there and he, and he tells us the real issue in life is repentance.

If there is somebody that is going to go back to these things while they are going back to them, while they are doing them, you can't renew them. You can't bring them to repentance while they are doing these things. You can go to the temple, you can go to the priest, you can go through every ceremony, all the sacrifice.

None of it will work. Anything you do there. But the real issue is ultimately repentance.

And the wonderful thing about repentance is that it's just simply changing my mind about who is upholding who. When you and I come to church, we had to come with a, hopefully if, if there's anything I say today that ends up making sense when you walk out here and says, I got it, I think maybe. Maybe.

What did he say? But when you walk out, if there's one thing is the issue of repenting of something here where you say, Lord, forgive me, I am trying to be a Christian. Forgive me. I have this tendency to lay foundations, make commitments, go through this.

I'm going to do this. I'm going to do that. I'm going to try out.

I'm going to go to church and be a better person. And if we could, rather than that, if we could simply say, Lord, if that isn't the most ridiculous thing in all the world, I'll tell you, I've been a Christian now with 35 years. I am no better than I am.

There was 35 years ago. That's pathetic, isn't it? But I believe that with all of my heart and certain in terms of who I am, I am exactly my flesh. My nature within me hasn't changed a bit.

The only thing that can possibly change is Christ living in me. Who I am is exactly the same. I have the capacity to think and do and behave.

And if I want to dwell on a lot of the behavior, the memories, the vocabulary, the attitudes, they're all right there. They haven't left me. I wish they had.

I wish one day I could just wake up and somebody said, do you remember? Say, no, didn't do it. Not me. I'm not capable of it.

But rather to realize, yes. But the wonderful thing that can happen in the Christian life is that I can be changed by repentance. And that is saying, Lord, whenever I uphold myself, that's what I'm going to get because I haven't changed.

And I'm going to go back to the same self to work with I ever had. But through repentance, you uphold me a different nature, a different life, a different power. All of these things pointed to needing Christ.

And I need you. I want you. I trust you.

I rest in you. And here the sad thing is, is that it does describe here, though, that you can be a believer. I believe you can be a believer that can bring the Lord to open shame.

You can be a believer, essentially, that by the way you live can be crucifying Christ afresh by the way that we are, that that literally there, as it says, they're an open shame. How many times have we see

sometimes believers that the way they live or the way they talk, the way they behave, and they're actually Christians. They belong to God.

We know that. And yet at the same time, how they're living is their own strength, their own power, their own resources. I think I want all have they're fighting for themselves, presenting themselves, doing their own thing.

And the result is they're in trouble. They're bringing an open shame. But here, just to close it, because I want to be done with this chapter as bad as you do, frankly.

But anyway, the the wonderful thing here, just to read these in verse 13, because we'll never you'll never solve this thing I have for me, but I don't think I'm good at doing it for others. But in verse 12, pick it up. He says that don't be slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patient inherited the promises for when God made promise to Abraham because he could swear my my no greater he swear by himself, saying, surely I will bless thing and multiplying.

I will multiply thee. And so afterwards, he patiently endured and he obtained the promise for men verily swear by the greater. And an oath is a confirmation into them and the end of all strife, wherein God willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of the promise, the immutability of his counsel confirmed it by an oath that by two immutable things in which it was impossible for God to lie, that we might have a strong consolation who have fled for a refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us, which hope we have as an anchor of our soul, both sure and steadfast with entereth into within the veil.

And here he looks and he says, listen, very simply, as his great illustration of this, he says, I want you to realize Abraham made it and Abraham made it because of the fact that God made him a covenant. He made him a promise. He said, I will uphold thee.

I will bless thee. And even though Abraham failed, which he did time and again, and which he even lied time again and when he at the same time, God still looked at him and upheld him. He still through his struggles in life, God hung in there, even though Abraham split and did some pretty tragic and ridiculous things at times, God still looked at him and he said, Abraham, I will bring you through this.

You've got to learn to yield to me and to yield to my power and to yield. My goodness, the yield to my love. And finally, through a lifetime, Abraham did that humanly when he went to his own resources and upheld himself, he failed.

But then when usually through repentance and through sorrow, he came back, build an altar, write things to God and says, Lord, I'm sorry. God then poured out his love, strengthened him, made a promise. He said, I won't lie.

I'll never leave you or forsake you. I am going to do what I'm going to do. And he did it.

And that will not simply be the testimony of Abraham in heaven. It'll also be the testimony of every one of you and me. We get there.

Somebody said, what are you doing here? I say, certainly wasn't me. It isn't because I was really good at laying foundation, keeping oaths, keeping promises, doing all the stuff I was supposed to do. I am here because his love wouldn't let me go.

I am here because somehow or another, he continuously worked within me and got me back on track again and again and again and again through my life. And for that, I'll love him forever and ever for it. And here the writer of Hebrews will hold it here, but he simply says, let's go on.

Let's just forget all this other stuff and let's let Jesus Christ uphold us. You don't need all these other things. You need that living, vital relationship with him.

Don't settle into complacency. Get it together in him. Let him do it.

I don't know about you. One other little insight I'll give you to me today. I seem to be doing things about myself, but one other little private matter about myself that I might tell you.

I don't know about you, but, and I want to be humble and honest about this thing, but I have always been the most well-balanced Christian I've ever known. I have. I've always been the most well-balanced Christian I've ever known.

The only thing that's always scared me is I'm always changing. But I've always evaluated basically the whole rest of the world from where I'm at. If you love the Lord more than me, you're a fanatic.

You're just a bizarre fanatic. If you love him less, you're backslidden. Because I'm normal, you see.

We have this tendency within us, and I think most of us for our own mental health, that we look and I'm okay. I'm just fine. And then we evaluate everybody else from where we are at at that time.

The only problem is, is like I said, I'm always changing. That's the scary part. But the issue is, is how do I get that mental, you know, attitude that we so easily have and to say, wait a minute, Lord, I'm not fine.

I may think I'm fine, but I'm not. I want to go on. Whatever it is I've had of you so far, thank you for it, but it isn't enough.

I want to go stronger and deeper in you. I want more of your power, more of your love, more of your work. I want you to help me in my home, my marriage, my vocabulary, my relationships, my behavior, my desires.

I want you to bring my life into subjection. I don't want to just simply sit back, fold my hands, go to church and say, I'm fine. How about you? But rather than that, Lord, help me, take me, uphold me, carry me all the way to heaven, longing more and more and more for you and never being content with where I'm at.

Father, we thank you for your love and we thank you for your word. And we ask, Lord, that as we look at it today, that we would find ourself just coming and saying, Jesus, help me. Jesus, strengthen me.

Jesus, teach me. And Lord, may we be ones today, we're not here to make any promises to tell you, Lord, I'm going to try harder. I'm going to do better.

Lord, help us to be done with that and simply to be able to, by faith, look to you and say, Jesus, I just need a fresh work of your love and your spirit. I need to go out here, not upholding myself by my promises, but I need to go out of here by the promises that you'll never leave me or forsake me. I need to leave here with the promise of your spirit filling my heart and my life.

I need to leave here with the promise of your wisdom, your love to guide me, to fill me, to strengthen me. Lord, may that be what's going on within our hearts. May we be able to open up our hearts and say, Lord, who cares where we've been? I want to know where I'm going.

And I want you to be the one carrying me, strengthening me, helping me, Lord, not to make any commitments of what we are, but Lord, to rest in the commitment already made. Lord, I pray that today that you would just help us to cease from our own labors, to cease from our own commitments and just to rest in the labor already done by Jesus Christ, to rest in your love, to rest in your forgiveness, to realize as we sit here that you have loved us, you have died for us, you have forgiven us, we are clean. And now the issue is just to open our heart and say, Lord, fill me, take my life, forgive me, wash me, be my Lord, be my King, uphold me like you do the rest of the universe, put my life together, make it work.

I can't do it, but Lord, you can. Would you teach us these things again and again and again? And Lord, if we've come in here today and I'm fine, may there be something that happens within us that we say I'm not. I want more of him.

I need more of him. And by faith, I ask for it. So Lord, touch us and strengthen us, each and every one.

Father, we ask it in Jesus' name, amen.

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