

# FAITH CALLS FOR PERSEVERANCE

**BIBLE BASIS:** Hebrews 10:19–31

**BIBLE TRUTH:** Jesus’ sacrificial death opens the way to the presence of God.

**MEMORY VERSE:** “Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering.” (Hebrews 10:23, KJV).

**LESSON AIM:** By the end of the lesson, we will: **KNOW** Jesus’ sacrificial death opens the way

to the presence of God; **FEEL** the importance of holding on to faith in Jesus; and **SHARE** our faith with others.

**BACKGROUND SCRIPTURES:** Hebrews 10 — Read and incorporate the insights gained from the Background Scriptures into your study of the lesson.

## TEACHER PREPARATION

**MATERIALS NEEDED:** Bibles, (several different versions), Quarterly Commentary/Teacher Manual, Adult Quarterly, teaching resources such as charts, worksheets/handouts, paper, pens, and pencils.

## OTHER MATERIALS NEEDED / TEACHER’S NOTES:

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## LESSON OVERVIEW

### LIFE NEED FOR TODAY’S LESSON

To live confidently in our relationship with Jesus Christ.

### BIBLE LEARNING

To learn that God will judge us based on our relationship with His Son.

### BIBLE APPLICATION

To know that we can come before the living God with great confidence because Jesus is the way.

### STUDENTS’ RESPONSES

Students will worship God with confidence.

## LESSON SCRIPTURE

### HEBREWS 10:19–31, KJV

**19** Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus,

**20** By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh;

**21** And having an high priest over the house of God;

**22** Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.

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**23** Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;)

**24** And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:

**25** Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.

**26** For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins,

**27** But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.

**28** He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses:

**29** Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?

**30** For we know him that hath said, Vengeance *belongeth* unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people.

**31** *It is* a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

### BIBLICAL DEFINITIONS

**A. Boldness (Hebrews 10:19)** *parrhesia* (Gk.)—To have openness, frankness in speaking.

**B. Faith (vv. 22, 23)** *pistis* (Gk.)—Assurance, belief; a strong and welcome conviction or trust that Jesus is the Messiah.

### LIGHT ON THE WORD

The Book of Hebrews has numerous references to the traditions of Jewish Temple worship. In the early years of the existence of the Temple, the Holy of Holies, which was located in the innermost sanctuary of the Temple, contained the Ark of the Covenant, which represented God's presence with the people of Israel. Because it was specially associated with the presence of God, the Holy of Holies was separated from the other parts of the Temple by a thick curtain. This curtain or veil prevented viewing of the ritual which took place in the inner sanctuary. The High Priest was the one in charge of the Temple worship. It was a hereditary position originally filled by Aaron and later by his descendants. Eventually, this was referred to as the Levitical priesthood since the positions could only be filled by the descendants of the tribe of Levi. Normally, the high priest served for life. Only the high priest could enter the Holy of Holies, and this occurred only once a year on the Day of Atonement.

Because there are references to religious sacrifices and ceremonies, the book of Hebrews was probably written before the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem in A.D. 70. The name of the author is not given; the author was knowledgeable of the Old Testament because there are direct quotations from the Old Testament as he argues the superiority of Jesus Christ and faith. The setting for the book is a period when Jewish Christians underwent severe persecution from the Romans and Jews, both socially and physically.

### TEACHING THE BIBLE LESSON

#### LIFE NEED FOR TODAY'S LESSON

**AIM:** That your students will learn that they are called to persevere despite the challenges.

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### INTRODUCTION

#### The New Sacrifice

Sacrifices were practiced from the earliest of times in the Old Testament. Animals were imperfect sacrifices that could neither purify nor atone for the sins of the people. The Old Testament animal sacrifices were only a placeholder until Jesus came and sacrificed Himself for our sins.

### BIBLE LEARNING

**AIM: That your students will learn that Jesus, who became the sacrifice for our sins, changes our relationship to God.**

### I. DESCRIPTION OF THE PRIESTHOOD OF CHRIST (Hebrews 10:19–21)

In chapters 5 through 10 of the Book of Hebrews, the writer has explained that the priesthood of Christ is superior to the Levitical priesthood, which was made at Mount Sinai. The Levitical priesthood could not bring the people to perfection. There was no permanent reconciliation between the people and God through the temporary and repeated animal sacrifices. The people needed the perfect sacrifice, Jesus Christ, who gave His life once to restore the people to a relationship with God.

#### The Priest of Christ Is Superior (verses 19–21)

**19. Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, 20. By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; 21. And having an high priest over the house of God;**

Under the Mosaic Law, when the high priest passed through a veil to enter the inner sanctuary, he made a sacrifice for the nation's sins. A curtain prevented anyone from seeing into the inner sanctuary. When Jesus died for the sins of humanity, the curtain was torn open

(**Matthew 27:51**), permitting anyone to enter the holiest of all—God's presence. The high priest was no longer required for believers to be forgiven. Because of this "new and living way" (**Hebrews 10:20**), believers can go directly to God through faith in Christ.

The function of the priest was to build a bridge between man and God. In fulfilling His divine role as our ultimate High Priest, Jesus not only shows us the way to God and introduces us to His very presence when we get there. By His sacrifice, the house or family of God is the Christian Church, which is composed of all true believers in the Lord Jesus.

### SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

#### QUESTION 1

What is the "new and living way" that Jesus has prepared for believers to come into the presence of God?

**The "new and living way" into God's presence was created by the death of Jesus on the Cross. Therefore, He is a new and living way.**

### LIGHT ON THE WORD

#### Entrance into the Presence of God

We come into the presence of God through His body, which was given for us. This is the New Covenant. The way by the Old Covenant under Mosaic Law neither gave life nor removed the liability to death. The way to peace and reconciliation, under the Old Covenant, was through the dead bodies of the animals; but Christ is living, and ever lives, to make intercession for us.

### II. THE PRIESTHOOD OF CHRIST AND OUR PROFESSION OF FAITH (Hebrews 10:22–25)

The Book of Hebrews was written during a time of great persecution of the church. This included

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bloody murders and tortures done often as entertainment for the masses who assembled in pagan coliseums and arenas. Although the Jewish Christians were experiencing persecution and witnessing the deaths of those they loved, the writer urged them to resist the temptation to turn away from Jesus. He wanted to reassure the believers by calling them to remember that God is faithful and He will do what He has promised.

### Encouraging our Brothers and Sisters in the Lord (verses 22–25)

**22. Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. 23. Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;) 24. And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: 25. Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.**

The writer of Hebrews needed to powerfully reinforce and strengthen the faith of these early Christians. Therefore, he tells them that despite the persecutions, they must remember the power of Jesus Christ. Through Christ, we can freely enter into the presence of God. Through faith in Christ's work on our behalf, we have "full assurance," or certainty, that our sins are forgiven. Because of the blood of Christ, our consciences are cleansed.

When the high priest entered the "holy place ... He shall put on the holy linen coat ... the linen breeches ... a linen girdle ... these are holy garments" and he must be cleansed; therefore "shall he wash his flesh in water" (*Leviticus 16:3–4*). The New Testament believer must be cleansed before he or she can come before the Holy One; however, this is fulfilled not by washing in water, but by the sacrifice of Jesus

Christ. When the writer refers to "our hearts sprinkled" and "bodies washed with pure water" (*Hebrews 10:22*), he is alluding to baptism. Because of the eternal efficacy of the blood of Christ, our consciences are cleansed.

The sacrifices of animals were a foreshadow of what God promised would come to pass through the Redeemer. Given that Christ has fulfilled the Promise and has cleansed us, we are compelled to realize that we can depend upon God. When He makes a promise, we can be sure He will keep it. He who cannot lie has promised eternal life to us. As He is faithful who has given us this promise, we must hold fast the profession of our hope.

Believers, therefore, must provoke (stir up) the qualities of love and good works toward each other. The writer knew believers could have an impact on one another by loving and doing good deeds for each other. When we share our love for God, we can encourage one another and introduce others to a new life through Christ.

This was critical for the people of God during the time of Hebrews. Because of the fear of persecution, some of the believers had stopped attending worship services; therefore, the writer encouraged the believers to pull together to stir up loving and active faith. The fellowship of believers is a source of encouragement; it is an opportunity to share faith and grow stronger. The writer urged the believers to get involved in exhorting (encouraging) one another with the truth.

### QUESTION 2

What are some ways that we can encourage one another in the Lord?

**We should encourage each other through acts of love and good works toward one another. Often volunteering time or lending an ear are ways of sharing your love for God with people who are in need or who may not even know Him. Through these acts, we encourage one**

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**another to remain faithful and to experience and appreciate the presence of God each day.**

### LIGHT ON THE WORD

#### The Willful Sin

The writer of Hebrews warns readers against sinning willfully. He is not referring to the accidental or occasional act of sin such as a misspoken word. There is a remedy for our daily sins: “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins” (1 John 1:9). However, the reference in Hebrews 10 is to a deliberate rejection of Christ after supposedly receiving Him as Savior. As humans, people stumble, misspeak, or stubbornly refuse to do “the right thing.” This, however, must not be the pattern that governs our lives. “Messing up” is never what God wants, and the Holy Spirit will convict us and lead us in rectifying our error whether we have been an affront to another person or disobedient to God.

### III. THE PRIESTHOOD OF CHRIST AND KNOWLEDGE OF TRUTH (Hebrews 10:26–27)

The writer of Hebrews encourages believers to “hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering” (Hebrews 10:23). Those who reject Christ and disobey Him are God’s adversaries. There is one certain judgment—death and destruction for obstinate sinners. They will experience the wrath of God because there is no other help for sinners who reject their only remedy—salvation through Jesus Christ, our Lord, and Savior.

#### Turning Away (verses 26–27)

**26. For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, 27. But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.**

Believers should not willfully rebel against God’s provisions after receiving and fully understanding the “knowledge of the truth,” which is Christ’s offer of salvation (Hebrews 10:26). The sin that is freely chosen could not be considered a minor transgression, but a deliberate turning away. This kind of sinner cannot turn back again for he or she is denying the basis for such return. The New International Version Bible (NIV) points out that people who reject Christ have a fearful expectation of judgment. The nature of this expectation is not defined, and the fact that the fate of these evil persons is left indefinite makes the warning all the more impressive. The NIV writer translates it as “raging fire,” an echo of Isaiah 26:11, which is a vivid expression for the fire of judgment that is intent on devouring God’s adversaries. The fact that Hebrews 10:27 uses the word “adversaries” shows that these people are not holding some neutral position. They have become the enemies of God.

### QUESTION 3

Explain the difference between a “willful sin” and an “occasional sin.”

**“Willful sin” is the deliberate rejection of the truth and turning a deaf ear to correction. Willful sin is a rejection of Jesus Christ despite previous statements of acceptance of salvation through Him.**

### LIGHT ON THE WORD

#### The Rejection of the Spirit of God

To the Hebrew people, receiving the knowledge of truth meant entering into the community that is defined by the true God. Historic rejection of God’s rule can be found in the way Israel turned away from the covenant through unbelief and idolatry. The people to whom this epistle was written knew how dire it was to reject God and His promises. These Jews were Christians, converts who had accepted Jesus Christ as Messiah and Savior. They realized that rejecting

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Christ meant that they knew what God had done in Christ and yet rejected Him.

### IV. THE PRIESTHOOD OF CHRIST AND HOW GOD WILL JUDGE HIS PEOPLE (Hebrews 10:28–31)

The Old Testament judgment for idolatry was death by stoning, but there is a worse punishment for someone who rejects Christ. The person who rejects the Spirit of God will receive a punishment greater than physical death. God is too holy to tolerate any sin, so sin must receive an awful punishment. There is no other sacrifice for sin except Christ's sacrifice on the Cross. Believers, who have received the mercy of God through Christ, are saved, and there is nothing to fear.

#### Apostasy (verses 28–31)

**28. He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: 29. Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace? 30. For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people. 31. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.**

The Law of Moses was given by God and so anyone who rejected it rejected God's direction and was killed without compassion. There was no place for mercy. The offender must be executed (**Deuteronomy 17:6; 19:15**). If the punishment for rejecting the Law of Moses was so severe, the punishment for rejecting Christ is worse because Jesus is greater than Moses. The author of Hebrews invites the audience to work out for themselves what sort of worse punishment someone would deserve for rejecting the gift of God in Christ.

The author's first quotation here is from **Deuteronomy 32:35**, which emphasizes the certainty that the Lord will act. The wrongdoer cannot hope to go unpunished because avenging wrong is in the hands of God. The second quotation is from **Deuteronomy 32:36**. God judges all. Those who turn against Christ must not think they can escape. There is no doubt about the Lord's intervention. The word "judge" in **Hebrews 10:30** may mean "give a favorable judgment" as well as "condemn." The latter meaning is intended here. That a person claims to be part of the community of the people of God does not exempt him or her from judgment. Usually falling into God's hands means reassurance, but not so here. Here it means to fall under His displeasure. Remember that He who lives forever can punish forever. All the enemies of God may expect the heaviest judgments of an not for a time but for eternity.

#### QUESTION 4

If we turn against Jesus Christ and His free gift of salvation, what will be the result?

The living God will judge us.

#### BIBLE APPLICATION

**AIM:** That your students will know the importance of holding on to faith in Jesus.

#### God Invites Us into His Presence

The writer of Hebrews urged believers to recognize the superiority of our faith and to live in obedience to God each day. Through Christ, we can experience God's presence and develop a relationship with Him. Are you doing this? Can you say that you know the presence of God? When did you experience His presence? How was your relationship with Him strengthened as a result? What new resolve does God's presence give you?

## STUDENTS' RESPONSES

**AIM:** That your students will encourage one another.

The world focuses on tangible rewards, promotions, and recognition with financial bonuses. The world encourages the pursuit of tangible endeavors and earthly wealth with retirement plans focused on life in the world. As believers, we have a purpose that is not focused on earthly rewards. Because we have accepted Christ by faith, we are friends of Christ with a purpose to share our love for Christ through faith. Each day we can encourage one another to show love and be faithful in our walk with Christ despite the distractions and expectations demanded by our present world.

## PRAYER

Dear Father, help us to walk faithfully before you. Help us to hold to Your unchanging Hand despite the situations we may face. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

## DIG A LITTLE DEEPER

### "I'm Warning You"

Hebrews has one central goal: to motivate persecuted believers to remain faithful to God. To do otherwise is to apostatize, to fall away from Christ and the faith. To accomplish this goal, the writer issues several warnings throughout the letter. Each warning comes on the heels of an affirmation about the finished work of Christ and the necessity of faithfulness.

Note that each warning begins with the term "therefore." In other words, each of these passages introduces a conclusion from what has preceded. Given what has just been stated, the hearers should respond in this way.

Drawing a conclusion from the message of the Son, the writer exhorts:

*Therefore, we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away from it. For since the message declared by angels proved to be reliable, and every transgression or disobedience received a just retribution, how shall we escape if we neglect such a great salvation? (2:1-3a).*

*Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says, "Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion .... Take care brethren lest there be found in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God (3:7-8a, 12).*

*Therefore, ... let us leave the elementary doctrine of Christ and go on to maturity .... For it is impossible, in the case of those who have once been enlightened ... and then have fallen away, to restore them again to repentance (6:1, 4, 6).*

*Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, ... and since we have a great high priest over the house of God, let us ... and let us ... and let us ... For if we go on sinning deliberately ... there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins.... How much worse punishment, do you think will be deserved ...? (10:19-29).*

*Therefore (v. 12) ... See that you do not refuse him who is speaking. For if they did not escape ... much less will we escape if we reject him who warns from heaven (12:25)*

## HOW TO SAY IT

Abihu.	uh-BAHY-hyoo.
Nadab.	NAY-dab.

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**DAILY HOME BIBLE READINGS**

**MONDAY**

A Great Faith  
(Matthew 8:5–13)

**TUESDAY**

A Saving Faith  
(Romans 10:8–17)

**WEDNESDAY**

A Justifying Faith  
(Galatians 2:15–21)

**THURSDAY**

An Examined Faith  
(2 Corinthians 13:5–10)

**FRIDAY**

An Enduring Faith  
(Romans 5:1–5)

**SATURDAY**

An Exemplary Faith  
(1 Thessalonians 1:2–10)

**SUNDAY**

The Full Assurance of Faith  
(Hebrews 10:19–31)

**COMMENTS / NOTES:**

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**PREPARE FOR NEXT SUNDAY**

Read **Hebrews 11:1–3, 6; Psalm 46:1–11**, and study “Faith Is Assurance.”

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