

Leviticus & Hebrews: The Necessity of the Cross

Lesson 15: Victory Through the Cross

Key Verse: *Therefore do not throw away your confidence, which has a great reward. ³⁶ For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God you may receive what is promised.~Hebrews 10.35-36*

We consider firefighters, police officers, soldiers and those who are spontaneously called to extraordinary actions on behalf of others as heroes. In Christianity, Hebrews 11 is likened to a “Heroes Hall of Fame”. Undergirding every hero's actions is a core belief that the sacrifice required is worth risking their own comforts, even up to their own life on behalf of others. Even more, they consider the risk worth the cost borne to those who love them and who suffer the consequences of their loss. With God as **our Confidence**, we too can risk our own comforts, even up to our own life expended in service according to **God's will**. Our Lord personally knows the cost of submitting to His Father's will. Jesus is our primary example of the confidence we have in God as we choose to faithfully submit to Him, even entering God's own “Heroes Hall of Fame” in His Book of Life (Revelation 21.27)!

Oh God of Abraham! We adore You! Oh God of all those who bravely and boldly serve You! We love You! Jesus, we thank You! Make us more like You. Fortify our faith in Your Promises and coming heavenly reward. Holy Spirit, empower us to choose God's will in every moment of every day. Open our eyes to see heavenly purpose in the mundane. Ready us to obediently act on behalf of those You call us to serve at cost to our comforts, even up to our lives. Teach us to submit in the same way Your Son did for us – in Love for You.

Hebrews 10.1-11.40 For since the law has but a shadow of the good things to come instead of the true form of these realities, it can never, by the same sacrifices that are continually offered every year, make perfect those who draw near. ² Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered, since the worshipers, having once been cleansed, would no longer have any consciousness of sins?

³ But in these sacrifices there is a reminder of sins every year. ⁴ For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins. ⁵ Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said, “Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a body have you prepared for me; ⁶ in burnt offerings and sin offerings you have taken no pleasure. ⁷ Then I said, ‘Behold, I have come to do your will, O God, as it is written of me in the scroll of the book.’” ⁸ When he said above, “You have neither desired nor taken pleasure in sacrifices and offerings and burnt offerings and sin offerings” (these are offered according to the law), ⁹ then he added, “Behold, I have come to do your will.” He does away with the first in order to establish the second. ¹⁰ And by that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

¹¹ And every priest stands daily at his service, offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. ¹² But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God, ¹³ waiting from that time until his enemies should be made a footstool for his feet. ¹⁴ For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified.

¹⁵ And the Holy Spirit also bears witness to us; for after saying, ¹⁶ “This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, declares the Lord: I will put my laws on their hearts, and write them on their minds,” ¹⁷ then he adds, “I will remember their sins and their lawless deeds no more.” ¹⁸ Where there is forgiveness of these, there is no longer any offering for sin.

¹⁹ Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, ²⁰ by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh, ²¹ and since we have a great priest over the house of God, ²² let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. ²³ Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful.

²⁴ And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, ²⁵ not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near. ²⁶ For if we go on sinning deliberately after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, ²⁷ but a fearful expectation of judgment, and a fury of fire that will consume the adversaries. ²⁸ Anyone who has set aside the law of Moses dies without mercy on the evidence of two or three witnesses. ²⁹ How much worse punishment, do you think, will be deserved by the one who has trampled underfoot the Son of God, and has profaned the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has outraged the Spirit of grace? ³⁰ For we know him who said, “Vengeance is mine; I will repay.” And again, “The Lord will judge his people.” ³¹ It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

³² But recall the former days when, after you were enlightened, you endured a hard struggle with sufferings, ³³ sometimes being publicly exposed to reproach and affliction, and sometimes being partners with those so treated. ³⁴ For you had compassion on those in prison, and you joyfully accepted the plundering of your property, since you knew that you yourselves had a better possession and an abiding one.

³⁵ Therefore do not throw away your confidence, which has a great reward. ³⁶ For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God you may receive what is promised. ³⁷ For, "Yet a little while, and the coming one will come and will not delay; ³⁸ but my righteous one shall live by faith, and if he shrinks back, my soul has no pleasure in him." ³⁹ But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who have faith and preserve their souls.

CH 11 Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. ² For by it the people of old received their commendation. ³ By faith we understand that the universe was created by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things that are visible.

⁴ By faith Abel offered to God a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain, through which he was commended as righteous, God commending him by accepting his gifts. And through his faith, though he died, he still speaks.

⁵ By faith Enoch was taken up so that he should not see death, and he was not found, because God had taken him. Now before he was taken he was commended as having pleased God. ⁶ And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.

⁷ By faith Noah, being warned by God concerning events as yet unseen, in reverent fear constructed an ark for the saving of his household. By this he condemned the world and became an heir of the righteousness that comes by faith.

⁸ By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to a place that he was to receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. ⁹ By faith he went to live in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, living in tents with Isaac and Jacob, heirs with him of the same promise. ¹⁰ For he was looking forward to the city that has foundations, whose designer and builder is God.

¹¹ By faith Sarah herself received power to conceive, even when she was past the age, since she considered him faithful who had promised. ¹² Therefore from one man, and him as good as dead, were born descendants as many as the stars of heaven and as many as the innumerable grains of sand by the seashore.

¹³ These all died in faith, not having received the things promised, but having seen them and greeted them from afar, and having acknowledged that they were strangers and exiles on the earth. ¹⁴ For people who speak thus make it clear that they are seeking a homeland. ¹⁵ If they had been thinking of that land from which they had gone out, they would have had opportunity to return. ¹⁶ But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared for them a city.

¹⁷ By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises was in the act of offering up his only son, ¹⁸ of whom it was said, "Through Isaac shall your offspring be named." ¹⁹ He considered that God was able even to raise him from the dead, from which, figuratively speaking, he did receive him back.

²⁰ By faith Isaac invoked future blessings on Jacob and Esau.

²¹ By faith Jacob, when dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, bowing in worship over the head of his staff. ²² By faith Joseph, at the end of his life, made mention of the exodus of the Israelites and gave directions concerning his bones.

²³ By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden for three months by his parents, because they saw that the child was beautiful, and they were not afraid of the king's edict.

²⁴ By faith Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, ²⁵ choosing rather to be mistreated with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin. ²⁶ He considered the reproach of Christ greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking to the reward. ²⁷ By faith he left Egypt, not being afraid of the anger of the king, for he endured as seeing him who is invisible. ²⁸ By faith he kept the Passover and sprinkled the blood, so that the Destroyer of the firstborn might not touch them. ²⁹ By faith the people crossed the Red Sea as on dry land, but the Egyptians, when they attempted to do the same, were drowned. ³⁰ By faith the walls of Jericho fell down after they had been encircled for seven days.

³¹ By faith Rahab the prostitute did not perish with those who were disobedient, because she had given a friendly welcome to the spies.

³² And what more shall I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets— ³³ who through faith conquered kingdoms, enforced justice, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, ³⁴ quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, were made strong out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight.

³⁵ Women received back their dead by resurrection. Some were tortured, refusing to accept release, so that they might rise again to a better life. ³⁶ Others suffered mocking and flogging, and even chains and imprisonment. ³⁷ They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were killed with the sword. They went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, afflicted, mistreated— ³⁸ of whom the world was not worthy—wandering about in deserts and mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.

³⁹ And all these, though commended through their faith, did not receive what was promised, ⁴⁰ since God had provided something better for us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect.

Diamonds: Hebrews 10 could be summarized as Paul telling his audience, “You got this!” By reminding this group of wavering Christ-followers of God’s will through Christ, Paul encourages us all that the work of Christ enables us to suffer with bold confidence. From the hard grip of depression to breath-stealing loss, His Spirit in us empowers us all to persevere in faith, placing both your life and death in His firm grasp. God’s will accomplished in Christ solidified His people’s salvation from hell (Hebrews 10.26-31).

Hebrews 10.1 is sometimes (mis)interpreted to justify the study of only the New Testament scriptures. However, this verse exposes the relationship Christ-followers have to both the Old Testament (covenant of the Law) and the New Testament (new covenant in Jesus). The lacing format of the Old and New Testaments in this Bible study proves that the simultaneous deep study of both covenants (testaments) increases faith in our personal eternal security and our anchor of hope in heaven, Jesus (Hebrews 10.11-14).

1. You are meeting a sweet friend for coffee or tea or lunch. Write down 2 or 3 surprising insights that have occurred through this lacing format. What has deepened your faith in Jesus, and/or how has God increased His intimacy with you?
2. How does studying both covenants fulfill Jesus’ prayer request in John 17.17, “Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth”?

While living by faith is most often considered the theme of Hebrews 11, in truth, this theme is best placed with Hebrews 10. Hebrews 11 is the outcome of the foundation of faith laid by Jesus (Hebrews 10). We have spent much time dissecting the old and new covenant. In Lesson 13, we added Jesus’ “flesh” to the sacrificial system through our study of the Lamb of God alongside the Cross. Paul does likewise in Hebrews 10.19-22.

3. Skim your answers to Lesson 13 (“The Lamb of the Cross”) as well as the doctrine of sanctification (Lesson 14, “Christlikeness through the Cross”). Ponder what you know about God’s devotion to a loving relationship with you and Christ’s selfless devotion to His Father’s love for you. How have you been renewed to actively apply the exhortation in Hebrews 10.23?

Hebrews 10.14 reminds us that we are “being made holy. That is to say, we are being transformed into what we have been made... The present tense of Christianity is always linked to and rests upon the past tense of Christ’s finished work.”¹ This reality spawns a “practical holiness”², such as the actions highlighted in Hebrews 10.32-39. Embedded in the foundational evidence of the necessity of faith is the hard truth those who reject Christ as Savior will experience: “fall[ing] into the hands of the living God.” (10.31). This warning against apostasy, with its succinct description of the eternal consequences for willfully rejecting God’s authority over one’s life and willfully continuing in sin, is the fourth and final warning of the author of Hebrews.³

Recall that Paul gave a similar warning in Hebrews 6.4-6. Alarming, apostasy is a sin found in “church people”!

¹ Phillips, p. 349

² Phillips, p. 350

³ Phillips, p. 373

Paul proves this through the deadly consequence of rejection, or violation, of Moses' law (10.28). In other words, God required the death penalty for His people's violation of specific laws (*not every broken law*) He established through Moses (Deuteronomy 17-25). Thus, how much greater will God punish those who willfully reject His own Son?!?! "But the greater severity is that breaking the old covenant brought *physical* death, while rejecting Christ brings *spiritual* death."⁴

4. From Hebrews 10.32-39, in contrast to the deadly consequences of apostasy, what does a Christ-follower look forward to? Despite the circumstances that tempt Christ-followers to abandon their faith, what do Christ-followers know and look forward to that buttresses their faith?

Deity: Our Confidence~ (Hebrews 10.35-36) Jesus as your confidence is tied first to eternal destiny in death (Hebrews 10.19-20). As explained in Hebrews, Jesus' sacrifice removed the barrier veil so that His people have immediate and undeterred access to God (Matthew 27.51; Hebrews 6.19 and 10.19-20; 2 Corinthians 3.12-18). This confidence to boldly enter God's presence is accomplished by "the blood of Jesus" (Hebrews 10.19).

"This confidence is something believers have and must know that they have in order to lead productive, godly lives. People who trust in Jesus Christ stand before an open door, with free and open access to God, and with their sins atoned for by His blood...that access to God makes a most important impact on how we should think and live...[through the work of Christ]. We possess what the Old Testament saints did not, namely, the right to enter through the holy place and into the presence of God...Jesus lives forever to secure this access...Christ's work as priest and as sacrifice has produced a new situation that did not exist before, but will exist forever as He reigns eternally in heaven...the One who opened and secured the way for us into God's presence is there Himself. He is there as our priest, representing us and pleading effectually for our acceptance, securing and sending to us the Holy Spirit so that we are fitted and empowered to be worshippers and priests before His throne. Because our High Priest is there, we can know that we belong there, too, and can thus approach with confidence."⁵

Paul presents four "let us" statements throughout Hebrews. All of these "let us" statements are secured in Christ's work. Therefore, all of Christ's followers have these privileges!

5. Listed below are the four "let us" exhortations along with a summation⁶. After reading them, identify the "practical holiness" in each of them. Is there one (or more) you are struggling to live out? Which one (or more) is being applied in your life/circumstances now?
 - a. Hebrews 4.16 – Prayer
 - b. Hebrews 10.22 – Worship
 - c. Hebrews 10.23 – Non-slip grip of Jesus
 - d. Hebrews 10.24-25 – Lavish loving (or at least as much as we love, and consider, ourselves)

Doctrine: The Will of God~ (Hebrews 10.35-36) "God's plan and purpose for His creation and for each individual. God does whatever He pleases (Psalm 135.6) and desires that all people do His will. Only people fully mature in Christ are able to do God's will consistently (Colossians 4.12). God's will is always good, acceptable, and perfect (Romans 12.2). Doing God's will sustained Jesus for life (John 4.34). Sometimes, however, the will of God leads to suffering (Romans 8.28; James 1.2-4; 1 Peter 3.17), as it did for Jesus (Isaiah 53.10; Matthew 26.39, 42)."

"Christians are to strive to know the will of God for their lives (Psalm 143.10; Ephesians 5.17; Colossians 1.9). Christians are to discern God's will through prayer (Colossians 1.9) and also pray for God's will for the world to be done (Matthew 6.10). Jesus counted those who did God's will as His own family members (Matthew 12.50).

⁴ Hughes, p. 273

⁵ Phillips, pp. 358-359

⁶ Phillips, pp.359-365

They, like Jesus, will live forever (1 John 2.17).”⁷

6. What characteristics do we find of the people listed in the “Hall of Fame” in Hebrews 11? What are their basic demographics? Include clues about their lifestyle, their roles in life, gender, ages, and more. If you are aware of their history, feel free to include such information, providing scripture so that others may later read about them too.

7. Visualize the group of women you see weekly in this study. You are surrounded by members of faith’s Hall of Fame! And you are in it, too! What common attributes do you observe in both the members of the Hebrews Hall of Fame and the members of the Hall of Fame you sit amongst weekly?

Airline attendants require a verbal “Yes” acknowledging what is required of the few passengers who have chosen to sit in the airplane’s emergency exit doors. More than offering longed-for extra leg room, those who sit in these seats may be required to take quick life-saving action on behalf of the many passengers on the plane (which is why I pray for them!). Jesus willfully embraced His God-given purpose and destiny (Psalm 40.6-8; Hebrews 10.5-7). In Christ, we also commit to a life lived at all cost to God’s service.

In 2025, God’s will is as simple as getting up out of bed to serve Him in the routine of breakfast, lunch, and dinner (plus snacks!) However, it can also be as complicated as leaving your homeland to serve Him in a foreign setting. Regardless, the pursuit of God’s will is a daily, minute-to-minute relationship over a large affair. In fact, don’t we find that He does His most effective work in shaping our hearts into His likeness (His will for us!) in the minute moments of irritation and flash-pan agitation?!?

8. List all the roles and responsibilities you have. Through God’s will, how do you see each of them being used to sanctify you (Hebrews 10.10), perfecting you (making you more like Him, Hebrews 10.14), building endurance (Hebrews 10.36), and fortifying bold, confident faith in Christ (Hebrews 10.39)?

Your Scripture-Soaked Prayer:

⁷ Holman Bible Dictionary, p.1673

Lecture Outline:

Aim: True faith is a confident, Christ-exalting faith.

- I. Faith's Object (Hebrews 10) **T1:** Christ is exalted when, by faith, believers draw near to God.
 - a. Where might you be growing weary in your faith and withdrawing from God?
 - b. What do you need to change to instead confidently draw near to God?
- II. Faith's Outcome (Hebrews 11) **T2:** Christ is exalted when, by faith, believers walk in obedience to God's will.
 - a. Which example of faith do you most need to imitate?
 - b. What changes do you need to make to begin or continue to walk in obedient faith to God's will?

Brand, Chad & Mitchell, Eric, *Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary* (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2015) p. 1673

Hughes, R. Kent, *Hebrews: An Anchor for the Soul, Preaching the Word* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2015) pp. 245-382

Phillips, Richard D., *Hebrews, Reformed Expository Commentary* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2006) pp. 332-527