

## STUDIES IN THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS

### STUDY NUMBER TWENTY-FOUR - Hebrews 13:18-25

#### TEXT:

v.18 Be praying for us, for we are certain that we are having a good conscience, desiring to be conducting ourselves commendably in all things.

v.19 And I am urging [you] all the more to do this, in order that I might be restored to you more quickly.

v.20 Now the God of peace, who brought up from the dead the great Shepherd of the sheep through the blood of the eternal covenant, even Jesus our Lord,

v.21 equip you in every good thing to do His will, doing in us that which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

v.22 But I am urging you, brethren, listen willingly to the word of exhortation, for I have written to you briefly.

v.23 Be knowing that our brother Timothy has been released; with whom, if he is coming soon, I shall see you.

v.24 Greet all those who are leading you and all the saints. Those from Italy are greeting you.

v.25 Grace be with you all.

## INTRODUCTION:

(New Cowboy Poetry: A Contemporary Gathering edited by Hal Cannon)

### **THE WHOLE LOAD WADDIE MITCHELL**

In a western town in the days of old,  
'Fore the mines closed down for the lack of gold,  
The folks there seized opportunity  
An' built them a right smart community.  
They built 'em a school where the R's were taught,  
An' they built them a church on a corner lot;  
They painted her white, with a steeple high  
To greet townfolk as they's passin' by.

They had 'em a sheriff, a judge an' a mayor,  
But they needed a preacher to make things square.  
So they sent back East, as was the general rule,  
An' hired one fresh from divinity school.  
When Sunday come he was all decked out  
To preach his sermon, whisper an' shout.  
But when he stepped out to the podium,  
It was all too obvious that no one come

'Cept one old cowboy in a pew back there,  
In his Sunday shirt an' his greased-down hair.  
He sat there quiet, just watched the floor,  
With a 'ccasional glance towards the church's door.  
Time stood still for the longest while,  
Till the preacher coughed an' faked a smile:  
"Guess we could try it again next week."  
But emotion reigned; he could hardly speak.

His demeanor was that of a scolded pup.  
He turned to leave when ol' Jake spoke up:  
"Hold on there, Parson, it taint yer fault,  
An' them thar doors ain't like no vault,  
'Cuz thar ain't locks for to keep folks out;  
An' if you don't preach now, Satan's won the bout.  
Now if I was t' haul out a whole load o' hay,  
An' only one cow showed, she'd get fed that day."

Well, this preachin' man, in the last few days,  
 Found it hard to cope with the western ways.  
 But he figured as how he'd found his call  
 From this profound man with his western drawl.  
 So he fixed his collar an' he stood up straight  
 And commenced to expound on the pearly gates;  
 And he shocked himself at his own recall  
 Of the book he waved, chapter, verse an' all.

It was God Almighty's omnipotent power  
 That he lectured on for near an hour,  
 Then the wages of sin an' the hell's brim fire;  
 An' he didn't weaken an' he didn't tire.  
 He was jumpin' an' screamin' an' poundin' the floor,  
 When he noticed ol' Jake weren't awake anymore.  
 Now, this made him mad, and he stomped to the pew;  
 He shook Jake's shoulder an' he said, "I'm not through."

"You're the one told me 'bout the cow gettin' fed,  
 An' here you're a-actin' like you're home in bed."  
 "You're right there, Preach, 'bout the things I told you;  
 If I'd a load of hay it would still stand true:  
 That cow would get fed, 'tis the cowboy's code--  
 But I wouldn't feed her the whole durn load."

pp. 55-56

### A 2:00 A.M. CALL ROD NELSON

A 2:00 A.M. call is no fun at all  
 For a rancher who needs his rest.  
 "To heck with that thing--just let it ring."  
 Bud wouldn't leave his warm nest.

"But, Bud," Liz cried, "maybe someone has died."  
 Her voice, though uncertain, was warning.  
 "Well, Liz," Bud said, "if anyone's dead,  
 They'll still be dead in the morning!"

p. 77

(Standing Together: Impacting Your Generation by Howard Hendricks)

But God interrupts Ananias with a simple command, "Go!" (9:15). To his credit, Ananias decides to do what he is told, and he goes and lays hands on Saul. He even calls him "brother" (9:17), which shows that he accepted Saul as a true convert. But how would you like that assignment: show up at the hotel room of Mr. Big, look around at all his cronies, then give him a big hug and say, "Welcome to the family, brother!""? It's a sure bet that Ananias was going through a Maalox moment!

p. 28

We are coming now to our FINAL STUDY in the wonderful BOOK OF HEBREWS. What a treasure this book has become to us.

I am reminded of the words of A. W. Tozer:

The only book that should ever be written is one that flows up from the heart, forced out by the inward pressure. When such a work has gestated with any man it is almost certain that it will be written. The man who is thus charged with a message, his book will be to him not only imperative, it will be inevitable.

(source unknown)

(The Message: Psalms by Eugene H. Peterson)

Psalms 12:6

God's words are pure words,  
Pure silver words refined seven times  
In the fires of his word-kiln,

pp. 18-19

The PASSION of the author has been obvious throughout the letter. He is desiring to keep these Hebrew Christians from making the mistake of forsaking the Lord and the wonderful relationship of grace that they presently sustain with Him. There are a number who, because of persecution, are contemplating going back under Judaism.

This book is a CLARION CRY from one who has found his total adequacy in Christ and wants these as well to:

KNOW,

APPRECIATE, and

APPROPRIATE

all they have in the Lord Jesus Christ.

As we come now to chapter 13 we are finding that the author has turned from:

the PRINCIPLES to the PRACTICE.

He is talking about:

LIFE EXPERIENCES and

THE ADEQUACY AND FAITHFULNESS OF THE LORD JESUS in the midst of all of the concerns and circumstances of daily life.

Someone has titled this final section (verses 18-25):

PERSONAL OBLIGATIONS.

Wiersbe says:

**Pray for them** (18-19) When you come to the throne of grace, ask God to make His shepherds faithful and fruitful. Pray that the Great Shepherd will use them to "make you complete in every good work" (vv. 20-21).

**Greet them** (24) You should know your leaders personally and be on good terms with them. Let nothing come between you that could create problems in the fellowship (12: 15).

pp. 822-3

G. Campbell Morgan says:

That intellectual wavering, moreover, resulted largely from the fact that they had not put Christ completely to the test. They were Christians. They were believers. They had turned from the Hebrew form of religion to its ultimate fulfilment in Jesus Christ, but they were unstable. They were remembering the majesty of the old economy with its angelic ministration, and its guidance through Moses and Joshua and Aaron. They were undoubtedly somewhat confused by the apparent simplicity that was in Christ.

p. 137

Thomas says:

The writer whoever he was, desires to be included in their fellowship of prayer. He feels that he can ask for these remembrances before God because of the consciousness of sincerity in his heart and life, and he is all the more anxious that this should be done in order that he may have the unspeakable joy of a speedier fellowship with them on restoration to liberty. Nothing could be more beautiful than this thought of one praying for another as an essential part of true Christian life.

p. 180

Draper says:

The last eight verses of Hebrews comprise a concluding prayer. In that prayer, the writer summarizes the heart of what he has said throughout the epistle. That's just the way God does it. He tells us what we ought to be, and then he enables us to be what we ought to be. He challenges us to allow it to happen in our lives. That's what he does in these verses.  
p. 385

Phillips sets the stage for the study by saying:

It only remains now for the writer to make his concluding remarks. What more can he say? He has roamed the Old Testament for illustrations, examples, and verses to support his warnings and pleas. He has appealed to the conscience, the intellect, the emotions, and the will. He has urged the horrors of apostasy and the bright hopes of heaven. He has balanced the sufferings of his present time against the glory which is to be revealed. All that remains is to draw together a few of the threads and make a few personal remarks.  
p. 218

On Saturday, December 23, Pearl called me at the office and asked if I would run a few errands for her in preparation for our Christmas celebration.

These errands all involved stores in the same shopping area so I thought it would be real easy to make three stops, get out of there, and get back home with great haste.

I made the first stop at Marshall's to pick up the things that she wanted me to pick up there. I made the second stop at the Pet store to pick up a few stocking stuffers for our granddogs and I was on my way to the Drug Emporium when it happened.

I did not realize as I was hastening along that the contours of the sidewalk changed and I stubbed my toe on the curb heading toward the entrance. I fell and hit my hands, my wrists, my knuckles, and my forehead, knocking my glasses off and bending them pretty good but not breaking them.

Several people had seen me fall and came hastening to be sure that I was all right. Even though I was stunned and bleeding, my pride made me say everything was O.K.

The plastic sacks that were carrying the doggy treats and other items both broke and scattered my belongings on the concrete.

On my knees I was trying to gather all of my things together into this broken plastic bag and as soon as I got them retrieved and tried to get to my feet they once again fell all over the cement.

By this time I had started bleeding pretty freely from the wound on my hand and wrist, so I was a mess.

There, on my knees, trying to retrieve my packages once again, a little boy came up and handed me a large empty paper sack. He gave it to me and I said, "Thank you so much." And he turned and walked away.

I have thought a lot about that since. I am sure that when he saw me fall either his parents or he himself emptied the bag of his treasures and came to minister to my need. It was just an empty paper bag but it was Christmas for me. He brought me what I needed in the midst of my difficulty and I will always be thankful for the Christmas of the empty sack.



This is the way the writer to the book of Hebrews feels. He has given sacrificially of himself in his ministry to these people by the written page. Now he bears his heart and shares some of his needs and what he would like them to do for him.

v.18 Be praying for us, for we are certain that we are having a good conscience, desiring to be conducting ourselves commendably in all things.

We are going to see TWO COMMANDS in these final verses.

The first one is here in verse 18 and the second one will be down in verse 22.

#### COMMAND #1:

"BE PRAYING FOR US."

This command tells us that the author has CONFIDENCE that these Hebrew Christians are rightly related to Christ or he certainly would not have asked them to do this for him.

#### Jeremiah 32:17-19

"Ah, Sovereign Lord, you have made the heavens and the earth by your great power and outstretched arm. Nothing is too hard for you. You show love to thousands but bring the punishment for the fathers' sins into the laps of their children after them. O great and powerful God, whose name is the Lord Almighty, great are your purposes and mighty are your deeds. Your eyes are open to all the ways of men; you reward everyone according to his conduct and as his deeds deserve.

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

With that same sense of spiritual humility that led him to use "we" in most of his warning sections, the writer requested the prayers of his readers, and **particularly** that he might **be restored** to them **soon**. His interest in them was personal, and he was eager to see them.  
p. 812

Stedman says:

Every Christian needs enlightenment and empowerment. Life is too big for us to handle alone, too complicated, too highly structured. There are too many deceitful things about it. We are so confused, so easily bewildered. But prayer can cut through these illusions and bring us understanding and perspective.  
p. 243

William Barclay says:

To the absent leader the duty of the congregation is the duty of prayer. It is a Christian duty always to bear our absent loved ones to the throne of God's grace. It is a Christian duty daily to remember before the throne of God's grace all those who bear the responsibility of leadership and of authority. When Mr. Baldwin, as he then was, became Prime Minister of Great Britain, his friends thronged around him to congratulate him. His answer to their congratulations was: "It is not your congratulations I need; it is your prayers."  
p. 229

Lenski says:

The request for prayers needs no comment; but the plural "for us" does. It is not a literary plural, for no careful writer says "we" and "I" in the same sentence as is done here when he is referring only to himself in both instances. Nor does "we" refer to the writer and the leaders mentioned in v. 17. "We"== the writer and his companions.  
p. 492

Lane says:

A sustained concern to resolve the tension between the community and those in a leadership role accounts for the request for prayer and the appearance of self-commendation in v 18.

p. 556

MacArthur says:

The writer of Hebrews apparently was a leader in the church or churches, to whom he was writing, and here asks for the prayer support of those whom he had ministered. Every servant of Christ needs the prayers of the believers he is called to work with. Church leaders are made of the same stuff as those they serve. They have sins, weaknesses, limitations, blind spots, and needs of all sorts, just as everyone else. They both need and deserve the prayers of God's people, without which they cannot be the most effective in His work (cf. James 3:1). God's leaders face temptations that most other believers do not face to the same degree, because Satan knows that, if he can undermine the leaders, many others will go down with them. If he can get them to compromise, to weaken their stand, to lessen their efforts, to become dejected and hopeless, he has caused the work of Christ great damage.

Paul did not hesitate to ask for prayer. "Pray on my behalf, that utterance may be given to me in the opening of my mouth, to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel" (Eph. 6:19).

p. 448

Owen says:

The request for their prayers argues a confidence in their faith and mutual love, without which he would not have requested their prayers.

pp. 279-80

Westcott says:

The Epistle closes with wide-reaching words of personal solicitude and tenderness. The writer asks for the prayers of his readers (18,19) and offers a prayer for them(20,21). He then adds one or two details which shew the closeness of the connexion by which they were bound to him, (22,23) and completes his salutations (24) with a final blessing (25).  
p. 445

Draper says:

This passage gives us the ingredients needed for us to be pleasing to the Lord. The first ingredient we see is prayer.  
p. 386

There is nothing that pleases God more than for his people to pray. Nothing pleases God more than for his people to lift one another up in prayer. How it must break his heart when we substitute criticism for prayer, when we substitute contentiousness and complaining for prayer. There is nothing wrong with our helping one another or criticizing one another in the right spirit. But when these things take the place of our bringing our brethren before God in prayer, it displeases God. He wants us to pray for one another, to lift one another up, to believe in one another. Even though there may not always be agreement, there is a unity of purpose and a common bond of love, partnership, and fellowship that binds us together.  
pp. 386-7

English says:

It is heartening to read this request for prayer upon the part of the writer of this epistle, for himself and for his fellow-workers--"for us." It declares his humility in respect to the saints as a whole. He does not consider himself to be on such a high plane in spiritual experience as not to need the intercession of other men.  
p. 502

Pink says:

"Pray for us" The servants of Christ stand in real and urgent need of the prayers of their people. They are but men themselves, ignorant, weak, and erring, and unless they are granted a double portion of the Spirit they are not equipped for their arduous and honourable calling. They are the ones who bear the brunt of the battle, and are the special objects of Satan's attacks. They are often tempted to compromise, to keep back that which, though unpalatable to them, is most profitable for their hearers. In the face of many disappointments and discouragements, they are apt to grow weary in well doing.

p. 353

DeHaan says:

The last but not least of the fruits of mature Christian experience is prayer (Heb. 13:18). It is not left for the last because it is of minor importance, but because it is most important and must not be forgotten. And if these other graces abound, prayers will be more effective.

p. 202

Richards says:

Even a man who writes on maturity remains in need of support and prayer. He needs to maintain a clear conscience and a passion to live honorably in every way. And he needs the presence and fellowship of others: "I particularly urge you to pray so that I may be restored to you soon."

p. 142

Wiersbe says:

He was unable to visit the readers personally, but he did want their prayer help. It is possible that some of his enemies had lied about him, so he affirms his honesty and integrity.

p. 154

(The Message: Proverbs by Eugene H. Peterson)

Proverb 1

Start with God

Start with God--the first step in learning is bowing  
down to God;  
only fools thumb their noses at such wisdom  
and learning.

p. 9

(The Christian in Complete Armour by William Gurnall)

The worldly person who does not go to his business every morning by way of a prayer closet rarely returns home in the evening to give thanks to God. He begins the day without God and it would be unusual for him to end it with Him.

(July 21)

(Prayer, Praise & Promises: A Daily Walk Through the Psalms by Warren W. Wiersbe)

Remember who God is, the kind of God to whom you are praying. Remember the great and wonderful things He does. He can do the impossible for you today. And remember, He promises to answer.



*These are wonderful encouragements to pray. When you pray, keep them before you. Contemplate God's character. Remember what He has done in your life. Recount His faithfulness to you. And be sure to claim the promises of the Bible.*

Day 214

(99-F-24)

"BE PRAYING FOR US, FOR WE ARE CERTAIN THAT WE ARE HAVING A GOOD CONSCIENCE, DESIRING TO BE CONDUCTING OURSELVES COMMENDABLY IN ALL THINGS."

With this COMMAND he also gives a REASON.

His REASON for asking them to pray for them is given in the FINAL PHRASE:

"FOR WE ARE CERTAIN THAT WE ARE HAVING A GOOD CONSCIENCE, DESIRING TO BE CONDUCTING OURSELVES COMMENDABLY IN ALL THINGS."

The REASON is TWO-FOLD. It has to do with the:

1. "CONSCIENCE" and
2. "CONDUCT."

It has to do with the:

MANNER OF LIFE and  
MOTIVATION.

Let us talk about the phrase:

"FOR WE ARE CERTAIN THAT WE ARE HAVING A GOOD CONSCIENCE."

Kistemaker says:

The writer is trying to say to the readers that he is aware of their uneasiness about his instruction and exhortations, but he himself bears no ill will. He can understand that some of the readers are not pleased with abolishing Levitical precepts because of the tradition of the fathers. But in his own heart the writer is persuaded that his conscience is clear. He has dedicated himself to the service of the Lord and therefore he desires to live honorably in

every respect. He wants to help the readers and be of service to them as a faithful pastor.  
p. 428



Delitzsch says:

His asking for their prayers is grounded on the joyfulness of conscience which pervaded himself and those of a like spirit with him.  
p. 396

A good conscience . . . is one which testifies to the agreement of our moral conduct with God's law written in our hearts, and with His revealed will--a conscience which, so far from accusing us, bids us take comfort, as regards God, on the ground of His mercy, and as regards human judgment, on the ground of our just conduct . . .  
p. 396

Hewitt says:

Two considerations are advanced to support his request. First there is the purity of his life and conduct; the very fact that such a statement was necessary suggests that some doubt of this existed in the minds of the readers. Secondly he mentions his desire to revisit them; this suggests that at some former period the author had visited the readers and was known to them.  
p. 215

Pink says:

As we pointed out previously, the conscience is that faculty with which the Creator has endowed man, whereby he is capable of judging his state and actions with respect to the judgment of God. Its office is twofold: to reveal sin to us, and to discover our duty, according to the light shining into it.  
p. 355

English says:

He was persuaded that he and his companions had a right to ask for prayer; for they knew that, insofar as they were aware, they were living within the will of God and were desirous only to continue thus. That is the force of this explanatory expression. And what a wonderful thing it would be if we could have such persuasion about ourselves when we ask others to pray for us, or if we could have like assurance about our fellow-Christians who solicit our prayers!  
p. 503

Phillips says:

Wrong motives and sin in the life are both hindrances to prayer. The writer knew that his life was clean and that he harbored no hindrances to prayer. He had a good conscience. Nothing hinders prayer as much as dishonesty.  
p. 218

J. Vernon McGee says:

It is wonderful to pillow your head at night with a good conscience, a conscience enlightened by the Word of God. A great many people are not walking in the light. If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John 1:6, 7).  
p. 615

Lange quotes Starke who says:

A good conscience is a great comfort, and gives us a good confidence before God and men; before God, to whom we are permitted filially to turn in all need and anxiety; before men, that we need not be shamefaced, but may be able to encounter with joyfulness the eyes of every man.  
p. 220

## NOT GETTING OLDER JUST GETTING BETTER?

Ted: "Your wife used to be terribly nervous. Now she is very calm and collected. What happened?"

Mike: "The doctor told her that nervousness was a usual symptom of advancing age."

A good conscience is a soft pillow.

<Unknown>

Harken to the warnings of conscience, if you would not feel its wounds.

<Unknown>

I value people with a conscience. It's like a beeper from God.

Robert Orben

There's no substitute for conscience. Unless, of course, it's witnesses.

Franklin P. Jones

Conscience: the inner voice which warns us that someone may be looking.

H.L. Mencken

(From InfoSearch 3.51)

Bruce says:

The good conscience of which he speaks is probably the fruit of a sense of duty done, a responsibility well discharged. Like Paul he could say: "our conscience assures us that in our dealings with our fellow-men, and above all in our dealings with you, our conduct has been governed by a devout and godly sincerity, by the grace of God and not by worldly wisdom. . . . In order that our service may not be brought into discredit, we avoid giving offence in anything"

(2 Cor. 2:12; 6:3, NEB).

p. 386

Hughes says:

From the necessity of obedience the author naturally switches to the command to pray: "Pray for us. We are sure that we have a clear conscience and desire to live honorably in every way" (v. 18). The writer's conscience is clear because he has performed well in his spiritual duties toward his friends. His conscience has made him confident toward both men and God. Similarly, Paul could write, "Now this is our boast: Our conscience testifies that we have conducted ourselves in the world, and especially in our relations with you, in the holiness and sincerity that are from God" (2 Corinthians 1:12). And, "By setting forth the truth plainly we commend ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God" (2 Corinthians 4:2). What a boon a clear conscience is! When the conscience is clear, one can ask wholeheartedly for the prayers of all the saints.  
p. 238

Charles Haddon Spurgeon, the peerless Victorian preacher of London, told his vast congregation as he concluded his sermon delivered May 27, 1855:

My people! shall I ever lose your prayers? Will ye ever cease supplications? . . . Will ye then ever cease to pray? I fear ye have not uttered so many prayers this morning as ye should have done; I fear there has not been so much earnest devotion as might have been poured forth. For my own part, I have not felt the wondrous power I sometimes experience.<sup>9</sup>

p. 239

"BE PRAYING FOR US, FOR WE ARE CERTAIN THAT WE ARE HAVING A GOOD CONSCIENCE, DESIRING TO BE CONDUCTING OURSELVES COMMENDABLY IN ALL THINGS."

A. T. Robertson says this word could be translated:

Nobly, honourably. Apparently the writer is conscious that unworthy motives have been attributed to him . . .  
p. 450

Montefiore in Black's commentary says:

There is a suggestion that our author's intentions may have been misunderstood, or at least open to misunderstanding, for he adds to his request a personal assurance about himself.  
p. 249

Lane says:

In the light of this background, the assurance of a "clear conscience" is all the more remarkable. In the dynamic context of community relationships, the assertion of a clear conscience is a particular form of protection against slander and an affirmation of credibility. It signifies "we have a clear conscience" in the specific matter of our conduct toward you. The clause expresses a joyful sense of being in the will of God (cf. 1 Clem. 45:7: the Most High is the defender and protector of those who serve his excellent name with a pure conscience").  
p. 557

Lenski says:

As far as we are able to say, this assurance about a good conscience bears on the contents of this epistle. Some of its warnings are sharp, plain language; the readers are to know that conscience compels the writer to speak to them in such a way. The men who are associated with him approve every word with a like good conscience.  
p. 492

Acts 24:16

In view of this, I also do my best to maintain always a blameless conscience both before God and before men.

1 Thessalonians 2:4

but just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, so we speak, not as pleasing men but God, who examines our hearts.

1 Thessalonians 2:9, 10

For you recall, brethren, our labor and hardship, how working night and day so as not to be a burden to any of you, we proclaimed to you the gospel of God. You are witnesses, and so is God, how devoutly and uprightly and blamelessly we behaved toward you believers;

1 Timothy 1:5

But the goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith.

1 Timothy 1:19

keeping faith and a good conscience, which some have rejected and suffered shipwreck in regard to their faith.

1 Timothy 3:9

but holding to the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience.

1 Timothy 4:2

by means of the hypocrisy of liars seared in their own conscience as with a branding iron,

(A Passion for Faithfulness: Wisdom From the Book of Nehemiah by J.I. Packer)

The story reminds us that even when God's people are praying just the right prayer about the concerns that God himself has laid on their hearts, he still may keep them waiting, because the time he appoints for prayer-answering action is often not as soon as was hoped. So persistence in prayer, proving our seriousness of purpose as we keep our requests before the throne day after day, becomes a vital lesson that all God's people in every age need to learn.

p. 63

(Prayer, Praise & Promises: A Daily Walk Through the Psalms by Warren W. Wiersbe)

We want to talk to God and tell Him about all of our problems. He wants to talk to us and tell us about all of His promises.

(Day 240)

(The Pleasures of God by John Piper)

Dwight L. Moody, the famous nineteenth century evangelist, was preaching once to a crowded meeting of children in Edinburgh, Scotland. To get their attention he posed a question: "What is prayer?"--expecting to answer the question himself. But to his amazement scores of little hands went up all over the hall. So Moody asked one young fellow to give his answer. The boy spoke out with clear and confident tones, "Prayer is an offering up of our desires unto God for things agreeable to His will, in the name of Christ, with confession of our sins and thankful acknowledgment of His mercies." Moody's amazed response was, "Thank God, my boy, that you were born in Scotland!"

p. 211

(The Pleasures of God by John Piper)

It is as though God has a favorite food. When we pray, he smells the aroma from the kitchen as you prepare his special dish. When God hungers for some special satisfaction, he seeks out a prayer to answer. Our prayer is the sweet aroma from the kitchen ascending up into the King's chambers making him hungry for the meal. But the actual enjoyment of the meal is his own glorious work in answering our prayer. The food of God is to answer our prayers. The most wonderful thing about the Bible is that it reveals a God who satisfies his appetite for joy by answering prayers. He has no deficiency in himself that he needs to fill up, so he gets his satisfaction by magnifying the glory of his riches by filling up the deficiencies of people who pray.

p. 223

Prayer is the walkie talkie on the battle-field of the world. It calls on God for courage (Ephesians 6:19). It calls in for troop deployment and target location (Acts 13:1-3). It calls in for protection and air cover (Matthew 6:13; Luke 21:36). It calls in for fire power to blast open a way for the Word (Colossians 4:3). It calls in for the miracle of healing for the wounded soldiers (James 5:16). It calls in for supplies for the forces (Matthew 6:11; Philippians 4:6). And it calls in for needed reinforcements (Matthew 9:38). This is the place of prayer--on the battlefield of the world. It is a wartime walkie talkie for spiritual warfare, not a domestic intercom to increase the comforts of the saints. And one of the reasons it malfunctions in the hands of so many Christian soldiers is that they have gone AWOL.

pp. 231-2



(Seeing Through: Reflecting God's Light in a Dark World by David Roper)

The world has yet to see what God will do through you and me.

Our task is to pray and wait and see what that will be. God will not allow you to waste your life. He will tell you what to do, and he will see to it that you bear fruit for him.

We're not called upon to originate, initiate, make far-reaching plans or execute them, but rather by the power of prayer to put ourselves into God's hands. "So shall you build to good and lasting purpose," F. B. Meyer said.  
p. 51

I don't know what God will do with you and me. But he knows. Our task is to pray and wait on him until he puts us to his intended use. It's up to him to get us to the right place at the right time.

That means that we must hold our plans loosely, giving God the right to revise them or replace them entirely, permitting him to advise, correct, and prompt us. We can never know in prospect what God will do with us--his will is always best seen in retrospect--but when the time comes to know, we will know. I cannot tell you how you will know, but you will know. "God will show you," George MacDonald said, "Do not fear the how."

Life gets exciting when we give God permission to chart our course. He takes us where others have never gone before and where we've never thought we could go. He leads us beyond anything we could ever ask or think, beyond our wildest dreams. He takes the smallest events and turns them into momentous occasions.

p. 49

Many years ago I decided to do that very thing. I was fed up with empty words and pharisaical phrases. In my search for new meaning, I came across this brief description of prayer, which I set on my desk and carried in the front of my Bible for years. I cannot locate the book from which it was taken, but I do know the author, a seventeenth-century Roman Catholic Frenchman named Francois Fenelon. Although written centuries ago, it has an undeniable ring of relevance:

Tell God all that is in your heart, as one unloads one's heart, its pleasures and its pains, to a dear friend. Tell Him your troubles, that He may comfort you; tell Him your joys, that He may sober them; tell Him your longings, that He may purify them; tell Him your dislikes, that He may help you to conquer them, talk to Him of your temptations, that He may shield you from them; show Him the wounds of your heart, that He may heal them; lay bare your indifference to good, your depraved tastes for evil, your instability. Tell Him how self-love makes you unjust to others, how vanity tempts you to be insincere, how pride disguises you to yourself and to others.

If you thus pour out all your weaknesses, needs, troubles, there will be no lack of what to say. You will never exhaust the subject. It is continually being renewed. People who have no secrets from each other never want for subjects of conversation. They do not weigh their words, for there is nothing to be held back, neither do they seek for something to say. They talk out of the abundance of the heart, without consideration they say just what they think. Blessed are they who attain to such familiar, unreserved intercourse with God.

--*Strengthening Your Grip*, Charles Swindoll

### Reach Heaven

A Western rancher had asked the district superintendent to have a pastor assigned to his community.

"How big a man do you want?" asked the superintendent.

"Well, Elder," the wiry, tanned man replied, "we're not overly particular, but when he's on his knees we'd like to have him reach heaven."

(From Parson's Bible Illustrator 1.0)

Not long ago I saw a neat little sign in a principal's office that stated, "In the event of nuclear attack, fire, or earthquake, the ban on prayer is temporarily lifted."

### Revival--If?

If all the sleeping folk will wake up,  
 If all the lukewarm folk will fire up,  
 If all the dishonest folk will confess up,  
 If all the disgruntled folk will cheer up,  
 If all the depressed folk will cheer up,  
 If all the estranged folk will make up,  
 If all the gossipers will shut up,  
 If all true soldiers will stand up,  
 If all the dry bones will shake up,  
 If all the church members will pray up . . .  
     Then we can have a revival!

--R. G. Lee

I heard a story the other day of a man who encountered a bit of trouble while flying his little airplane. He called the control tower and said, "Pilot to tower, I'm 300 miles from the airport, six hundred feet above the ground, and I'm out of fuel. I am descending rapidly. Please advise. Over." "Tower to pilot," the dispatcher began, "Repeat after me: 'Our Father Who art in heaven . . .'"

(From Parson's Bible Illustrator 1.0)

### The Man in the Glass

When you get what you want in your struggle for self  
 And the world makes you king for a day,  
 Just go to a mirror and look at yourself,  
 And see what THAT man has to say.  
 For it isn't your father or mother or wife  
 Who judgment upon you must pass;  
 The fellow whose verdict counts most in your life  
 Is the one staring back from the glass.  
 Some people may think you a straight-shootin' chum  
 And call you a wonderful guy,  
 But the man in the glass says you're only a bum  
 If you can't look him straight in the eye.  
 He's the fellow to please, never mind all the rest  
 For he's with you clear up to the end,  
 And you've passed your most dangerous, difficult test  
 If the man in the glass is your friend.  
 You may fool the whole world down the pathway of years  
 And get pats on the back as you pass,  
 But your final reward will be heartaches and tears  
 If you've cheated the man in the glass.

(From Parson's Bible Illustrator 1.0)

So the author COMMANDS them to:

"BE PRAYING FOR [THEM]."

The REASON he feels free about doing this is because:

"WE ARE CERTAIN THAT WE ARE HAVING A GOOD  
 CONSCIENCE, DESIRING TO BE CONDUCTING OURSELVES  
 COMMENDABLY IN ALL THINGS."

Their CONSCIENCE and their CONDUCT is:

CLEAR and COMMENDABLE.

Therefore they ask these Hebrew saints to remember them in prayer.

v.19 And I am urging [you] all the more to do this, in order that I might be restored to you more quickly.

"AND I AM URGING [YOU] ALL THE MORE."

He is putting pressure on them "TO DO THIS," that is, to be praying for them.

The PURPOSE OF THE PRAYER is in the FINAL PHRASE of the verse:

"IN ORDER THAT I MIGHT BE RESTORED TO YOU MORE QUICKLY."

Westcott says:

The expression does not necessarily imply a state of imprisonment, which is in fact excluded by the language of v. 23, since the purpose thus declared presupposes, so far, freedom of action. All that the word requires is that the writer should have been kept from the Hebrews (in one sense) against his will. It may have been by illness.  
p. 447

Hebrews 12:3

For consider Him who has endured such hostility by sinners against Himself, in order that you do not grow weary, giving out in your souls.

1 Thessalonians 2:18

For we wanted to come to you--I, Paul, more than once--and yet Satan thwarted us.

Hebrews 13:3

Be constantly mindful of the prisoners, as [though you were] fellow-prisoners, and those who are suffering ill-treatment, since you yourselves also are being in the body.

The writer knows that there is POWER IN PRAYER.

I am reminded of the experience that the early church had in:

Acts 12:1-16

Now about that time Herod the king laid hands on some who belonged to the church, in order to mistreat them. And he had James the brother of John put to death with a sword. And when he saw that it pleased the Jews, he proceeded to arrest Peter also. Now it was during the days of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. And when he had seized him, he put him in prison, delivering him to four squads of soldiers to guard him, intending after the Passover to bring him out before the people. So Peter was kept in the prison, but prayer for him was being made fervently by the church to God. And on the very night when Herod was about to bring him forward, Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains; and guards in front of the door were watching over the prison. And behold, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared, and a light shone in the cell; and he struck Peter's side and roused him, saying, "Get up quickly." And his chains fell off his hands. And the angel said to him, "Gird yourself and put on your sandals." And he did so. And he said to him, "Wrap your cloak around you and follow me." And he went out and continued to follow, and he did not know that what was being done by the angel was real, but thought he was seeing a vision. And when they had passed the first and second guard, they came to the iron gate that leads into the city, which opened for them by itself; and they went out and went along one street; and immediately the angel departed from him. And when Peter came to himself, he said, "Now I know for sure that the Lord has sent forth His angel and rescued me from the hand of Herod and from all that the Jewish people were expecting." And when he realized this, he went to the house of Mary, the mother of John who was also called Mark, where many were gathered together and were praying. And when he knocked at the door of the gate, a servant-girl named Rhoda came to answer. And when she recognized Peter's voice, because of her joy she did not open the gate, but ran in and announced that Peter was standing in front of the gate. And they said to her, "You are out of your mind!" But she kept insisting that it was so. And they kept saying, "It is his angel." But Peter continued knocking; and when they had opened the door, they saw him and were amazed.

v.20 Now the God of peace, who brought up from the dead the great Shepherd of the sheep through the blood of the eternal covenant, even Jesus our Lord,

The author now comes to the:

POINT OF BENEDICTION.

He has asked them to PRAY FOR HIM and now HE IS PRAYING FOR THEM.

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

In a lovely benediction which captures a number of the major themes of the epistle (e.g., **peace, blood, covenant, Resurrection, Shepherd, equip**), the writer expressed confidence in **our Lord Jesus** as the **Great Shepherd** of New-Covenant people, through whom God was able to effect His will (equip [equals] "to prepare, make ready for use"; cf. Eph. 4:12) in the readers and in himself. This indeed is what he prayed for his readers.  
p. 812

"NOW THE GOD OF PEACE."

WHAT A WONDERFUL TITLE TO GIVE TO OUR HEAVENLY FATHER.

HE HAS EVERYTHING UNDER CONTROL!

The author has mentioned "PEACE" back up in chapter 12:14:

"Be pursuing peace with all men, and the sanctification without which no one will see the Lord.



He is the God of peace because He provides the foundation for peace both on the HORIZONTAL and VERTICAL.

He provides peace for:

us at the point of ETERNAL SALVATION. This points to the PAST for we who are believers.

the PRESENT by continually working sanctification in our lives as the relationship deepens.

He will one day in the future provide the peace of ultimate glorification when we shall be like him for we shall see him as he is.

Yes, He is the "GOD OF PEACE" and I am experiencing His peace this day knowing of what He has done in the past to provide my eternal salvation. And to know what he is doing in His present good work to make me more like His Son in sanctification. And knowing with a certainty that no matter what the future holds, He holds the future and I will soon be living in a glorified body in His presence forever.

I AM SO GLAD THAT I AM IN HIS INTENSIVE CARE. HE MONITORS MY EVERY MOVE.

Westcott says:

The Apostle has first asked for the prayers of his readers, and then he anticipates their answer by the outpouring of his own petitions in their behalf.

p. 447

Westcott, speaking of "THE GOD OF PEACE," says further:

The aspects under which God is described as 'the God of peace' and the author of the exaltation of Christ, correspond with the trials of the Hebrews. They were in a crisis of conflict within and without. They were tempted to

separate themselves from those who were their true leaders under the presence of unexpected afflictions (comp. xii. II); and they were tempted also to question the power of Christ and the efficacy of the Covenant made through Him.  
p. 447

Lenski says:

As the writer asks for the prayers of his readers, so he offers prayer for them.  
p. 493

He says further:

In this one sentence the writer sums up all that his epistle contains and puts it into the form of a fervent prayer-wish.  
p. 493

Lane says:

The "peace" of God will be appropriated through the obedience and submission of the community to their leaders (13:17) . . .  
p. 560

A. T. Robertson, speaking of "THE GOD OF PEACE," says:

God is the author and giver of peace, a Pauline phrase (6 times) as in 1 Thess. 5:23.  
p. 450

### 1 Thessalonians 5:23

Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Hughes says:

The book of Hebrews closes with one of the most exquisite and soaring of all Scriptural benedictions. Multiple millions of worshipers have been dismissed with the pastor's upraised hand and the sonorous words that begin, "May the God of peace . . ."  
p. 242

Bruce says:

This prayer has the general structure of a collect<sup>114</sup> in the third person, consisting of (a) the invocation ("Now may the God of peace"), (b) an adjective clause setting forth the ground on which the following petition is based ("who . . . brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus . . ."), (c) the main petition ("fit you to do his will in everything that is good"), (d) a subsidiary petition ("as he brings to pass in us whatever gives him pleasure"), (e) a pleading of the mediatorial merit of Christ ("through Jesus Christ"), (f) a doxology ("to whom be the glory for ever and ever"), and (g) the "Amen."  
p. 387

Barclay says:

Even in the most troublous and distressing situation, God can bring peace to men's souls. In any fellowship where there is division it is because men have forgotten God and only the memory of God's presence can bring back the lost peace.  
pp. 229-30

Thomas says:

In this closing prayer of doxology the entire Epistle is summed up, and on this account it calls for the closest possible attention . . .  
p. 181

Macaulay says:

"OUR GOD is a consuming fire," declares the last verse of chapter twelve, yet here He is designated "the God of peace" (Heb 13:20a). There He is the Judge, shaking earth and heaven with His terror. Here He is the God of our salvation, meeting our alienation with a great reconciliation, providing "peace . . . [that] passeth all understanding" (Phil 4:7) for our restless hearts. p. 258

### REST EASY

An elderly British minister had reached the end of his earthly journey. On the morning of what would become his last day, a friend remarked to him, "They tell me you did not sleep very well last night." "It's true," replied the aged Christian, "I did not sleep very well, but I rested gloriously; for I put my head down on three pillows--the pillow of infinite wisdom, the pillow of infinite power, and the pillow of infinite love. I had a beautiful night!"

### GOD'S QUIETING PEACE

Several years ago a submarine was being tested and had to remain submerged for many hours. When it returned to the harbor, the captain was asked, "How did the terrible storm last night affect you?" The officer looked at him in surprise and exclaimed, "Storm? We didn't even know there was one!" The sub had been so far beneath the surface that it had reached the area known to sailors as "the cushion of the sea." Although the ocean may be whipped into huge waves by high winds, the waters below are never stirred. A T. Pierson said, "The peace of God is that eternal calm which lies far too deep in the praying, trusting soul to be reached by any external disturbances."

(From InfoSearch 3.51)

## THE PEACE-FILLED LIFE

When H. B. Macartney, an Australian pastor, visited Hudson Taylor in China, he was amazed at the missionary's serenity in spite of his many burdens and his busy schedule. Macartney finally mustered up the courage to say, "You are occupied with millions, I with tens. Your letters are pressingly important, mine of comparatively little value. Yet I am worried and distressed while you are always calm. Tell me, what makes the difference?" Taylor replied, "I could not possibly get through the work I have to do without the peace of God which passes all understanding keeping my heart and mind." Macartney later wrote, "He was in God all the time, and God was in him. It was the true abiding spoken of in John 15."

## A DOUBLE PROMISE

In 1555, Nicholas Ridley was burned at the stake because of his witness for Christ. On the night before Ridley's execution, his brother offered to remain with him in the prison chamber to be of assistance and comfort. Nicholas declined the offer and replied that he meant to go to bed and sleep as quietly as ever he did in his life. Because he knew the peace of God, he could rest in the strength of the everlasting arms of his Lord to meet his need. So can we! God gives us strength for those times when we are weak and fearful.

(From InfoSearch 3.51)

## Peace from Above

Whenever I am troubled  
 and lost in deep despair,  
 I bundle all my troubles up  
 and go to God in prayer,  
 I tell Him I am heartsick  
 and lost and lonely too,  
 That I am deeply burdened  
 and don't know what to do.  
 But I know He stilled the tempest  
 and calmed the angry sea,  
 And I humble ask if in His love  
 He'll do the same for me.  
 Then I just keep quiet  
 and think of thoughts of peace,  
 And as I abide in stillness  
 my restless murmurings cease.

--Helen Steiner Rice

(From Parson's Bible Illustrator 1.0)

### Colossians 1:20

and through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace  
 through the blood of His cross; through Him, I say, whether things on  
 earth or things in heaven.

G. Campbell Morgan reminds us:

When Paul was writing to the Corinthians he wrote a tremendous sentence. I am content with the declaration, using Paul's words. "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself." The incarnation, God manifest; and God manifest for one purpose, that through the manifestation in all its completeness, He would reconcile the world to Himself.  
 p. 189

Owen says:

He is the Author of peace, He Purposed, designed, and prepared it, in the eternal counsels of His own will; and He communicates peace by Jesus Christ.

p. 280

Richards says:

The writer adds a benediction that stands as one of the greatest masterpieces of Scripture. And it is one of the great promises for us.

p. 142

Wiersbe says:

This benediction seems to gather together the major themes of Hebrews: peace, the resurrected Christ, the blood, the covenant, spiritual perfection (maturity) God's work in the believer.

p. 155

Pink says:

Viewing our text in the light of its immediate context, we perceive a blessed exemplification of the fact that the apostle practised what he preached, for what he had required from his readers he is here seen doing for them. In vv. 18, 19 he had besought the prayers of the Hebrews on *his* behalf, and now we find him supplicating the Throne of Grace *on their* behalf.

p. 363

"NOW THE GOD OF PEACE, WHO BROUGHT UP FROM THE DEAD."

Here is the ONLY MENTION of the RESURRECTION in the Epistle.

THE RESURRECTION IS THE FATHER'S STAMP OF APPROVAL ON THE WORK OF THE SON.





English says:

"That brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus"--this is the first direct allusion to Christ's resurrection in the epistle, by the way. The peace that we have with God and know in the daily walk is as a result of Christ's substitutionary sacrifice for us. God has declared His satisfaction with the work of His Son by raising Him from among the dead. This is the pledge that God's promises of salvation, power, resurrection, and future glory will not fail--He "brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus."  
p. 504

Hewitt says:

Frequent references have been made in the Epistle to the ascension and glorification of Christ, but *brought again from the dead* is the only direct allusion to His resurrection. The fact that Christ was raised by God in virtue of the eternal covenant is proof that His redeeming work had been accepted and that salvation for His people is assured. In other words, all that is said about Christ in this Epistle is genuine, for God has set His seal upon it.  
p. 216

Yes, He is "THE GOD OF PEACE, WHO BROUGHT UP FROM THE DEAD" the Lord Jesus Christ and thus by that act provides:

REDEMPTION,

RECONCILIATION, and

RELATIONSHIP.

He provides REDEMPTION in "having made peace through the blood of His cross" (Colossians 1:20).

## HE HAS PROVIDED RECONCILIATION.

### Colossians 1:20

and through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, I say, whether things on earth or things in heaven.

### Romans 5:1

Therefore having been made right with God we are having peace.

As a result of REDEMPTION and RECONCILIATION we now have RELATIONSHIP.

### Isaiah 26:3 (KJV)

Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: . . .

### Isaiah 32:17 (KJV)

And the work of righteousness shall be peace; . . .

Kistemaker says:

The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews mentions the resurrection of Jesus once, in the benediction. Indirectly he includes this doctrine when he introduces the topic of Christ's exaltation at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven (1:3).

p. 430

Thomas says:

This is the only place in the Epistle where Christ's resurrection is named. The typical character of the Jewish tabernacle had no place for the resurrection, as distinct from the ascension, and *the thought as we* have seen passes straight from the death on Calvary to our Lord's appearance in heaven on our behalf. But here where the reference is clearly to the power a God in relation to our life, the resurrection is fitly mentioned. God who brought Christ from the dead is about to bring us.  
p. 181-2

Lane says the same thing:

This is the only direct reference in the homily to the resurrection of Jesus. What is implicit elsewhere (e.g., 7:16, 24) is here made explicit. The resurrection of Jesus demonstrates God's decisive intervention by which he acknowledged and ratified the cross of Christ as the means of the redemption of the human family . . .  
p. 561

"NOW THE GOD OF PEACE, WHO BROUGHT UP FROM THE DEAD THE GREAT SHEPHERD OF THE SHEEP."

### Psalm 23

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not be in want.  
He makes me lie down in green pastures,  
    he leads me beside quiet waters,  
    he restores my soul.  
He guides me in paths of righteousness  
    for his name's sake.  
Even though I walk  
    through the valley of the shadow of death,  
I will fear no evil,  
    for you are with me;  
    your rod and your staff,  
    they comfort me.  
You prepare a table before me  
    in the presence of my enemies.  
You anoint my head with oil;  
    my cup overflows.

Surely goodness and love will follow me  
all the days of my life,  
and I will dwell in the house of the Lord  
forever.

John 10:11

"I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep.

John 10:14

"I am the good shepherd; and I know My own, and My own know Me,

1 Peter 5:4

And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.

Numbers 27:15-17

Moses said to the Lord, "May the Lord, the God of the spirits of all mankind, appoint a man over this community to go out and come in before them, one who will lead them out and bring them in, so the Lord's people will not be like sheep without a shepherd."

Ezekiel 34:15, 16

I myself will tend my sheep and have them lie down, declares the Sovereign Lord. I will search for the lost and bring back the strays. I will bind up the injured and strengthen the weak, but the sleek and the strong I will destroy. I will shepherd the flock with justice.

Luke 15:3-7

And He told them this parable, saying, "What man among you, if he has a hundred sheep and has lost one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the open pasture, and go after the one which is lost, until he finds it? And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing. And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and his neighbors, saying to them, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost!' I tell you that in the same way, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents, than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.

Isaiah 53:6

We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

Christ is presented as:

THE GOOD SHEPHERD who gives His life for His sheep (Psalm 22),

THE GREAT SHEPHERD who cares for His sheep (Psalm 23), and

THE CHIEF SHEPHERD who is coming for His sheep (Psalm 24).

Using this title, the author is showing the Hebrew Christians GOD'S RELATIONSHIP TO THEM IN THEIR NEED.

Thomas says:

He is here called "the great shepherd." It is one of the three passages where He is spoken of under this figure. He is "the good shepherd" who died (John 10:14), "the great shepherd" who rose (Heb. 13:20), and "the chief shepherd" who will come again (I Pet. 5:4). This is what God has done.

p. 182

J. Vernon McGee says much the same thing:

"That great shepherd of the sheep." The Lord Jesus is here called the Great Shepherd. In Psalm 22 He is presented as the Good Shepherd, and in John 10:11 He calls Himself the Good Shepherd. As the Good Shepherd He gave His life for the sheep. As the Great Shepherd He is the one who perfects the sheep and builds them up. We see that here and also in Psalm 23. He leads us beside the still waters and leads us to the place where the grass is good and green and very tender, that is, to the Word of God. Then in Psalm 24 He is presented as the Chief Shepherd. "And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away" (1 Pet. 5:4). He died in the past as the Good Shepherd; He is the Great Shepherd today; and He is coming some day as the Chief Shepherd for His sheep. He started out with one hundred sheep, and do you know how many sheep He is going to have with Him in heaven? Ninety-nine? No. He is going to have all one hundred sheep with him there. pp. 615-16

Stedman says:

With Him is linked the Lord Jesus, the Great Shepherd of the sheep. I like that phrase, *the great shepherd of the sheep*. I came from Montana and know a good deal about sheep. If you are from the city you have probably learned about sheep from "Mary had a little lamb" and "Little Bo Peep." You think, therefore, that their fleece is as white as snow, and that if you leave them alone they'll come home, wagging their tails behind them. But I can assure you it is all a lie; it is not true!

Sheep are the most helpless of creatures. There are two outstanding characteristics of sheep: they have no wisdom, and they have no weapons. They are forever running off and getting lost and unable to find their way back, and if anything attacks them they are utterly helpless to defend themselves. That is why they need a shepherd. pp. 244-5



"NOW THE GOD OF PEACE, WHO BROUGHT UP FROM THE DEAD THE GREAT SHEPHERD OF THE SHEEP THROUGH THE BLOOD OF THE ETERNAL COVENANT."

Lane says:

The writer understands that Jesus died on the cross as a covenant sacrifice and that he entered into the heavenly sanctuary and there sprinkled his own blood, prior to the resurrection. The resurrection of Jesus occurred by virtue of the sprinkling of the blood in the heavenly sanctuary and the establishment of the new covenant.

p. 563

Phillips says:

The assurance of the true believer's security is based on the blood of the eternal covenant. The writer cannot forget the shifting shadows in the background, those wavering Hebrews who were professing Christianity, but who, at heart, preferred imagined security of the fold of Judaism to the real security divided by the Good Shepherd. A fold without a shepherd is, after all, a desolate and very unsafe place.

p. 220

Owen makes the distinction by saying:

This covenant is called "everlasting," in opposition to the covenant made at Sinai. The blood of this covenant is the blood of Christ Himself; it was a sacrifice unto God, and by it the covenant was confirmed. By the blood of Christ, an end was put unto the old covenant with all its services and promises; atonement was made for sin, the Church was sanctified or dedicated to God, the law was fulfilled, the threatenings of death executed, eternal redemption obtained, the promises of the covenant confirmed, and by one offering they who were sanctified are perfected for ever.

p. 281

Wuest says:

It was within the sphere of the eternal covenant that Messiah, having died for sinful man, was raised up from among those who are dead. He could not be a high priest after the order of Melchisedec if He were not raised from the dead. Sinful man needs a living Priest to give life to the believing sinner, not a dead priest merely to pay for his sins. Thus, it was provided within the New Testament that the priest who offered Himself for sacrifice, would be raised from the dead.

p. 242

Hughes says:

And this covenant, this promise, is eternal. It will never be replaced by another as it once replaced the Old Covenant. It was established by the blood of the ultimate Lamb of God, whose atoning death was ratified and verified by his resurrection.

p. 244

Montefiore in Black's commentary says:

The new **covenant** is superior to Moses' in as much as it is **eternal**. . .

p. 251

#### Jeremiah 32:40

I will make an everlasting covenant with them: I will never stop doing good to them, and I will inspire them to fear me, so that they will never turn away from me.

1 Thessalonians 5:24

Faithful is He who calls you, and He also will bring it to pass.

"NOW THE GOD OF PEACE, WHO BROUGHT UP FROM THE DEAD THE GREAT SHEPHERD OF THE SHEEP THROUGH THE BLOOD OF THE ETERNAL COVENANT, EVEN JESUS OUR LORD."

This "ETERNAL COVENANT" is the NEW COVENANT.

IT HAS BEEN SIGNED IN THE BLOOD OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST.

The FOCUS is on the:

QUALITY OF THIS COVENANT as opposed to the  
MOSAIC COVENANT.

This one is an "ETERNAL COVENANT."

THE OLD COVENANT WAS MERELY TEMPORARY.

"NOW THE GOD OF PEACE, WHO BROUGHT UP FROM THE DEAD THE GREAT SHEPHERD OF THE SHEEP THROUGH THE BLOOD OF THE ETERNAL COVENANT, EVEN JESUS OUR LORD."

He is FOCUSING once again upon the Lord Jesus. The author identifies with the readers by calling Him "OUR LORD."

Hebrews 4:14

Since then we are having a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us be holding fast our confession.

We not only have a "great high priest" who has taken care of the PAST, we now know that we have a "GREAT SHEPHERD" who cares for the PRESENT, and who will lead victoriously into the FUTURE.

The author makes reference to the "ETERNAL COVENANT" because this is the contract He is using in dealing with us as believers.

v.21 equip you in every good thing to do His will, doing in us that which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

The PRAYER of the author moves from:

PRAISE to PETITIONS.

"Now [may] the God of peace . . . EQUIP YOU IN EVERY GOOD THING."

The TWO THINGS that these Hebrew Christians needed to face the final laps of their race in victory was:

1. ARMOR and
2. GRACE.

We could say they need:

SUPPLY and CORRECTION in order to finish their course.

It is the PRAYER OF THE AUTHOR that:

"the God of peace . . . EQUIP [them] TO DO HIS WILL."

"EQUIP YOU IN EVERY GOOD THING" [that is] WITH ALL THE RESOURCES NECESSARY TO ACCOMPLISH THE TASK AND TO WIN THE VICTORY.



May "the God of peace . . . EQUIP YOU" with His:

PERSON,

PRESENCE,

POWER,

PROGRAM,

PURPOSE,

PROVISION,

PROTECTION, and

PEACE.

"EQUIP YOU IN EVERY GOOD THING TO DO HIS WILL."

Hebrews 12:1

Therefore, since we are having so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance, and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us be running with perseverance the race lying before us,

There are TWO THINGS that are said to us:

1. MAY "THE GOD OF PEACE . . . EQUIP YOU IN EVERY GOOD THING TO DO HIS WILL," and
2. MAY "THE GOD OF PEACE . . . [BE] DOING IN US THAT WHICH IS PLEASING IN HIS SIGHT, THROUGH JESUS CHRIST, TO WHOM BE THE GLORY FOREVER AND EVER. AMEN."

1. The first is OUR WORK TO DO HIS WILL (EXTERNAL).
2. The second is HIS WORK IN US (INTERNAL).
3. The first is HIS WORK THROUGH US.
4. The second is HIS WORK IN US.

Kistemaker observes:

A plaque with simple wording adorns a wall in our family room. Every member of the family can testify to the truthfulness of the wording. Here is the text:

The will of God  
can never lead you  
where the grace of God  
cannot keep you.

p. 431

Hewitt says:

The prayer is that all the members may be equipped with all the necessary means which will enable them to do God's will. The will of God for them at that time was to go forth to Jesus outside the camp. They were to make a definite break with Jewish tradition and Jewish nationalism.

p. 216





Wiersbe says:

The phrase "make you perfect" (Heb. 13:21) is the translation of one Greek word, *katartidzo*. This is an unfamiliar word to us, but it was familiar to the people who received this letter. The doctors knew it because it meant "to set a broken bone." To fishermen it meant "to mend a broken net" (see Matt. 4:21). To sailors it meant "to outfit a ship for a voyage." To soldiers it meant "to equip an army for battle."

Our Saviour in heaven wants to equip us for life on earth. Tenderly, He wants to set the "broken bones" in our lives so that we might walk straight and run our life-races successfully. He wants to repair the breaks in the nets so that we might catch fish and win souls. He wants to equip us for battle and outfit us so that we will not be battered in the storms of life. In brief, He wants to mature us so that He can work *in* us and *through* us that which pleases Him and accomplishes His will.  
pp. 155-6

Wiersbe then raises the question:

How does He equip us? By tracing this word *katartidzo* in the New Testament, we can discover the tools that God uses to mature and equip His children. He uses the Word of God (2 Tim. 3:16-17) and prayer (1 Thes. 3:10) in the fellowship of the local church (Eph. 4:11-12). He also uses individual believers to equip us and mend us (Gal. 6:1). Finally, He uses suffering to perfect His children (1 Peter 5:10), and this relates to what we learned from Hebrews chapter 12 about chastening  
p. 156

F. B. Meyer calls this verse:

THE BURDEN OF THE PRAYER is that these Hebrew Christians may be made perfect to do God's will. The word "perfect" means to set in joint, or articulate. Naturally, we are out of joint, or at the best, work stiffly; but the ideal of Christian living is to be so perfectly "set," that God's purposes may be easily and completely realized in us.  
p. 61

### 2 Kings 22:19

Because your heart was responsive and you humbled yourself before the Lord . . .

### Jeremiah 18:1-6

This is the word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord: "Go down to the potter's house, and there I will give you my message." So I went down to the potter's house, and I saw him working at the wheel. But the pot he was shaping from the clay was marred in his hands; so the potter formed it into another pot, shaping it as seemed best to him. Then the word of the Lord came to me: "O house of Israel, can I not do with you as this potter does?" declares the Lord. "Like clay in the hand of the potter, so are you in my hand, O house of Israel."

The words of the hymn writer well up in our hearts:

Have Thine Own Way, Lord

Have Thine own way, Lord! Have Thine own way!  
Thou art the Potter, I am the clay.  
Mould me and make me After Thy will,  
While I am waiting, Yielded and still.

("Have Thine Own Way, Lord" by Adelaide A. Pollard.  
The New Church Hymnal, Lexicon Music, Inc., 1976. #186)

"Now the God of peace . . . EQUIP YOU IN EVERY GOOD THING TO DO  
HIS WILL, DOING IN US THAT WHICH IS PLEASING IN HIS SIGHT."

We move now from the:

EXTERNAL--SUPPLY and CORRECTION to

INTERNAL--MOLDING and MAKING us more like the Savior.

This INTERNAL WORK is described in a number of passages in the  
Scripture.

### 2 Corinthians 5:17

Therefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things  
passed away; behold, new things have come.

### Philippians 2:12, 13

So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my  
presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your  
salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who is at work in you,  
both to will and to work for His good pleasure.

1 John 3:2, 3

Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we shall be. We know that, when He appears, we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him just as He is. And everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.

Philippians 1:6

For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus.

Ephesians 2:10

For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

1 Corinthians 15:51

Behold, I tell you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,

1 Thessalonians 2:13

And for this reason we also constantly thank God that when you received from us the word of God's message, you accepted it not as the word of men, but for what it really is, the word of God, which also performs its work in you who believe.

"DOING IN US THAT WHICH IS PLEASING IN HIS SIGHT."

Hebrews 11:5, 6

By faith Enoch was taken up so that he should not see death; and he was not found because God took him up; for he had witness borne that before his being taken up he was pleasing to God. And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who is coming to God must believe that He is, and that He proves Himself a rewarder of those who are seeking Him.



Zephaniah 3:17

The Lord your God is with you, he is mighty to save. He will take great delight in you, he will quiet you with his love, he will rejoice over you with singing."

The prayer of the author is beautiful.

That "the God of peace . . . [would] EQUIP YOU" with all the resources necessary "TO DO HIS WILL" and that He would work in the relationship with us "THAT WHICH IS PLEASING IN HIS SIGHT."

The RESOURCES and RELATIONSHIP which is ours is "THROUGH JESUS CHRIST TO WHOM BE THE GLORY FOREVER AND EVER. AMEN."

Back in verse 20 the AUTHOR'S FOCUS is on the phrase:

"through the blood of the eternal covenant."

Now in verse 21 it is:

"THROUGH JESUS CHRIST."

I never knew an early-rising, hard-working, prudent man, careful of his earnings, and strictly honest, who complained of bad luck. A good character, good habits, and iron industry are impregnable to the assaults of all the ill luck that fools ever dreamed of.

Joseph Addison

I am only one, but I am one. I can't do everything, but I can do something. And what I can do, that I ought to do. And what I ought to do, by the grace of God, I shall do.

Edward E. Hale

Everything comes to him who hustles while he waits.

Thomas Alva Edison

The secret of patience is doing something else in the meanwhile.

<Unknown>

If you please God, it doesn't matter who you displease. If you displease God, it doesn't matter who you please.

<Unknown>

(From InfoSearch 3.51)

F. B. Meyer raises the question:

Why will you not, my readers, who have followed these chapters thus far to the last, resolve from this moment that your will shall henceforth say, "Yes" to God's will; and that you will live out what He wills and works within? Probably, at the very outset, you will be tested by your attitude to some one thing. Do not try to answer all the suggestions or inquiries that may be raised tumultuously within, but deal immediately and decisively with that single item. Dare to say, with respect to it, "I will thy will, O my God." And immediately the gate will open into the rapture of a new life. But remember that his will must be done in *every* work to which you put your hands; and then every work will be *good*.

p. 62

MacArthur says:

The thing we must contribute to the Christian life is willing yieldedness. All we have to do is open the channel of our wills and let God's power work through us. "Now He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food, will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness" (2 Cor. 9:10). We work out our salvation because God is at work in us "both to will and to work for His good pleasure" (Phil. 2:12-13). Because Christ does the work, He deserves the credit and praise, **to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen.**  
p. 451

Stedman makes comment on the phrase:

*Through Jesus Christ.* That is the secret of life, that is the way God intended man to live--through Jesus Christ. Paul can say, in Philippians, *I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth Me*<sup>1</sup> (Phil. 4:13). What an adequate program! What a mighty gospel! What good news for this present life! God intended it for you that you might live in your present circumstances, wherever you are.  
p. 246

"TO WHOM [that is Jesus Christ] BE THE GLORY FOREVER AND EVER. AMEN."

The author started singing the DOXOLOGY.

Thomas says this is:

(7) *Life's Complete Realization.* --"To whom be glory for ever and ever." This is the crowning point of the divine purpose concerning us. "Glory" is the manifestation of splendor, and our lives adjusted to the will of God, and filled with His grace, are to be the expression of His "glory" in time and for eternity. This is what God expects.  
p. 182



Hughes says:

There is only one thing left to do, and that is to glorify God--"to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen."

- Glorify him for his peace, for it is his nature and his desire for his people. He has only thoughts of peace for us. Approach him with holy delight!
- Glorify him for his eternal covenant. What an amazing thing that God should enter into a covenant with us! Adore him for his blood, which sealed it. Bless him for our new hearts.
- Glorify him for giving us our "great Shepherd," for though we were all going our own way, he sent his Son to save us with his Lamb's blood, and then to shepherd us. Magnify him for his shepherd's compassion and care.
- Glorify him that he has equipped us and enabled us to do his will and to please him--even in the storms!

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. Amen!

p. 248

Macaulay says:

Father of Peace, and God of love,  
 We own Thy power to save,  
 That power by which our Shepherd rose  
 Victorious o'er the grave;

Him from the dead Thou brought'st again,  
 When by His precious blood  
 Confirmed and sealed for evermore  
 Th' eternal covenant stood.

O may Thy Spirit seal our souls,  
 And mould us to Thy will,  
 That our weak hearts no more may stray,  
 But keep Thy precepts still;

That to perfection's sacred height  
 We nearer still may rise,  
 And all we think, and all we do,  
 Be pleasing in Thine eyes!

p. 263

(Time To Get Serious: Daily Devotions to Keep You Close to God by Tony Evans)

To far too many the Christian life is like a trip to Disneyland--all fun, games, thrill rides, and cartoon characters. However, it is only when they leave the theme park that they enter the real world of sickness, death, poverty, divorce, debt, and crime. Because many Christians have successfully separated faith and life, they are often unprepared to deal with the real nitty-gritty matters of life our faith was designed to enable us to handle.

p. 9

v.22 But I am urging you, brethren, listen willingly to the word of exhortation, for I have written to you briefly.

We come now to COMMAND #2 in these FINAL VERSES.

COMMAND #2:

"BUT I AM URGING YOU, BRETHREN, LISTEN WILLINGLY TO THE WORD OF EXHORTATION."

COMMAND #1 was back in verse 18:

"Be praying for us."

He is asking them to:

"be praying" and

"LISTEN WILLINGLY TO THE WORD OF EXHORTATION."

He is "URGING" them to:

"pray" (verse 19) and

"LISTEN WILLING TO THE WORD OF EXHORTATION" (verse 22).

Hebrews 5:11

Concerning Him there is much to be said, and it is hard to explain, since you have become sluggish in hearing (hard of hearing).

2 Kings 22:19

Because your heart was responsive and you humbled yourself before the Lord . . .

1 Samuel 3:9, 10

So Eli told Samuel, "Go and lie down, and if he calls you, say, 'Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening.'" So Samuel went and lay down in his place. The Lord came and stood there, calling as at the other times, "Samuel! Samuel!" Then Samuel said, "Speak, for your servant is listening."

SEVEN TIMES in the SEVEN LETTERS TO THE CHURCHES in (Revelation 2 and 3) the Lord Jesus CONCLUDES EACH LETTER WITH THE SAME PHRASE:

"HE WHO HAS AN EAR, LET HIM HEAR WHAT THE SPIRIT IS SAYING TO THE CHURCHES."

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

Urging once again that his readers **bear with his word of exhortation**, he expressed the hope that he and **Timothy** would soon see them. After giving them greetings, he committed them to God's grace.  
p. 812

Montefiore in Black's commentary says:

Our author senses that his Epistle may not be warmly welcomed. He tries to allay criticism before it can be voiced.  
p. 252

Wuest says:

The writer pleads with the recipients not to become impatient at his counsels in this letter. The words "word of exhortation," refer to the entire letter which the writer regards as hortatory rather than didactic or consolatory.  
p. 242

Owen says:

By the term "*brethren*" he denotes his near relation unto them in nature and in grace; his love unto them, and his common interest with them in the cause in hand.

p. 282

Phillips says:

The writer--especially if it was the apostle Paul--can well visualize the bristling and hostility with which his epistle would be received by some. It struck so hard at Jewish prejudices. He pleads for a fair hearing. After all, while he has covered the ground, there remains so much more that could have been said. He has already mentioned this when speaking of Melchizedek (5:11). His letter is brief compared with the dimensions of its theme and the seriousness of its implications.

p. 221

Lane says:

Sustained pastoral concern as well as the sense of separation from his audience encouraged the writer to add a few brief personal remarks.

p. 567

The pastoral appeal . . . "and I urge you, brothers," conveys a tone of gentleness and warmth (for the use of the fraternal expression "brothers," see 3:1, 12; 10:19). Concurrently, it expresses an authority appropriate to a church leader addressing a community in crisis.

p. 567

A. T. Robertson, speaking of "THE WORD OF EXHORTATION," says:

It certainly is that, a powerful appeal in fact.  
p. 451

DeHaan says much the same thing:

Suffer the word of exhortation! The exhortation had been pointed and direct. His charge against them of spiritual immaturity, his severe warnings against the sin unto death, his solemn revelation concerning chastening and suffering loss at the Judgment Seat of Christ, were not by any means pleasant or welcome truths, and he fears they may resent the solemn implications of judgment and loss of rewards. They would undoubtedly rather hear about grace, and security and rewards, and their inheritance and position in Christ. They enjoyed hearing about "no condemnation"; but the messages on the responsibilities of grace and the announcement that "God shall judge his people," this they would rather not hear.  
p. 203

"BUT I AM URGING YOU, BRETHREN, LISTEN WILLINGLY TO THE WORD OF EXHORTATION, FOR I HAVE WRITTEN TO YOU BRIEFLY."

Just as he stated a REASON WHY in COMMAND #1 (verse 18) so he does it here.

COMMAND #1:

"Be praying for us, for we are certain that we are having a good conscience, desiring to be conducting ourselves commendably in all things."

So here:

"BUT I AM URGING YOU, BRETHREN, LISTEN WILLINGLY TO THE WORD OF EXHORTATION, FOR I HAVE WRITTEN TO YOU BRIEFLY."

The letter is small in view of what could have been written.

MacArthur says:

The whole letter (under 10,000 words) is shorter than Romans or 1 Corinthians and can be read in less than an hour. If the writer had dealt fully with the great themes he discusses, the letter would have been inconceivably long. But it is amazingly short in comparison to the eternal and infinite truths it contains.

p. 454

(Time To Get Serious: Daily Devotions to Keep You Close to God by Tony Evans)

One night I came out of my kitchen and found a roach on my counter. This was unlike any roach I had ever seen. It was a "jump bad in your face, get down" roach. When I walked up to this brother, he didn't run away. He just stood there as if to say, "Look, this is my house."

I couldn't believe it. It was just amazing to look at this thing. I would move my hand in front of it, and it did not budge. Obviously, it did not know who I am, because I squashed that boy flat!

You know, that's what autonomous man does to God. He gets "roachy" on God. He pops back like he is someone, like he has a little power. He's got a little degree behind his name. He's got some machines that can take him into outer space, and he thinks he's got power. But it's suicide to "jump bad" against God. He has *unlimited* power.

p. 22

(New Cowboy Poetry: A Contemporary Gathering edited by Hal Cannon)

**HAILSTORM**  
**COLEN H. SWEETEN, JR.**

I remember the deafening roar,  
The wavering fields of wheat,  
The huddled family--  
A sudden chilling of the July heat,  
And fear in my father's eyes--  
My father who kicked badgers  
And laughed at broncos!  
Mother quietly put her arm around him  
As if she feared he might rush,  
Bare-fisted, to battle the icy pellets.

I remember my father's eyes, filled  
With tears as big as toadstools.  
Icy tears which just hung there.  
There was too much pride to fall,  
And too much hurt to retreat.  
And then our harvest was over.  
Our valley was still, oh, so still.

Soon the hurt was healing.  
There was no bitterness.  
There was no blame.  
I knew my parents still trusted God.

Now, in the quiet of my own silent hailstorms,  
When I alone am aware of the roar,  
I feel a strength from that old scar  
And find courage born of faith,  
Not of understanding.

p. 152

(The Message: Proverbs by Eugene H. Peterson)

Proverb 24

If you fall to pieces in a crisis,  
there wasn't much to you in the first place.

p. 81





v.23 Be knowing that our brother Timothy has been released; with whom, if he is coming soon, I shall see you.

Once again he uses the term "BROTHER" speaking of Timothy even as he used the term brethren speaking of the recipients of his letters back in verse 22.

Here he is passing information on to them to alleviate their concern and update the situation as far as their circumstances are concerned.

You could write over this verse:

Since you don't know whether or when I am coming, you better heed this letter.

When Paul wrote to Philemon asking him to take back Onesimus he also told him to prepare lodging because he was going to be coming.

v.24 Greet all those who are leading you and all the saints. Those from Italy are greeting you.

What he is asking them to do here is to:

GREET THE LEADERS and  
THE LEAD.

He SEPARATES the LEADERS and the LEAD in what he is asking of them at this point.

1. "GREET ALL THOSE WHO ARE LEADING YOU" AND
2. "GREET . . . ALL THE SAINTS."

He has already MADE REFERENCE TWO PREVIOUS TIMES in this thirteenth chapter to the:

LEADERSHIP OF THE CONGREGATION.

#### Hebrews 13:7

Be constantly remembering those who are leading you, who spoke the word of God to you; and considering the outcome of their way of life, be imitating their faith.

#### Hebrews 13:17

Keep on obeying your leaders and submitting [to them]; for they themselves are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will give an account, in order that they may be doing this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no help to you.

(Credibility by James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner)

But people still want and need leadership. They just want leaders who hold to an ethic of service and are genuinely respectful of the intelligence and contributions of their constituents. They want leaders who will put principles ahead of politics and other people before self-interests.

p. xvii

Time and again, people called for leaders who were honest, forward-looking, inspiring, and competent. Such repeated agreement led us to realize that there was more to our findings than simply those four desirable qualities.

p. xx

More than fifteen hundred managers nationwide provided 225 values, characteristics, and attitudes that they believed crucial to leadership. A panel of researchers and managers subsequently analyzed the factors and reduced them to fifteen categories. The most frequent responses, in order of mention, were (1) integrity (leaders are truthful, are trustworthy, have character, have convictions); (2) competence (leaders are capable, productive, efficient); and (3) leadership (leaders are inspiring, are decisive, provide direction). A follow-up study sponsored by the Federal Executive Institute Alumni Association, involving eight hundred senior public sector administrators, replicated these findings.

p. 12

(The Top Ten Mistakes Leaders Make by Hans Finzel)

"What makes a good manager?" someone asked Yogi Berra.

"A good ball club," Yogi replied.

p. 92

"The best executive is the one who has sense enough to pick good men to do what he wants done, and self-restraint enough to keep from meddling with them while they do it."

--Theodore Roosevelt

p. 101

(Rocking the Roles: Building a Win-Win Marriage by Robert Lewis and William Hendricks)

PERHAPS YOU'VE HEARD the story of a man who phoned a local armory and spoke to a young recruit. "What kind of stock do we have there at the armory, private?" the caller asked authoritatively.

The private replied, "Sir, we have six tanks, six trucks, twelve jeeps, and a whole lot of guns and ammunition. Oh, yeah, we've also got two Cadillacs for our big, fat generals."

The caller paused before barking out, "Private, do you know who this is?"

"No, sir," the startled private replied.

"This is General Weston!"

Again there was a pause in the conversation, until the private asked, "General Weston, do you know who this is?"

Surprised, the general answered, "No!"

The private chuckled and said, "See ya around, fatty!"

p. 81

(The Message: Proverbs by Eugene H. Peterson)

Proverb 25

Remove the wicked from leadership  
and authority will be credible and  
God-honoring.

p. 84

Proverb 28

When the country is in chaos,  
everybody has a plan to fix it--  
But it takes a leader of real understanding  
to straighten things out.

p. 93

Proverb 29

A leader of good judgment gives stability;  
an exploiting leader leaves a trail of waste.

p. 97



(A Dangerous Grace by Charles Colson with Nancy R. Pearcey)

The lure of power can separate the most resolute of Christians from the true nature of Christian leadership, which is service to others. It's difficult to stand on a pedestal and wash the feet of those below.  
p. 113

(A Passion for Faithfulness: Wisdom From the Book of Nehemiah by J.I. Packer)

Note how thoroughly Nehemiah, the new governor just arrived from the Persian capital, identified with his fellow-Jews whom he had been sent to govern. "He does not play the visiting official from Susa, saying, 'You people are in a mess, and I have come to help you'. Rather it is, 'You see the bad situation *we* are in.' He is one of them."<sup>6</sup>

Note too how purposefully, having thus declared his solidarity with them, he stirred them up to action, "'Come, let *us* rebuild . . . and *we* will no longer be in disgrace.'"

6. White, *Excellence in Leadership*, p. 47.  
p. 85

"There has always been a true elite of God's leaders," writes John White. "They are the meek who inherit the earth (Mt. 5:5). They weep and pray in secret, and defy earth and hell in public. They tremble when faced with danger, but die in their tracks rather than turn back. They are like a shepherd defending his sheep or a mother protecting her young. They sacrifice without grumbling, give without calculating, suffer without groaning. To those in their charge they say, 'We live if you do well.' Their price is above rubies. And Nehemiah was one of them."<sup>3</sup>

3. White, *Excellence in Leadership*, p. 89.  
p. 125

The world is not interested in the storms you encountered, but whether you brought in the ship.

Journal of True

Education

(From InfoSearch 3.51)

### Rule for Christian Living

#### John Wesley's Rule for Christian Living

Do all the good you can,  
By all the means you can,  
In all the ways you can,  
In all the places you can,  
At all the times you can,  
To all the people you can,  
As long as ever . . .  
You can!

--Christian History, Vol II, No. I

(From Parson's Bible Illustrator 1.0)



v.25 Grace be with you all.

MacArthur says:

The epistle ends with a simple, yet lovely conclusion in the form of a plea for God to grant **grace** to the readers (cf. Titus 3:15), as He does for all His children through the One who alone can give grace--the Lord Jesus Christ.  
p. 455

Lane says:

With this closing benediction, the personal relationships and crisis of the community are brought under the aspect of the sufficiency of the inexhaustible grace of God.  
p. 571

Phillips says:

It is grace that makes it possible. Grace brings us together in the family; grace keeps us moving forward in the faith. Grace!  
p. 222

Delitzsch says:

This "grace" is that which justifies, frees, establishes us, and makes us joyful; which sanctifies, saves, and glorifies us; which begins, brings about, and completes our salvation; in which our spiritual life is rooted, and out of which it grows;--"grace," that is the absolutely undeserved and free result of the divine love, which, through our Lord Jesus Christ, has been purchased for us sinners and has come down upon us in all the fulness of its riches.  
pp. 407-8

Barclay says:

And so the letter comes to an end with a blessing. All through it has been telling of the grace of Christ which opens the way to God, and so we come to an end with a prayer that that wondrous grace may rest upon us.  
p. 231

English says:

It is the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ to which the writer refers--the grace whereby we have been saved; the grace whereby we are kept; the grace by which we are satisfied; the grace which is sufficient for every one of us; the grace that we learn to exercise in our Christian walk, by the Spirit; the grace whereby we shall be rewarded at His hand; the grace that will bring us into heaven; the grace that will bestow Christ's glory and perfection upon us when we shall see Him; the true grace of God wherein we stand. It is a perfect benediction and, therefore, a fitting conclusion to this exposition. "Grace be with you all. Amen."  
p. 508

Lange quotes Heubner who says:

The grace of God, the highest wish for ourselves and others (Ps. cvi. 4). Lord, remember me according to Thy grace, which Thou has promised to Thy people. Amen!  
p. 220

(They Walked with God by James S. Bell, Jr.)

"Out of the knottiest timber," says Rutherford, "He can make vessels of mercy for service in the high place of glory."

"I came, I saw, I conquered," says Toplady, "may be inscribed by the Savior on every monument of grace. I came to the sinner; I looked upon him; and with a look of omnipotent love, I conquered."

My friend, we would have been this day wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness--Christless, hopeless, portionless--had not grace invited us and grace constrained us.

D. L. Moody

(7/23)

(Prayer, Praise & Promises: A Daily Walk Through the Psalms by Warren W. Wiersbe)

Acknowledge the sovereignty of God today. He is in control. Recognize His sufficiency. He can give you what you need for this day. Then accept His generosity. He enjoys giving to those who trust Him and glorify Him in all that they do.

(Day 320)

The word "GRACE" occurs EIGHT TIMES in this Epistle. Let us meditate on those phrases as we bring our exposition to a close.

Hebrews 2:9

But we are seeing Jesus who for a short time has been made lower than the angels because of the suffering of death, having been crowned with glory and honor, in order that by the grace of God He might taste death for every one.

There are TWO USAGES of the word "GRACE" in:

Hebrews 4:16

Let us therefore be drawing near with confidence to the throne of grace, in order that we may receive mercy and may find grace to help in time of need.

Hebrews 10:29

How much greater a punishment are you thinking one will deserve who trampled under foot the Son of God, and regarded as common (unclean) the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and insulted the Spirit of grace?

Hebrews 12:15

Be seeing to it that no one is coming short of the grace of God; that no root of bitterness springing up is causing trouble, and by it many be defiled;

Hebrews 12:28

Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be having grace (showing gratitude), by means of which we may be serving God in an acceptable manner with reverence and awe;

Hebrews 13:9

Stop being carried away by varied and strange teachings; for it is good for the heart to be strengthened by grace, not by foods, by means of which those who are ordering their behavior were not benefited.

Hebrews 13:25

Grace be with you all.

When we meditate upon "GRACE" we think of it and our experience of it from the:

PAST,

PRESENT, and

FUTURE.

"GRACE" from the PAST TENSE:

GRACE IS THE BASIS FOR SALVATION.

Our:

REDEMPTION,

RECONCILIATION, and

RELATIONSHIP are all acts of God on our behalf.

They are GIFTS. These gifts involve the:

NEW COVENANT,

PRIESTHOOD, and

SACRIFICE.

Grace in the PRESENT TENSE:

THE BASIS FOR SANCTIFICATION.

We have His:

PERSON,

POWER, and

PRESENCE.

HIS INTERCESSORY MINISTRY: MONITORING OUR SITUATION.  
WE ARE IN HIS INTENSIVE CARE.

Hebrews 7:25

Hence also He is able to be saving forever those who are drawing near to God through Him, since He always is living for the purpose of making intercession for them.

1 Peter 5:7

casting all your anxiety upon Him, because He cares for you.

"GRACE" in the FUTURE TENSE:

BASIS FOR GLORIFICATION.

We look forward to the HEAVENLY CITY.

Romans 8:38, 39

For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

1 Corinthians 2:9

but just as it is written, "Things which eye has not seen and ear has not heard, and which have not entered the heart of man, all that God has prepared for those who love Him."

John 14:1, 2

Let not your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you.

Ann Kiemel in her book I Am Running to Win says:

Running is like finding Jesus. You start out with so much enthusiasm, so excited and exhilarated, so much momentum, ready to become a great runner. What you don't know, then, is that it doesn't happen overnight. It takes hours of courage and pain and hard work, standing alone, putting more into the effort than anyone else understands. It is one thing to find Jesus and another to commit one's life to Him and follow Him day in and day out, without demanding any promises or guarantees, just following Him because you love Him.



## CONCLUSION:

What are some of the lessons we can learn from this particular study?

LESSON #1: We have a responsibility to be praying for one another.

LESSON #2: A good conscience and good conduct put us on praying ground.

LESSON #3: Prayer moves the hand of God in the accomplishment of His purpose for our lives.

LESSON #4: He is the God of peace because He has everything under control.

LESSON #5: The resurrection demonstrates the Father's stamp of approval on the work of the Son.

LESSON #6: Jesus is a "great high priest" and He is a "great Shepherd."

LESSON #7: The foundation for our redemption, reconciliation, and relationship is found in the "blood of the eternal covenant."

LESSON #8: The "God of peace" will "equip you . . . to do His will."

LESSON #9: His resources are totally adequate to the full accomplishment of His will for our lives.

LESSON #10: He is working in us and He is working through us.

LESSON #11: I am so glad that I am in His intensive care. He monitors my every move!

We have now come to the TIME OF DECISION. Listen carefully to these STATISTICS:

- After age 35, only 1 person in 50,000 receives Christ.
- After age 45, only 1 in 300,000.
- After age 75, only 1 in 700,000.

What is your decision going to be today in view of the God of grace who extends to you an invitation to receive the gift that He has provided in our Savior?

Thomas says:

Five words may perhaps sum up the entire Epistle from the standpoint of Christian life and duty. We are to enter, to experience, to enjoy, to exult, and to extol.  
p. 183

F. B. Meyer says:

The Christian is the workshop of God. If our life is not bringing glory to God, see to it that at once you set to work to ascertain the cause. Learning it, let it be dealt with forthwith. Hand yourself over to God to make you and keep you right. And thus begin a song of love and praise which shall rise, through all coming ages, to the Father who chose you in Christ, to the Saviour who bought you with his blood, and to the Spirit who sanctifies the heart; one adorable Trinity, to whom be the glory for ever and ever. Amen.  
p. 63

Wiersbe says:

But the total impact of Hebrews answers the important question, "How can I stand firm in a world that is shaking all around me?" The answer: know the superior Person, Jesus Christ; trust His superior priesthood; and live by the superior principle of faith. Build your life on the things of heaven that will never shake.

Be confident! Jesus Christ saves to the uttermost!

p. 157

Draper says:

The Book of Hebrews is God's clarion call for action. It is a challenge to commitment to his Son, Jesus Christ. It is a challenge to express in every area of our lives the very life of God. Our lives are to be placed in the arena. We are to be involved in the struggle with evil--yet not in our own strength, but in the strength of the living Christ who resides in and who works through us. God's Word to us is, "I have instructed you. Now move into action!"

p. 392

(Standing Together: Impacting Your Generation by Howard Hendricks)

I have never met a Christian who sat down and planned to live a mediocre life. But if most of us keep going in the direction we're headed, we may end up there.

p. 23

(The Life God Blesses: Weathering the Storms of Life That Threaten the Soul  
by Gordon MacDonald)

Tho' much is taken, much abides: and tho'  
We are not now that strength which in old days  
Moved earth and heaven; that which we are, we are;  
One equal temper of heroic hearts,  
Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will  
To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield.

--Tennyson, "Ulysses"

p. 93

Calvin Miller in his book Walking With Saints quotes Jean-Pierre de Caussade:

May we be worthy of Jean-Pierre de Caussade's final counsel:

**Forgive me, divine Love, for speaking only of my shortcomings and not having yet understood what it means to let your will be done, not having allowed myself to be poured into that mould. I have been through all your galleries and admired all your paintings, but I have not yet surrendered myself sufficiently to be worthy to receive the strokes of your brush. . . . I will devote myself exclusively to the duty of the present moment to love you, to fulfill my obligations, and to let your will be done.<sup>21</sup>**

21. Epigraph, Jean-Pierre de Caussade, *The Sacrament of the Present Moment*. trans. Kitty Muggeridge, from the original text of *Self-Abandonment to Divine Providence* (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1982) pp. 75-76. p. 207

Let us meditate in closing on TWO PASSAGES of Scripture from Hebrews.

### Hebrews 10:23

Let us constantly be holding fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful;

### Hebrews 10:35-37

Therefore, do not throw away your confidence, which is having a great reward. For you are having need of perseverance, in order that, having done the will of God, you may receive what was promised. For yet in a very little while, He who is coming will come, and will not delay.

Ray Stedman concludes his study of Hebrews with this prayer:

*"Our dear Father, thank You for this mighty letter coming to us across twenty centuries of time, reflecting the great truths that are still available, still demonstrable in our very midst. Help us to grasp and understand these, but more than that, give us the courage to step out upon them, to live life on this basis, that we might enter into the*

*glorious liberty of the children of God, for we pray in Your name,  
Amen."*

p. 247