ROUTE 66
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TITUS

Who was Titus? What was his relationship to Paul? Why did Paul write him this letter? Titus and Timothy were two young preachers who Paul took “under his wing.” There seemed to have been a peculiar bond of affection between Paul and his Grecian convert. How Paul loved him and appreciated his companionship.

2 Cor. 7:6 Nevertheless God, that comforteth those that are cast down, comforted us by the coming of Titus;
2 Cor. 7:13 Therefore we were comforted in your comfort: yea, and exceedingly the more joyed we for the joy of Titus, because his spirit was refreshed by you all.

In 2 Corinthians Paul mentioned Titus nine times. Paul sent him to Corinth as his delegate. The great apostle was thrilled when Titus brought him such a great report from Corinth. When Paul was released from prison, Titus accompanied him on a visit to Crete where Paul assisted the work there. Later, Titus was with Paul during part of his second imprisonment in Rome.

ALL THE MEN IN THE BIBLE / DR. HERBERT LOCKYER / ZONDERVAN PUBL. / PAGE 330

It is interesting to me to note that Paul and Titus had ministry on the island of Crete, although the Book of Acts does not relate it. So the Book of Acts tells only a part of the story of the missions outreach of the first century church.

Titus was a gentile. Paul took a lot of heat from the Jerusalem elders for refusing to cause Titus to go through the Jewish rite of circumcision.

In this short letter Paul will give “Pastor Titus” good counsel on the role of the church in Crete which Titus apparently pastors.

Chapter One

The first four verses comprise Paul’s greetings to his good friend. Then Paul immediately counseled Titus on the role of elders in the church:
Titus 1:5-9  [The Message]  I left you in charge in Crete so you could complete what I left half-done. Appoint leaders in every town according to my instructions. [6] As you select them, ask, "Is this man well-thought-of? Are his children believers? Do they respect him and stay out of trouble?" [7] It's important that a church leader, responsible for the affairs in God's house, be looked up to—not pushy, not short-tempered, not a drunk, not a bully, not money-hungry. [8] He must welcome people, be helpful, wise, fair, reverent, have a good grip on himself, [9] and have a good grip on the Message, knowing how to use the truth to either spur people on in knowledge or stop them in their tracks if they oppose it.

It was vital that the church leaders on Crete be examples of Jesus for other residents of that island did not have such a sterling report:

Titus 1:10-16

For there are a lot of rebels out there, full of loose, confusing, and deceiving talk. Those who were brought up religious and ought to know better are the worst. [11] They've got to be shut up. They're disrupting entire families with their teaching, and all for the sake of a fast buck. [12] One of their own prophets said it best: "The Cretans are liars from the womb, barking dogs, lazy bellies." [13] He certainly spoke the truth. Get on them right away. Stop that diseased talk of Jewish make-believe and made-up rules so they can recover a robust faith. [14] [15] Everything is clean to the clean-minded; nothing is clean to dirty-minded unbelievers. They leave their dirty fingerprints on every thought and act. [16] They say they know God, but their actions speak louder than their words. They're real creeps, disobedient good-for-nothings.

Who made all accusations against the Cretans whom Paul quoted? Epimenides, who lived several hundred years earlier. Bear in mind that not all the people of Crete fit that dreadful description. But the message Paul is reminding Titus of is this: no matter how degraded a society may be, the life of Christ can change everything. In verse 16, Paul warned against hypocrites who claim spirituality but are really carnal in action.

Chapter Two

The scriptural basis for the way church people should live is found in Acts 2:42 [The Message]  And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.

A gorgeous church facility might be fine, but without those attributes in verse 42, lived in the lives of the professing believers, the building doesn't amount to much.
In chapter 2, Paul spoke to so many elements of believers on how we should live:

- Men who are older: Titus 2:2  KJV  That the aged men be sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity, in patience. A community should be able to respect older men in the faith because of their lives.

- Women who are older: Titus 2:3  KJV  The aged women likewise, that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things; It is a wholesome thing when older women can teach younger ones without fomenting resentment or resistance.

- Young women: Titus 2:4-5  KJV  That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, [5] To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed. Contrary to some opinions, expressed in modern commentaries, these words of Paul are NOT an indictment against women in the workplace. But it is an encouragement to consider the home as the primary responsibility. “Obedient to husbands” means to RESPOND to her husbands considerate care and love. It is therefore incumbent upon the man to initiate a response by the way he treats his wife.

- Young men: Titus 2:6-8  KJV  Young men likewise exhort to be sober minded. [7] In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, [8] Sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you. Remember that Titus himself was a relatively young man. “Titus, you be the example of these truths!”

- Servants / slaves: Titus 2:9-10  KJV  Titus 2:9-10  Exhort servants to be obedient unto their own masters, and to please them well in all things; not answering again; [10] Not purloining, but shewing all good fidelity; that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things. Paul also had teaching for those who were servants. In the ancient Roman world there were many slaves. It is said that 90% of the names on the walls of the catacombs are those of slaves or ex-slaves. Paul taught the people in those unfortunate circumstances to relate to those in authority over them with respect and dignity.

How we are to live in the light of the coming of our Lord:

Titus 2:11-15  KJV  For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, [12] Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; [13] Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; [14] Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify
unto himself [peculiar people], zealous of good works. [15] These things speak, and 
exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee.

Paul wrote that we followers of Jesus are to be “a peculiar people” – not weird, peculiar! 
There’s a difference. In what way are we “peculiar?” We are zealous of good works. 
In other words we respond to the worlds many stimuli by living the life of Christ, not the 
works of the flesh or the devil.

Chapter Three

Good works will never save you. But saved people will do good works! In this 
chapter Paul waxes very practical:

1. Law-abiders Titus 3:1 KJV Put them in mind to be subject to principalities 
and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work,

This means the most every-day practical living such as: paying taxes, obeying traffic 
signs, speed limit signs, attitudes to those in authority, etc.

2. Watch our mouths Titus 3:2 KJV To speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, 
but gentle, shewing all meekness unto all men.

Prior to conversion, Paul writes, we lived any old way we wanted: Titus 3:3-5 KJV 
For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving 
divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one 
another. [4] But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man 
appeared, [5] Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to 
his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy 
Ghost;

No, our salvation is not because of WHAT WE HAVE DONE, but what Christ did for us 
on the cross.

3. Don’t get involved in non-solving debates: Titus 3:9-11 KJV But avoid foolish 
questions, and genealogies, and contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are 
unprofitable and vain. [10] A man that is an heretick after the first and second 
admonition reject; [11] Knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being 
condemned of himself.

I try valiantly to avoid arguing with people. Sometimes I am approached by someone
with a really contentious attitude. I try to kindly slip away. Others come to me with
sincere questions or comments, uttered in gentleness and love. They are great and I love
to talk to them. But you or I can waste a whole lot of valuable time arguing with those
who do not want to learn but only dissension.

PHILEMON

This tiny book, snuggled between Titus and Hebrews is a drama! The main characters
in it are: Paul, Onesimus and Philemon. You know who Paul is, but who are the other
two?

Philemon was a very rich man who lived in Colossae, Turkey. He had gone to Ephesus
on business where he encountered Paul and his ministry. Philemon had committed his
life to Christ and returned to his life and business in Colossae.

Onesimus was one of his slaves. In the Roman Empire, owning slaves was common.
He carefully planned his moves and had escaped and made his way to Rome where he,
too, encountered Paul (who was waiting on his trial/hearing before Nero.) He confessed
to Paul that he was a runaway and was perhaps surprised when Paul told him he needed to
return to Philemon. In order to make the return successful, Paul wrote this very personal
letter to Philemon, asking him to treat Onesimus like a brother, not a slave.

In the first nine verses he greets Philemon warmly and begins his plea with verse 10:

Philemon 1:10-21 [The Message]

[11] He was useless to you before; now he's useful to both of us. [12] I'm sending
him back to you, but it feels like I'm cutting off my right arm in doing so. [13] I
wanted in the worst way to keep him here as your stand-in to help out while I'm in
jail for the Message. [14] But I didn't want to do anything behind your back, make
you do a good deed that you hadn't willingly agreed to.

[15] Maybe it's all for the best that you lost him for a while. You're getting him
back now for good—[16] and no mere slave this time, but a true Christian brother!
That's what he was to me—he'll be even more than that to you.

[17] So if you still consider me a comrade-in-arms, welcome him back as you
would me. [18] If he damaged anything or owes you anything, chalk it up to my
account. [19] This is my personal signature—Paul—and I stand behind it. (I don't
need to remind you, do I, that you owe your very life to me?) [20] Do me this big
favor, friend. You'll be doing it for Christ, but it will also do my heart good.

[21] I know you well enough to know you will. You'll probably go far beyond
what I've written.
Paul indicated that one of Philemon’s primary attributes was hospitality and generosity. Paul noted that Philemon was also a strong witness for Jesus in his hometown. Paul then informed him in his letter that he had Onesimus with him in Rome, that his slave was now his brother in Christ and implored him to receive him home with no punishment. He noted that Onesimus was a terrific help to him in Rome and he really would like to have had him stay there, but that wouldn’t be right. And he added, “Whatever damage has been done because of the escape, let me know what it is and I’ll gladly pay the bill myself.”

Paul ended the letter with personal greetings to anyone he might have known or met. We do not know what happened, but it seems safe to assume that there was a grand Christian reunion between Philemon and Onesimus, championed by this charming letter from Paul.

HEBREWS

This book is somewhat complicated, yet incredibly rewarding for our study and personal faith. It was written by an unknown author (though many believe it was Paul) to the Christians in Jerusalem who had grown so weary of persecution and poverty.

Chapter One

The first four verses virtually equal the first four verses of John’s Gospel in their magnificent presentation of the Christ:

Hebrews 1:1-4  KJV  God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, [2] Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; [3] Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; [4] Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.

Here is yet another translation of these 4 verses:  Hebrews 1:1-4  (The Living Bible)  
Long ago God spoke in many different ways to our fathers through the prophets [in visions, dreams, and even face to face], telling them little by little about his plans.  
[2] But now in these days he has spoken to us through his Son to whom he has given everything and through whom he made the world and everything there is.  
[3] God’s Son shines out with God’s glory, and all that God’s Son is and does
marks him as God. He regulates the universe by the mighty power of his command. He is the one who died to cleanse us and clear our record of all sin, and then sat down in highest honor beside the great God of heaven.

[4] Thus he became far greater than the angels, as proved by the fact that his name "Son of God," which was passed on to him from his Father, is far greater than the names and titles of the angels.

The student of Hebrews will fall in love with Jesus all over again. The believers in Jerusalem had been so beaten up they had forgotten who they were and what their inheritance through Christ was. The writer made it clear that Jesus was superior to angels. Hebrews 1:5-14 The Living Bible For God never said to any angel, "You are my Son, and today I have given you the honor that goes with that name." But God said it about Jesus. Another time he said, "I am his Father and he is my Son."

[6] And still another time--when his firstborn Son came to earth--God said, "Let all the angels of God worship him."

[7] God speaks of his angels as messengers swift as the wind and as servants made of flaming fire; [8] but of his Son he says, "Your Kingdom, O God, will last forever and ever; its commands are always just and right. [9] You love right and hate wrong; so God, even your God, has poured out more gladness upon you than on anyone else."

[10] God also called him "Lord" when he said, "Lord, in the beginning you made the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands. [11] They will disappear into nothingness, but you will remain forever. They will become worn out like old clothes, [12] and some day you will fold them up and replace them. But you yourself will never change, and your years will never end."

[13] And did God ever say to an angel, as he does to his Son, "Sit here beside me in honor until I crush all your enemies beneath your feet"?

[14] No, for the angels are only spirit-messengers sent out to help and care for those who are to receive his salvation.

The Jews in Jerusalem were well aware of the ministry of angels - and duly impressed. But this Jesus was not in their category! He was the Son of God revealed to them on earth. He is the only access we have to the presence of God. Yes, the angels, according to verse 14, are ministering spirits; but they are not the Messiah. Jesus is!

Chapter Two

Note the writer now challenges the reader: Knowing that Jesus is God's Son and greater than even the holy angels, "how shall we escape if we neglect such a great salvation?"

Hebrews 2:3-4 KJV How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which
at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that
heard him; [4] God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and
with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will? We give
altar calls in virtually every service at First Assembly, giving the opportunity for anyone
to find the Lord and God’s salvation.

How many ways are there to God? ONE! Jesus! Hebrews 2:10, 16-18

And it was right and proper that God, who made everything for his own glory,
should allow Jesus to suffer, for in doing this he was bringing vast multitudes of
God's people to heaven; for his suffering made Jesus a perfect Leader, one fit to
bring them into their salvation.

[16] We all know he did not come as an angel but as a human being—yes, a Jew.
[17] And it was necessary for Jesus to be like us, his brothers, so that he could be our
merciful and faithful High Priest before God, a Priest who would be both merciful to
us and faithful to God in dealing with the sins of the people. [18] For since he himself
has now been through suffering and temptation, he knows what it is like when we
suffer and are tempted, and he is wonderfully able to help us.

Christ’s atonement was not accomplished via remote control. He came as an earth’s
being, subject to the same powers and same frailties as everyone else. William Barclay,
one of my favorite writers, put it like this:

The basis of the Greek idea of God was detachment; the basis of the Christian idea is
identity. Through His sufferings, Jesus identified with mankind.

Chapter Three

Consider the thoughts of early Jewish believers in Jerusalem. They were being
pummeled for their faith. Some were wondering, “Have we given up too much to be
followers of Jesus?” So the writer to these Hebrews reminds them that Jesus is the
ultimate goal of life, and that He is even “better than angels.” And he continues that
Christ is even better than Moses and the glorious Torah faith:

Hebrews 3:1-6 [The Message]

So, my dear Christian friends, companions in following this call to the heights,
take a good hard look at Jesus. He’s the centerpiece of everything we believe, [2]
faithful in everything God gave him to do. Moses was also faithful, [3] but Jesus gets
far more honor. A builder is more valuable than a building any day. [4] Every house
has a builder, but the Builder behind them all is God. [5] Moses did a good job in
God's house, but it was all servant work, getting things ready for what was to come. [6] Christ as Son is in charge of the house. Now, if we can only keep a firm grip on this bold confidence, we're the house!

Then the writer gives an impassioned plea to the Jerusalem saints to remain in the faith, to persevere and to endure to the very end: Hebrews 3:12-13 [The Message] So watch your step, friends. Make sure there's no evil unbelief lying around that will trip you up and throw you off course, diverting you from the living God. [13] For as long as it's still God's Today, keep each other on your toes so sin doesn't slow down your reflexes.

Sin certainly had slowed down the Children of Israel enroute from Egypt to the promised land. I have traversed that route by bus in 12 hours. Well the early Hebrews didn't have a bus, of course, but it still took them 40 years to get to the Promised Land. Unbelief and sin certainly slowed them down. Never let the cynical, blase attitude of the world keep you from spiritual progress.

Chapter Four

As we grow older, the subject of “rest” appeals to us more and more. In this chapter, the writer reminds us of the “rest” that knowing Jesus brings to our soul:

Hebrews 4:1-7 New King James

Therefore, since a promise remains of entering His rest, let us fear lest any of you seem to have come short of it. [2] For indeed the gospel was preached to us as well as to them; but the word which they heard did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in those who heard it. [3] For we who have believed do enter that rest, as He has said: "So I swore in My wrath, 'They shall not enter My rest,' "although the works were finished from the foundation of the world. [4] For He has spoken in a certain place of the seventh day in this way: "And God rested on the seventh day from all His works"; [5] and again in this place: "They shall not enter My rest." [6] Since therefore it remains that some must enter it, and those to whom it was first preached did not enter because of disobedience, [7] again He designates a certain day, saying in David, "Today," after such a long time, as it has been said: "Today, if you will hear His voice, Do not harden your hearts."

The Bible promises God will give His “beloved” rest. Jesus taught us in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew, chapters 5, 6 and 7) not to worry unduly about tomorrow.

Hebrews 4:11-13 KJV Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man
fall after the same example of unbelief. [12] For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is adiscerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. [13] Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.

If God’s Word is that important, it should be the spotlight event in every service. In every home. In every life!

Chapter Five

The Hebrews writer comes back again to the subject of spiritual maturity. Sounds like Paul, doesn’t it? Listen to his plea: Hebrews 5:12-14 New King James  For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food. [13] For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. [14] But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

I remember the joy of kindergarten and first grade, learning how to read. I have one of the DICK AND JANE books as a memento in my library. I could read the whole semester book in 2 minutes...so it’s not the top priority of my reading life. Yet spiritually many are still in the Dick and Jane books of the faith. I WONDER ABOUT CHURCHES THAT HAVE REDUCED CHRISTIANITY TO THE SIMPLEST EQUATION – AND STAYED THERE.

Chapter Six

The writer continues (remember that chapter headings are NOT inspired): Hebrews 6:1-8 New King James  Therefore, leaving the discussion of the elementary principles of Christ, let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, [2] of the doctrine of baptisms, of laying on of hands, of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment. [3] And this we will do if God permits. [4] For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit, [5] and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, [6] if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance, since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God, and put Him to an open shame. [7] For the
earth which drinks in the rain that often comes upon it, and bears herbs useful for
those by whom it is cultivated, receives blessing from God; [8] but if it bears thorns
and briars, it is rejected and near to being cursed, whose end is to be burned.

These verses contain a shocking teaching. While I believe my salvation is
secure, it is possible for believers to turn away to the point of no return. A
believer who has known the fullness of God, who, by an act of his or her will,
tells God to leave him or her alone, and goes his or her own way, cannot come
back. Nor, I believe, will that person want to.

Hebrews 6:13-20  NKJV

For when God made a promise to Abraham, because He could swear by no one
greater, He swore by Himself, [14] saying, "Surely blessing I will bless you, and
multiplying I will multiply you." [15] And so, after he had patiently endured, he
obtained the promise. [16] For men indeed swear by the greater, and an oath for
confirmation is for them an end of all dispute. [17] Thus God, determining to show
more abundantly to the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed
it by an oath, [18] that by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to
lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the
hope set before us. [19] This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and
steadfast, and which enters the Presence behind the veil, [20] where the forerunner
has entered for us, even Jesus, having become High Priest forever according to the
order of Melchizedek.

Prior to Calvary, only one man, one time annually, had access to the literal presence of
God and that was the high priest of Israel. He would enter cautiously behind the great
veil of the Temple that separated the Holy of Holies. In that tiny room was the Ark of
the Covenant, and the physical presence of God. It was better for him not to linger long
there for man could only endure so much of the eternities. But when Jesus died on
Calvary, at that precise moment the veil of the Temple was torn in two from top to the
bottom. God opened up His holy presence to anyone willing to enter in.

(Who was Melchizedek? He was a figure of great importance. He enters history in
Genesis 14. We learn of him in prophetic scripture in Psalm 110. Here in Hebrews
we learn of him in doctrine. He prefigures Christ’s priesthood. He has no record of
father, mother, birth or death. He was a temporary prototype of what we would know in
Christ.)

Chapter Seven

11
As noted in the box on the previous page, David foretold of the work of Messiah (Psalm 110:4). Hebrews continues the theme here that God had raised up a new priesthood, the high priest being Jesus Christ Himself. Hebrews 7:11-19 NKJV Therefore, if perfection were through the Levitical priesthood (for under it the people received the law), what further need was there that another priest should rise according to the order of Melchizedek, and not be called according to the order of Aaron? [12] For the priesthood being changed, of necessity there is also a change of the law. [13] For He of whom these things are spoken belongs to another tribe, from which no man has officiated at the altar.

[14] For it is evident that our Lord arose from Judah, of which tribe Moses spoke nothing concerning priesthood. [15] And it is yet far more evident if, in the likeness of Melchizedek, there arises another priest [16] who has come, not according to the law of a fleshly commandment, but according to the power of an endless life. [17] For He testifies: You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek." [18] For on the one hand there is an annulling of the former commandment because of its weakness and unprofitableness, [19] for the law made nothing perfect; on the other hand, there is the bringing in of a better hope, through which we draw near to God.

Yes, the Old Testament was divine and given by God but it made nothing perfect. But Christ, on the other hand, brought in a much better hope for all mankind, through which we draw near to God.

Chapter Eight

In the Old Testament, the mediator, the national high priest was a man. A mere man. But Hebrews teaches us that our High Priest is not only Priest, but the perfect sacrifice for sins as well!

Hebrews 8:7-13 NKJV For if that first covenant had been faultless, then no place would have been sought for a second. [8] Because finding fault with them, He says: "Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah-- [9] not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they did not continue in My covenant, and I disregarded them, says the Lord. [10] For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put My laws in their mind and write them on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. [11] None of them shall teach his neighbor, and none his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them. [12] For
I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more." [13] In that He says, "A new covenant," He has made the first obsolete. Now what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away.

How is the New Covenant superior? In the Old Testament, God wrote His laws TO the people; in the New Testament God wrote His laws IN the people. Their very lives would be the transcript of His agreement (covenant). Then God promised He would be our God and we would be His people (verse 10). And finally He promised to be merciful to us. "Amazing grace – how sweet the sound!"

Chapter Nine

Hebrews 9:1-5 NKJV Then indeed, even the first covenant had ordinances of divine service and the earthly sanctuary. [2] For a tabernacle was prepared: the first part, in which was the lampstand, the table, and the showbread, which is called the sanctuary; [3] and behind the second veil, the part of the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of All, [4] which had the golden censer and the ark of the covenant overlaid on all sides with gold, in which were the golden pot that had the manna, Aaron’s rod that budded, and the tablets of the covenant; [5] and above it were the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat. Of these things we cannot now speak in detail.

The Tabernacle (Exodus) was not very big - about 15 feet wide and 45 feet long. The linen fence enclosure around it was about 75 x 100 feet. The tabernacle itself was divided into two rooms. Only priests could enter them. The first room was 15 x 30 feet and contained several things:

- the lampstand, an elaborately-wrought menorah (7-branched candlestick) made of pure gold.
- a small altar table about 2 feet long, covered with gold, which held little cakes or shewbread.
- in front of the veil was an altar of incense
- behind the veil was the second room, much smaller - 15 x 15 x 15 - a cube, which contained the Ark of the Covenant. This room was the Holy of Holies.

Outside in the courtyard stood the great brazen altar of sacrifice and the laver for cleansing. This tabernacle - portable - was the center of Jewish worship until Solomon constructed the Temple in Jerusalem. Everything about this tabernacle foreshadowed Christ and His atonement on Calvary.

Hebrews 9:16-22 NKJV For where there is a testament, there must also of
necessity be the death of the testator. [17] For a testament is in force after men are
dead, since it has no power at all while the testator lives. [18] Therefore not even the
first covenant was dedicated without blood. [19] For when Moses had spoken every
precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and goats,
with water, scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book itself and all the
people, [20] saying, "This is the blood of the covenant which God has commanded
you." [21] Then likewise he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle and all the
vessels of the ministry. [22] And according to the law almost all things are purified
with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no remission.

The New Testament is really Christ’s “will” for His followers. No will goes into effect
until the death of the one who made it. That person must die first. Christ came to make
the great covenant between God and man. It could not go into force until His death.
None of our salvation would be possible without Christ’s going to the cross!

Chapter Ten

After writing about the privileges we have in Christ, the writer challenges us concerning
those who take Christ’s death as something “common” - or “take it or leave it;” Hebrews
10:29-31 NKJV Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be
thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of
the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of
grace? [30] For we know Him who said, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the
Lord. And again, "The Lord will judge His people." [31] It is a fearful thing to fall
into the hands of the living God. Oh, there is so much more to God’s nature than His
love alone (thank God for that, but there is more): What about God’s justice? Do we
want to consider that? Or - His honor? If a person - or group entity - defies the living
God, do they really think there will be no reaction?

Chapter Eleven

I have preached from this chapter again and again - the golden roll call of heroes of the
FAITH. Hebrews 11:1-6 KJV Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the
evidence of things not seen. [2] For by it the elders obtained a good report. [3]
Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so
that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear. [4] By faith
Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained
witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet
speaketh. [5] By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was
not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this

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testimony, that he pleased God. [6] But without faith it is impossible to please him:
for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them
that diligently seek him. The rest of the chapter deals with men and women in the
Word exhibited faith in their earthly lives. Note - some to great victories, yet others
dying in their faith: Hebrews 11:33-40  KJV  Who through faith subdued
kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions,
[34] Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness
were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.
[35] Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not
accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection: [36] And others
had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and
imprisonment: [37] They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were
slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being
destitute, afflicted, tormented; [38] (Of whom the world was not worthy:) they
wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. [39] And
these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: [40]
God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be
made perfect. Don’t make the mistake of equating faith with earthly acquisition or
victories alone. We’re not home yet.

Chapter Twelve

We are somewhat like sports players on the field, being cheered on by those who have
gone before us: Hebrews 12:1-2  KJV  Wherefore seeing we also are compassed
about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin
which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before
us, [2] Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that
was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the
right hand of the throne of God.

What a range of characters were listed in the previous chapter, all of them cheering us on:
Abel, a son; Noah, a father’ Abraham, an adventurer; Sarah, a mother; Joseph, a Prime
Minister; Moses, born a slave; Rahab, a prostitute; Gideon, a farmer; Samson, a playboy;
Jephthah, an illegitimate child - and so many others. There are as many stories of God’s
call and faithfulness as there are people!

Chapter Twelve

Much of this chapter deals with God’s holiness (His divine moral, mental, spiritual
health). Hebrews 12:8-9  Only irresponsible parents leave children to fend for
themselves. Would you prefer an irresponsible God? [9] We respect our own parents for training and not spoiling us, so why not embrace God's training so we can truly live? God sometimes spanks us when we get out of line. Why? Because He loves us. A good parent truly raises a child to be a great adult. It would be irresponsible to raise a child to do only what he or she wants.

This chapter gives us a strong reaching on the end time: Hebrews 12:27-28 KJV And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. [28] Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear:

One day, everything that CAN be shaken WILL be shaken....so that those things that CANNOT be shaken will REMAIN. What a strong guide for the way we conduct our lives before Him.

Chapter Thirteen

This book closes by giving us five great principles: Hebrews 13:1-6 KJV Let brotherly love continue. [2] Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares. [3] Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body. [4] Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge. [5] Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. [6] So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.

• Interpersonal relationships
• Hospitality
• Sympathy for those in difficulty
• Sexual purity
• Contentment

Hebrews 13:18-25 KJV

Pray for us: for we trust we have a good conscience, in all things willing to live honestly. [19] But I beseech you the rather to do this, that I may be restored to you the sooner. [20] Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, [21] Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for
ever and ever. Amen. [22] And I beseech you, brethren, suffer the word of exhortation: for I have written a letter unto you in few words. [23] Know ye that our brother Timothy is set at liberty; with whom, if he come shortly, I will see you. [24] Salute all them that have the rule over you, and all the saints. They of Italy salute you. [25] Grace be with you all. Amen.

In this beautiful closing statement, the author encourages us to press forward to a state of completeness in God’s will. We should be well-balanced, strong in every area of our lives. Do we know God’s Word well? Wonderful! Now what about our spirit, our attitude? Are we faithful in just one or two areas while we let down in others? We are encouraged in this passage to strive for complete experience in the Lord.....as is stated in verse 21, “...well pleasing in His sight.”

When next we meet: JAMES