

INCENTIVES FOR PERSEVERANCE

(Part Three)

TEXT: Hebrews 10:12-23

INTRODUCTION: It is an observation of fact as well as a spiritual principle that “*the just shall live by [his] faith*” (10:38 quoting Hab. 2:4). It is **God** Who works in us to persevere in faith, but we are not mere passive robots.

“It is by **faith alone** that men are saved, but the faith that saves is never alone.”

Saving faith is always accompanied by persevering grace. It is “*through faith*” that we are **kept** as well as **saved** (1 Pet. 1:5, Lk. 22:32).

Our specific circumstances may be different from those of the Jews to whom the writer of the book of Hebrews was written. But we need the same spiritual **incentives** that he gave these first-century believers facing persecution for their faith. All of these incentives focus on the person and work of Jesus Christ. He is the “*author and the finisher [perfector]*” of our faith (Heb. 12:2). We must therefore look to Him for **sanctification** even as we looked in faith to Him for our **justification**.

OUTLINE: What six truths from the epistle to the Hebrews do we need to consider if we would persevere and “finish strong”?

I. The Sinless Life of Christ

(2:17,18; 4:14-16)

A. His Incarnation

B. His Impeccability (John 14:30)

C. His Identification with us (Acts 9:4)

1. Our ‘infirmities’
2. Our sins

II. The Present Mediation of Christ

(7:24,25)

A. Praying that we will be **kept** (Jn. 17:11)

B. Praying that our **faith** will not **fail** (Lk. 22:32)

III. The Sufficient Atonement of Christ

(10:12-23)

A. Produces **assurance** (v. 22)

1. Through the witness of the **Holy Spirit** (v. 15)
2. Through the witness of the **blood** (“*hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience*”)

3. Through the witness of the **water** (“*and our bodies washed with pure water*”)

B. Produces **steadfastness** (v. 23)

1. Faith which implies obedience and righteousness

2. Righteousness which produces peace and assurance (Isa. 32:17)

IV. A View of Heavenly Rewards
(10:34-37)

A. Minimizes temporal **loss** (v. 34)

B. Produces **patience** (v. 36)

C. Focuses on the **Second Coming** of Christ (v. 37).

V. The Successful Race of Other Christians
(12:1)

A. Because their **agony** was not in vain (Gk. for “race”)

B. Because their **circumstances** were not different from ours (chap. 11)

C. Because their **perfection** is tied to ours (11:40)

VI. A View of God’s Purpose in Chastening
(12:3-8)

A. Cause for **consolation** (v. 6)

B. Reassured by His **restraint** (v. 11, 1 Cor. 10:13)

C. Results in **meekness** (Job 34:31)

CONCLUSION: There is both a **divine** and **human** side to **sanctification**. God “*works in*” what we “*work out*” (Phil. 2:12,13). Our salvation is an accomplished fact because of Christ’s finished work, if indeed we have truly “believed” on Him. No human being can give this assurance. Only the Holy Spirit can bear witness to unseen spiritual realities.

“The Holy Spirit Who comes from Heaven bears witness of what is in Heaven” (A. Murray). He does not reveal it to the mind but to the **heart** of the one who is lowly and contrite. Dwelling in us, He not only makes us aware of Christ’s present work of mediation, but He gives full witness to all the efficacy and sufficiency of Christ’s past atoning work. Do not fear to take Christ as your own in all of His work on your behalf!