



2022 1Q In These Last Days: The Message of Hebrews Lesson 11: Jesus, Author and Perfector of Our Faith

by Tim Jennings (announcements last page)

SABBATH

Read memory text:

“Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God” (Hebrews 12:2 NIV84).

What does this text mean to you?

This text contains 5 powerful truths for us.

1. God’s Design Law

One of God’s design laws is operational in this instruction—which one? The law of worship, by beholding we are changed. We actually become like the God we worship and admire. Thus, we are to fix our minds, hearts, affections upon Jesus.

2. Joy set before Him

What is the joy? What is the motive for His action?

What was Jesus achieving on the cross?

Was Jesus’ trying to persuade His Father of something or was Jesus the living Word of God doing everything exactly as the Father would do if the Father were the one who came in human form?

Consider this quote from *That I May Know Him*:

- Had God the Father come to our world and dwelt among us, humbling Himself, veiling His glory, that humanity might look upon Him, the history that we have of the life of Christ would not have been changed.... In every act of Jesus, in every lesson of His instruction, we are to see and hear and recognize God. In sight, in hearing, in effect, it is the voice and movements of the Father. TMK 338.4

What was the joy? Jesus understood that sin destroys, it breaks the bonds of love and trust and



obstructs God's living giving presence from flowing into and through people. Jesus understood that He was purging, overcoming, destroying the sin infection and restoring humanity to unity with God and His joy was from:

- fulfilling His Father's will—what joy do you know His Father was proud of Him, that His Father admired and loved what He was doing. That His Father would say, “Well done Son, you have revealed my character perfectly and eradicated the infection of fear and selfishness destroying humanity. My heart is bursting with affection for you!”
 - Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross! Therefore **God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father** (Php 2:5–11 NIV84).
- the knowledge that His sacrifice would not only save the species in His own humanity, not only fulfill the Father's will in revealing the truth about God that secures the unfallen universe, not only because the Father was proud of Him, but because He so loved us and knew that His sacrifice would save all who trust Him and restore them to perfection and eternal life.

What kind of war was Jesus waging? How did Jesus fight it? Is there a lesson for us as we face the injustices coming upon the world today?

3. Author and Perfector of our Faith

What does it mean the author and perfector or finisher of our faith?

The Greek for Author can also be “leader,” “originator,” “founder,” “pioneer.”

What does it mean that Jesus is the originator, founder, author, leader, pioneer also the “perfector” or “finisher” of our faith?

What do you understand faith to be? There is context here, this description of Jesus being the author and finisher of our faith comes right after the long description of faith in chapter 11.

From chapter 11 what do we understand faith to be?

- Is it believing a certain set of doctrines?
- Is it adhering to a certain creed?
- Is it doing certain rituals or ceremonies?

Or is living faith something operational between two living beings? How, what does it do? Any synonyms for faith? The best English synonym is trust—faith is our living trust relationship with God.



Saving faith is a trust agreement between the sinner and God. It is a bond of intelligent, functional understanding—loyalty, devotion, trust, and confidence in God that results in real action and real change in the sinner.

In Hebrews 11:1, the Greek word translated as “substance” is hypostasis. The first part of the word (sub) is from the Greek hypo and means low or under, as in hypoglycemia (low blood sugar) or hypotension (low blood pressure). The last part of the word (stance) is from the Greek stasis and means standing. This Greek word (hypostasis) was translated into a Latin-based word (substance); the first half, sub, means low or under, as in subway or subterranean; the last half, stance, means standing.

Translated into modern English, faith is our “understanding of things hoped for.” This understanding has two meanings, both of which apply to our faith: 1) an understanding *of* God, and 2) an understanding *with* God.

Jesus is the Author and Finisher of our understanding with God. Our faith relationship with God, our trust in God, requires that we know Him, and the first part of our *understanding* is to have the lies about God destroyed by the truth that Jesus revealed. Jesus is the author or originator of our faith because Jesus is the source of the truth which destroys the lies of Satan and win us back to trust.

And then in that trust relationship with God, understanding He is trustworthy, understanding we have a terminal sin condition we cannot fix or cure, we enter into a new understanding *with* God, an agreement with God, some call this a covenant with God.

This understanding *with* God is a covenant transaction—not a legal transaction. It is like the marriage covenant. When two people get married (as God designed, not as the state legally encodes), they commit to be faithful, loyal, and devoted to one another, forsaking all previous and all other potential love-interests. They commit to go to each other and work together through difficulties, to overcome obstacles together, and to not betray the best interests of the other.

We know God and trust Him with our lives, our hearts, minds, families, fortunes and futures. We trust that if we run to Him daily, with every fear, insecurity, failing, shortcoming, hurt, anxiety, distress, victory, and celebration that He will finish the work of healing our hearts and minds. He is our Healer, we are His patient. We must trust Him and follow where He leads and we trust that His Remedy will fix all that is broken in us as long as we don't break trust with Him.

Jesus establishes or authors our faith by providing all the evidence to win us to trust. And Jesus, having been tempted in all points like us yet without sin, having developed a perfect sinless human character, becomes the finisher of our faith as He reproduces Himself in us, such that “it is no longer I that live but Christ lives in me.” We die to fear and selfishness and live to love God and others more than self. This is all the work of Jesus, our work is to choose to trust Him and follow where He leads.

4. Scorning the Shame



What do you make of the idea of Jesus scorning the shame of the cross?

What does shame cause people to do?

Shame causes people to fear rejection, fear embarrassment, fear others will condemn them and not like them. Thus shame causes people to isolate, to hide their true selves, to create all kinds of psychological defenses and to avoid really being known. In other words, shame causes people to divide and separate not come into at-one-ment.

Jesus as the cross is our atonement—His actions and victory removes the dividing walls and all who experience Jesus are known and are able to be known and come into the unity of our faith, to be loved despite their history of sin and shame.

This is one of the reasons the 12 step groups are healing, in those groups people disclose themselves. “Hi, I’m Joe and I’m and alcoholic” and they are accepted as a person struggling. The alcoholism, the problem, the addiction, the bad behaviors done under the influence are not accepted, the *person* the *sinner* is accepted. And this is part of the healing that is supposed to be experienced in the church. That we confess our sins one to another, not for the purpose of legal accounting, for judicial adjustment, for forgiveness even, but for the purpose of despising or overcoming the shame inherent in sin. That having been reconciled to Christ, have been reborn with a new heart and right spirit, we are freed from the shame and no longer live in fear.

But it is important to recognize, that shame just like guilt can be appropriate or inappropriate. A person can experience both guilt and shame because they have objectively done wrong (sinned), or a person can experience guilt and shame because they believe a lie when they have not objectively done wrong. This often happens when something wrong has happened to them.

Consider the difference in the shame a woman who commits adultery experiences, with the shame a woman who has been raped experiences. One has genuine shame, due to having shamed herself in the choice to violate her own values, vows, morals, God’s design etc. and the resolution necessarily requires repentance, a real heart change, and confession appropriate mature Christians who can know her and still love her and validate her heart transformation and new life of victory and loyalty in Christ.

But the woman who is raped and feels shame, has false shame because she has done no objective wrong. Her shame is based on a lie of some type that being abused by another in some way diminishes her. There is no need for her to repent or confess any wrong, yet her situation may very well require her to reveal herself to others, NOT for the purpose of being forgiven as the adulterer seeks, but for the purpose of disabusing the lie operating in her mind that she is shameful.

Understanding this reality is part of what enabled Christ to despise the shame of the Cross because He knew who He was and that the shame of the experience was actually upon those who rejected and crucified Him, and not on Him. Thus “Father forgiven them they don’t know what they are doing... they think they are shaming me – but it is actually shame on them.” Christ, when he was lifted up



“drew all” unto Himself, thus He knew His act was an act of supreme glory and not shame.

5. Sat down right hand of God’s Throne

Does this mean He is not our High Priest ministering in the heavenly sanctuary?

Not at all—both this description sitting at the right hand of God’s throne and the descriptions of Jesus in the heavenly sanctuary are visual images to connote function, power, authority, ability, position, and activity.

The right hand of God is the way of saying God’s Hand—He has the power, ability, authority to act with the fullness of God. This phrase is not a phrase of physical locality it is a description of divine authority.

Likewise the descriptions of Jesus in the heavenly sanctuary as our High Priest are also not descriptions of physical locality but authority and function—Jesus has the remedy for sin and the ability and authority to apply that remedy to heal sinners and Jesus is doing that work. That is the message of the heavenly sanctuary.

Jesus saved the human race in His own person as a real human overcoming sin when He died on the cross and rose again as an immortal sinless human. In doing so He procured the remedy to sin and is in heaven administering that remedy to all who trust Him, i.e. finishing our faith. This is metaphorically taught in the sanctuary imagery.

SUNDAY

The lesson asks us to read Hebrews 10:35-39:

So do not throw away your confidence; it will be richly rewarded. You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what he has promised. For in just a very little while, “He who is coming will come and will not delay. But my righteous one will live by faith. And if he shrinks back, I will not be pleased with him.” But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who believe and are saved (Hebrews 10:35-39 NIV84).

What does this text mean to you?

Upon what is our confidence in God based? Read Friday paragraph 2 and 3 from *Steps to Christ*:

God never asks us to believe, without giving sufficient evidence upon which to base our faith. His existence, His character, the truthfulness of His word, are all established by testimony that **appeals to our reason**; and this testimony is abundant. Yet God has never removed the possibility of doubt. **Our faith must rest upon evidence, not demonstration.**



Those who wish to doubt will have opportunity; while those who really desire to know the truth will find **plenty of evidence on which to rest their faith.** SC 105.2

It is impossible for finite minds **fully to comprehend** the character or the works of the Infinite One. To the keenest intellect, the most highly educated mind, that holy Being must ever remain clothed in mystery. “Canst thou by searching find out God? canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection? It is as high as heaven; what canst thou do? deeper than hell; what canst thou know?” Job 11:7, 8. SC 105.3

What is our faith to be based upon? Evidence, what is evidence? That which reveals truth, which makes things plain, which validates, confirms, gives confidence in something.

What are the three threads of evidence God has given us?

- Scripture
- Science/nature
- Experience

And when all three of these threads come to the same conclusion then we can have confidence in the position.

What is the evidence for the existence of God?

- Scripture
 - The declarations of Scripture—God created heaven and earth;
 - The testimony of people who encountered God
 - The testimony and historical life of Jesus
 - The prophecies written beforehand and then fulfilled
 - The design laws of God described within
- Science/nature
 - The various laws upon which life is built: love, liberty, truth, worship, exertion, laws of health etc.
 - The absolute reliability of the life-giving and health promoting aspects of harmony with God’s design laws for life
 - The complexity of life—no living organism can exist by one piece of it developing without the other pieces also being operational at the same time. Thus it is impossible for life to occur on its own, it requires a Creator.
 - The second law of thermodynamics that nothing naturally organizes itself and becomes more complex, all things decay and become more random unless some intelligence puts in energy to organize it. Consider leaving your house for 20 years and coming back to see if it has been improved or decayed.
 - The reality that life never comes from non-living material, life comes from life. All those scientists who claim that life comes from non-living matter on their own have the burden to demonstrate this. Until they can reproduce this they have no evidence. Those who teach Creation have evidence of the entire world that life comes from living organisms.
 - Life requires coded information in the DNA/RNA of all living organisms and



information cannot randomly form and code itself, it requires and intelligence.

- Experience
 - Every individual experience of grace, resolution of guilt and shame and transformation of an untrustworthy exploiter into a trustworthy lover of others.
 - Our own personal relationship with God

What about the evidence for God's character?

- The fact that sin exists—if God were like Satan alleges, how would God have handled any questioning, any rebellion? Like every human dictator, with crushing power to destroy. But God has handled it with truth, love, and liberty, because what God wants is love and friendship and this can never be achieved with imposed laws and coercive force.
 - God could have destroyed Satan and his sympathizers as easily as one can cast a pebble to the earth; but **He did not do this. Rebellion was not to be overcome by force. Compelling power is found only under Satan's government.** The Lord's principles are not of this order. His authority rests upon goodness, mercy, and love; and the presentation of these principles is the means to be used. **God's government is moral, and truth and love are to be the prevailing power.** DA 759.1
- The life of Jesus—who is God in human flesh and if we have seen Jesus we have seen the Father

What about the trustworthiness of God's Word? What evidence is there for this?

- It is historically very accurate
- It reveals God's character through history
- Bible prophecies that have come true
- The principles or design laws that it reveals
- But most importantly the revelation of Jesus Christ

Hebrews 10 speaks about the faithful receiving the promise of God—what is the promise we are to receive?

Does God promise we will experience earthly wealth, health, and long life? What does God promise?

Consider for a moment heroes like Daniel, Job, and Paul—did these individuals receive the promise of God? Didn't Job suffer terrible losses of family, wealth and health? Didn't Daniel experience loss of freedom, being taken as a captive? Didn't Paul get imprisoned, beaten and eventually executed?

What is the promise that they received and that all the faithful will receive? Eternal life and inheritance of the earth made new! The meek shall inherit the earth!

How do we handle the difficulties of this world? How are we to face trials, tribulations, injustices as members of God's family? How are we to war against Satan's forces?

When you read stories like Joseph, Daniel, Paul, how did they wage war? How are we to wage war



today?

Satan assailed Christ with fierce and subtle temptations; but he was repulsed in every conflict. Those victories make it possible for us to conquer. Christ will give strength to all who seek it. **No man without his own consent can be overcome by Satan.** The tempter has no power to control the will or force the soul to sin. **He can cause distress, but not defilement.** The fact that Christ conquered should inspire His followers with courage to fight the battle against sin and Satan (EG White *From Here to Forever* 314).

The text in Hebrews also says, “For in just a very little while, ‘He who is coming will come and will not delay.’” What does this mean?

Has there been a delay? The lesson suggests that there is an appointed time for God to fulfill His promises, what do you think of this idea?

The Bible uses language like this, “the appointed time,” “when the times are fulfilled” etc., what does it mean?

Does it mean that God appoints a time and regardless of circumstances He says “time is up, here I come ready or not”? Or, does appointed times mean that God looks through the corridors of time and knows exactly when the circumstances are right for Him to act, when the people will be ready for the action He has promise to take?

As we consider this idea of an appointed time, let’s include what Peter wrote:

But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a **day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness.** He is patient with you, **not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.** But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare. Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives as you look forward to the day of God and **speed its coming.** That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat. But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness. (2 Pe 3:8–13 NIV84).

This is speaking primarily of the second coming, with a non-detailed overview of the final end of sin and sinners at end of the 1000 years when the earth is made new. But the context here is the second coming of Christ, in which the wicked will die the first death and go to sleep to be raised again at the end of the 1000 years. So the fires here are the fires of combustion that melt elements and would be similar to the fires that destroyed Sodom. These are not the fires that destroy sin as described in Isaiah 33:14,15.

But, let’s focus on the question of appointed times—what does appointed time mean in light of what



Peter has written?

Can we hasten the day? How?

When the gospel of the kingdom goes to the entire world then the end will come.

What is the gospel? The good news, but about what? God's kingdom—and God's kingdom is not of this world—so what is the good news to go to the world?

The truth about God's character of love, which is the foundation, source, basis of His law of love, truth, liberty upon which He created the universe to operate.

Thus the good news is that God and His government are not like human governments. No imposed rules, no imposed punishments, no external restrictions upon our freedoms, no censoring, no limits on free speech, assembly, worship. In God's kingdom we have complete and unlimited freedom because every single being there will love God and others and have internal self-control that all restraints to do evil are from themselves having God's law written upon their hearts. Each saint in heaven and the angels would rather die that sin—in fact having been transformed sin is repulsive.

MONDAY

What do you understand the purpose was of God telling Abraham to offer Isaac?

There were several purposes or reasons, but the primary one was for the healing of Abraham's character/heart/mind from sin.

What is the root element of sinfulness or the carnal nature that we are all born with and which tempts each of us?

Fear and selfishness, the me-first survival drives caused by fear.

Salvation is dying to fear and selfishness and being reborn with a new heart and right spirit so that “we do not love our lives so much as to shrink from death.”

Jesus said to his disciples, “If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will find it (Mt 16:24–25 NIV84).

Abraham's faith relationship with God was a growing, healing, transforming experience. It wasn't instantaneous victory over every deep root of fear and selfishness, it was a living faith relationship that required Abraham to make choices along the way. We see Abraham's faith in:

- Leaving Ur
- Fighting to recover Lot



- Allowing Lot to choose which portion he wanted and trusting God with his own future and fortune
- Trusting that he would have a son and be the father of a great nation
- But Abraham also struggled with doubts, fears, insecurities and ended up distrusting God by taking Hagar to try and fulfill the promise of God with his own ability
- We see fear and selfishness intrude when he lied about Sarah, twice, in order to protect himself
- So while Abraham trusts God, Abraham still struggled to apply that trust fully to surrender every fear, and selfish desire to God. So after God miraculously allowed Sarah to become pregnant and give birth to Isaac, He instructed Abraham to sacrifice the child who was the fulfillment of the promise. And what would that instruction cause Abraham to arise within Abraham—not because God placed it there, but because it was always there and God wanted to draw it out and removed it—doubt, fear and selfishness. God did this so that Abraham could face His deep fears and the selfishness within and choose to trust God with what was more important to him than his own life and finally get the victory over his own fear and selfishness.

There were other purposes in addition to therapeutically intervening to solidify Abraham in trust, and those reasons include:

- Allowing Abraham to know God more fully, to gain insight into the plan of salvation and empathize with God's heart in sacrificing Jesus
- Be an object lesson of the plan of salvation
- Be an example of faithfulness to generations to come
- To demonstrate that God NEVER requires child sacrifice. Don't miss the point here. While God instructed Abraham to do this—to help Abraham overcome his doubts and fears, God actually stopped and prevented human sacrifice. So this is an example or evidence that God never accepts human sacrifice.

TUESDAY

Read first paragraph, “Moses is the second...” What do you think that Moses' life highlights defiance of the king?

The Bible not only records real people who did real historic things, but many of the stories are object lessons to teach the plan of salvation.

The story of the Hebrews in Egypt and Moses is one of this real historic events that teaches a larger reality.

- Egypt represents this world of sin
- Pharaoh represents Satan the ruler of this world of sin
- The Hebrews were slaves in Egypt
 - and we are slaves to sin
- Moses was born a slave in Egypt
 - we are born in sin conceived in iniquity



- The king of Egypt claimed the lives of the Hebrew babies
 - Satan claims the lives of all who are born in sin
- Moses parents rejected the legal claims of the king of Egypt
 - Those who know Jesus reject the legal claims of Satan to the lives of their children
- Moses parents put him in a basket on the water
 - Our parents dedicate us to God and put us in His care
- Moses sister watched over the basket
 - Families and church members watch over our growing children
- God provided opportunity for Moses to be educated by his own mother in the things of God
 - God provides opportunity for the faithful to educate their children in His truth
- God provided Moses educational opportunities in Egypt that would prepare him for his later work
 - God provides us with education in the world to prepare us for His work
- Moses had to choose at some point which kingdom He would identify and align with, Egypt or Israel
 - We have to choose whose kingdom do we align with and whose the methods, laws, and principles we practice
- Moses rejected Egypt and became the deliverer of the people, and led them through the Red Sea, metaphor of baptism, to journey to the promised land
 - We are to reject the principles of this world be immersed into the baptism of the Holy Spirit so we will enter the promised land

WEDNESDAY

What do you think of including Rahab the prostitute in the long list of faithful in Hebrews 11? Isn't it beautiful? Doesn't her inclusion speak hope to everyone of us who have histories marred by ugliness?

And what is the action that Rahab is noted for? Hiding the spies and lying to keep them hidden, why would this be noteworthy to be in the hall of faith?

Did it take faith for Rahab to do this? Did Rahab put her life on the line? Was she willing to sacrifice herself to protect others? And those she chose to protect was based upon what? Did she have some thread of insight, light, hope, and faith in the God of the Hebrews? And she chose to act on that faith and align herself with God.

We don't have a text that God said "well lied Rahab" we have a text that basically says, "Well done, you chose me!"

But Rahab would know very little of God's character, she would know very little of God's methods, principles or preferences, and thus Rahab chose as a child to follow God. And her faith resulted in actions that were meaningful, even though her comprehension was still childlike.



This is a good example of what the Bible means when it says, “man looks on the outward appearance but the Lord looks on the heart.”

The imposed law view, the satanic view, the legal view, is about the deeds and actions, but the healing view, the reality of God’s kingdom is always about the condition of the heart.

Here we have the case of a person whose heart was won to trust in God and chose to act on that trust in a way that she lied, she bore a false witness against her neighbors in Jericho by hiding terrorists bent on destroying all the men, women and children in that city. But she did it because her heart was right.

Who knows if she would have had the faith of Daniel and his friends if she might not have spoken the truth, been called before the city leaders, and God intervene with a miracle like the lions or the fiery furnace and the city responds like Nineveh?



ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Materials in Australia

Simon and Maani Harrison have a Facebook group in Australia and have the following Come and Reason resources available in Australia:

- The Remedy New Testament
- The Remedy Psalms
- *Could It Be This Simple?*
- The Heavenly Sanctuary and Investigative Judgment for the Modern World
- First set of tracts

You can email Simon at australia@comeandreason.com

Materials in South Africa

Jacques van den Heever has materials available in South Africa you can contact him and Order using his NEW EMAIL: southafrica@comeandreason.com

New Release: The Final Message of Mercy to the World—The Three Angels, magazine.

You can read a digital version online at our website. Here is a link to the flip version <https://comeandreason.com/files/flipbooks/3Angels/>