

## Hebrews 5:4-6:3

### I. Review

A. It has been 3 weeks since we were in Hebrews last – do you still remember what the theme is? *Jesus is better*

1. Chapters 1 & 2: Jesus is better than the angels
2. Chapter 3: Jesus is better than Moses
3. Here in chapter 5: Jesus is better than the high priest

### B. 5:1-3

1. We saw that the High Priest is taken from *among* men, meaning that he is *not over* men
2. Aaron was a prime example of a man who was undeserving and unqualified to stand before the Lord presenting sin offerings on behalf of the people
3. He himself needed a sin offering to be made on his own behalf before he could offer for others
4. The man that God chooses must be able to understand his own human frailty and sin nature
5. Verse 4 gives the application of verses 1-3

### II. 5:4-11

#### A. 5:4

1. “No man takes this honor to himself”
  - a. Aaron didn’t choose himself, nor did Moses choose Him – God chose Aaron
  - b. Aaron did not choose his son Eleazar to succeed him – God did
  - c. Eleazar did not choose Phinehas as his successor – God did
2. Jesus, God Incarnate chose Peter, James, John and all the others including Judas Iscariot
3. No man *should* take this honor to himself, but some men do anyway

4. Too many men have ended up in the ministry who didn't belong there because they chose themselves
5. And when they go into the ministry being educated for the ministry, but not called by God, one of three things eventually happens:
  - a. They learn the hard way that the ministry can be a meatgrinder, and they end up getting chewed up & spit out, and they leave the ministry embittered
  - b. They stack up degrees like cordwood and turn the ministry into an academic pursuit, hoping to garner the respect of their colleagues
  - c. After experiencing how hard ministry can be, they humble themselves, admit their error, and turn to the Lord, who shows them grace and mercy and begins to develop them for ministry His way
  - d. I was on this path in college, until I heard the voice of the Lord tell me in a campus Bible Study, "Tom, I haven't called you."
  - e. Fortunately, I listened and gave up any aspirations of going into the ministry at that point
  - f. In fact, I determined NOT to go into the ministry at all - well, we see how *that* worked out! 🙄
6. But in all seriousness, a couple of years after I graduated, I availed myself to the Lord to use me however He saw fit, and He enrolled me into the seminary of life that lasted 23 years before He put me in the ministry full time
7. Any man that chooses himself, only has himself to look to for help and guidance when he faces the inevitable challenges of ministry
8. Far too many who entered into the ministry never once heard Jesus say, "as My Father has sent Me, I also send you."

B. 5:5a

1. In the same way, Jesus did not choose himself
2. In the gospel of John alone, Jesus acknowledged 33 times that God sent Him
3. The last time He says that God sent Him is in 20:21, where He says, “as My Father has sent Me, I also send you.”
4. We have a High Priest chosen by God, and He is God’s only begotten Son and no other

C. 5:5b-6

1. Verse 5 is quoting Psalm 2:7 – the full context in Psalm 2 from verse 6 to verse 9 reads:

“6 Yet I have set My King on My holy hill of Zion.” 7 “I will declare the decree: The Lord has said to Me, ‘You are My Son, today I have begotten You.”

8 Ask of Me, and I will give You the nations for Your inheritance, and the ends of the earth for Your possession. 9 You shall break them with a rod of iron; You shall dash them to pieces like a potter’s vessel.”

2. In other words, even when Christ returns as king, He will have the nations as an inheritance *because His Father will give it to Him!*

3. Melchizedek is an interesting figure in scripture - he is mentioned nine places in scripture:

- a. Psalm 110:4, which is quoted here in verse 6

“4 The Lord has sworn and will not relent, “You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.”

- b. But to gain the full context of the passage, we need to look at verses 1-6:

“1 The Lord said to my Lord, “Sit at My right hand, till I make Your enemies Your footstool.” 2 The Lord shall send the rod of Your strength out of Zion. Rule in the midst of Your enemies!

3 Your people shall be volunteers in the day of Your power; in the beauties of holiness, from the womb of the morning, You have the dew of Your youth.

4 The Lord has sworn and will not relent, “You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.”

5 The Lord is at Your right hand; He shall execute kings in the day of His wrath. 6 He shall judge among the nations, He shall fill the places with dead bodies, He shall execute the heads of many countries.”

c. Gen 14:18

“Then Melchizedek king of Salem (*peace*) brought out bread and wine; he was the priest of God Most High”

d. Genesis 14 continues:

“19 And he (*Melchizedek*) blessed him (*Abram*) and said: “Blessed be Abram of God Most High, possessor of heaven and earth; 20 and blessed be God Most High, Who has delivered your enemies into your hand.”

And he (*Abram*) gave him (*Melchizedek*) a tithe of all.”

e. This was prior to the institution of the Levitical priesthood

f. Both of the passages quoted in verses 5 & 6 point to the millennial reign of Christ

g. Melchizedek will be mentioned again in verse 10 of chapter 5, once at the tail end of chapter 6, and 6 times in chapter 7

h. Because chapter 7 will talk more extensively concerning Melchizedek, I will save the majority of that discussion for when we get to chapter 7

- i. The subject of chapter 5 is Christ Jesus, our High Priest and priesthood is forever

D. 5:7-8

“7 who (*speaking of Jesus*), in the days of His flesh . . .

1. Where it says, “in the days of His flesh”, it is referring to Jesus during his visitation in his mortal flesh on this earth
2. The last word in verse 7 is ‘fear’
  - a. Not *phobos* – fright, fear, terror
  - b. *eulabeia* – reverence, devotion, piety
  - c. Most of the English translations use ‘reverence’ instead of ‘fear’
3. Luke, in the 22<sup>nd</sup> chapter of his gospel, tells us in his gospel that while he was praying in the Garden of Gethsemane on the night of His arrest:

“ . . . He knelt down and prayed, 42 saying, “Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done.”

43 Then an angel appeared to Him from heaven, strengthening Him.  
44 And being in agony, He prayed more earnestly. Then His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground.”
4. Here in verse 7, we are told that God heard the prayer of His Son
5. In Isaiah 53:10, the prophet says that, “ . . . it pleased the Lord to bruise Him; He has put Him to grief.”
  - a. I can’t imagine how heart wrenching it must have been for the Lord to hear His Son’s plea, yet He followed through in sending His Son to suffer and die a horrible for the sake of a man like me

- b. Yet Jesus was faithful to the end and went willingly to the cross to make a way of salvation, even for the most wretched of sinners
- c. Jesus said that He had come not to do His own will, but the will of His Father who sent Him
- d. In His humanity, Jesus was obedient to stay the course knowing the importance of the outcome for mankind, and in it set an example for us: in our humanity, we too can be obedient to God

E. 5:9

- 1. This is not saying that Jesus was created imperfect or incomplete
- 2. It is saying that Jesus mission to make a way of salvation was *perfected* – made complete
- 3. Once His work on the cross was finished, the work to save us was done *by Him*, thus He became the author of salvation to all those who would believe in Him
- 4. Where the writer of Hebrews talks about eternal salvation in this verse, know that there is *no other kind of salvation*, because if it is not eternal, it is not salvation
- 5. Eternal salvation is not to be confused with the ‘eternal security’, which is the teaching that once a person is saved, they will always be saved, even if they reject Christ and become an enemy the gospel
- 6. So this is saying that by being obedient to the cross and having been tempted without sin, He became the perfect sacrifice in the completion of the finished work on the cross for all those who believe in Him
- 7. The author’s thought continues in verse 10, where Jesus is *still* the subject:

F. 5:10-11

1. I told you earlier that I don't want to get too far into the weeds regarding Melchizedek, we will save that for when we get to chapter 7
2. The point of verse 10 is that Jesus is our High Priest according to the order of Melchizedek, and not of Aaron
3. Jesus was from the tribe of Judah, and not the tribe of Levi
4. Melchizedek's priesthood was apart from, *and predated* the Levitical priesthood and the giving of the Law and by 500 to 600 years!
5. In that sense, Jesus, being the eternal Son of God, predated the Law, and His priesthood is apart the tribe of Levi
6. One of the things that we saw about Aaron is that he was a flawed man, as were his successors
7. The writer tells his audience that they have become dull of hearing
  - a. Dullness of hearing isn't a physical problem or a cognitive problem
  - b. Dullness of hearing is an infirmity of the will
  - c. It is the unwillingness to receive by faith the basics of our faith because of doubt or mistrust
  - d. Hopefully ~~we~~ haven't become dull of hearing!

III. 5:12-14

A. 5:12-13

1. Keep in mind that Hebrews was written to second generation Jewish believers who were already facing severe persecution
2. Most had been schooled in the Torah, which was their scriptures at this point
3. Some were considering returning to Judaism so that they might escape the persecution

4. When we get to chapter 6, we will see what those ‘first principles’ (or elementary principles) are
5. “You ought to be teachers, but you have come to need milk”
6. In other words, they had become a bunch of spiritual babies!
7. Babies of all species are supposed to grow up – natural course of all in the animal kingdom
  - a. A number of years ago, my then-middle-school daughter forced me to watch a documentary with her about a single guy in his thirties who worked at Home Depot and lived a pretty normal life out in public
  - b. The documentary showed him buying building materials and paint, to take home for a project to build
  - c. He made a very nice highchair big enough for him to sit in, and he was not a small fellow
  - d. He had a fantasy about being a baby, and found a woman who would live with him as his surrogate mother
  - e. Everyday when he drove home from his job at Home Depot, he would put on a diaper, and his surrogate mother would feed him in his high chair
  - f. He would eat with his hands, smear it on his face, and throw some on the floor just like a baby
  - g. Then his surrogate mother would warm a bottle like the ones used to feed calves, and cradle his upper body like a baby and give him his bottle
  - h. When necessary, she would also change his diaper for him and put him to bed
  - i. I have been crept out less by a dead body covered in maggots than by that documentary
  - j. I tell you this story so that you will remember it any time you might find yourself not wanting to grow in your faith



8. If you recently accepted Christ as your Savior, it is okay to be a babe in Christ, but only for a little while
9. It is necessary to learn the elementary principles of our salvation before we move on to the more difficult doctrines of the Bible
10. The author of Hebrews was saying that the Jewish believers should by now be able to understand and teach others about the resurrection from the Old Testament Scriptures, but instead they were still struggling over the basics concerning their own salvation
11. In Galatians, the problem was that both Jews and Gentiles were turning to the Law, thinking that it would somehow make them better
12. The problem being addressed in Hebrews is that the Jews were wanting to *go back to the dead works of the Law* which became dead in their usefulness to those who know Christ
13. In so doing, they needed to go back to the basic principles concerning their salvation
14. Sometimes we can become so enamored with the intellectualism and eloquence of certain preachers, that we fail to see their doctrinal error
15. When that happens, it is time to put that all aside and return to the uncomplicated basics of the faith
16. Our salvation should produce in us and through us works which originate by the Holy Spirit living in us, and are Spirit filled and Spirit led
17. Any works outside of that are of the flesh and produce fleshly results
18. When we add works of the flesh to our salvation, it tends to produce a sense of self-righteousness, which becomes legalism
19. In case I haven't made it clear by now, I hate legalism because it puts us back under bondage

B. 5:14

1. “By reason of use have their senses exercised”: in other words, ‘those who have *made a habit* of training for discernment’
2. I think that we all get excited when someone who has a rough past comes to Christ for the first time, or returns to Christ after having backslidden
3. But there is a danger *in that excitement*, because wolves in sheep’s clothing will often come in with a great story of how they got saved out of some pit of darkness
4. They know all the right words to say, and if they are believer, they are very unstable in their walk
5. And there are some who are working to figure out quickly who the easily-impressionable believers are who have difficulty discerning between good and evil, and will put on a show for them of what an on-fire Christian they are
6. All too often (and only once is too often), they will pick that person as their mark, and will take advantage of them
7. Jude 20-23 tells us:

“But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.

**And on some have compassion, making a distinction; but others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire, hating even the garment defiled by the flesh.”**

8. Discernment is not the same as the spiritual gift of discerning of spirits
9. Discernment comes through habitually training to discern

10. It is great to be enthusiastic about what we think the Lord might be doing in someone, yet we need to still exercise caution
11. We should neither be too quick to pass judgment, nor should we be too easily persuaded by an impressive story
12. It would follow that we should take time to wait and see who and what someone really is all about
13. This is one of the reasons why we have a rule that no one gets involved in ministry here until they have been here at least six months
14. In reality, there is no guarantee that just because someone has been here for six months that we will let them get involved in certain ministries
15. In fact, there are some ministries in this fellowship where we want to observe a person for a longer period of time before we put them in that ministry

**\*\*POSSIBLE STOPPING POINT\*\***

IV. 6:1-8

A. 6:1-3

1. Notice in verse 1 that the word ‘principles’ is italicized, meaning that it is not in the original language, but was put there by the translators to help us in our understanding
2. The word for ‘elementary’ in the Greek is *arche*, which means: fundamental, basic, or beginning
3. The author is not suggesting that we *turn away* from the elementary, but that we move on from the basics of salvation, and move forward in our walks to maturity
4. The Basic fundamentals – the foundation on which our faith is built – are important
5. It is impossible to build a good house without first building a good foundation

6. But once you have built a good foundation, if you never frame it, sheet it, roof it and finish it, you still don't have a house
7. The author is saying that the foundation is done, so it is time to build the house
8. Here are the six basic fundamentals of the faith:
  - a. Repentance from dead works
    - Repentance is not an attitude of the heart
    - It is an act of the will
  - b. Faith in God for our salvation
    - Faith in God to save us comes through our faith in His Son Jesus and the sufficiency of His work to save us
  - c. Doctrine of baptisms
    - ceremonial bathing
    - John preached a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins, which was the preparation for the coming of Messiah
    - The book of Acts has examples of the baptism of the Holy Spirit
    - Philip demonstrated for us the believer's baptism with the Ethiopian eunuch, which is what we practice
    - We will also baptize when people want to rededicate themselves to the Lord
    - Baptism and the Lord's Supper are the two ordinances that we as believers are told to keep – symbolizing the death of the old nature and being born again into the body of Christ
    - By the way, we are still planning on a baptism, we just don't have a date yet
  - d. Laying on of hands - the symbolic transference of authority or power accompanied by prayer

- Acts 8:14-18 – the bestowing of the Holy Spirit by the apostles to other believers
  - I Tim 4 – a spiritual gift given to Timothy
  - Commissioning for the ministry with prayer
  - Praying for a person, especially for healing
- e. The resurrection out from among the dead – everyone is resurrected, some to everlasting life, others to everlasting contempt
- f. Eternal judgment
- Judgment – *krima* – where we get the word “cremation” – means damnation
  - Eternal fire - Hell is certain
  - Believing in the reality of hell
  - Without judgement of sin, the quality eternal life for the believer would be no better than it is right now in this fallen world
9. These are the basics of the Christian faith
10. When I first went to college, I attended a Southern Baptist church my first semester
- a. The first week of school, they were having a revival and of course they preached salvation for a solid week, and I thought, “what a great church!”
  - b. After the revival was over, they continued to preach salvation week after week for the remainder of the semester
  - c. I decide at the semester break that it was time for me to move on from the elementary principals and find a church that taught the rest of the Bible

11. As we are approaching a controversial passage, we need to stay focused on the main point that the author is making: It is time to leave the elementary principles of salvation and pursue perfection, not in the sense of flawlessness, but in the sense of completion and spiritual maturity
12. What are the six fundamentals?
  - a. Repentance
  - b. Placing your faith in Jesus
  - c. Understanding and obeying the ordinance of baptism
  - d. Laying on of hands – demonstrating the belief in the power of the Holy Spirit and of prayer
  - e. Resurrection of the dead – you are an eternal being
  - f. The reality of Hell
13. The Hebrew writer is telling his audience that if time permits – meaning ‘if the Lord doesn’t come back shortly – we will move on from the elementary principles
14. If you are a believer who is young in the Lord, a baby Christian, it is okay if you don’t already have this all worked out yet in your life – for now!
15. If you have been a believer who has struggled with some of these things for a while, it is time to grow up and move forward
16. Don’t allow yourself to be like the creepy Home Depot guy with the highchair
17. Verse 4: “It is impossible” for me to get anywhere in this verse in the time we have left, so we are going to quit here

## B. Application

1. All authority and calling to ministry comes from God
2. If you aren’t familiar with the six elementary principles of the faith and need to become familiar with them, we want to help you

3. Once you have that down, it is time to move on to maturity
4. Coming to church will help you grow only to a point
5. Your quiet time in the word and prayer will help you more
6. Men's ministry, women's ministry, youth ministry, inductive bible study classes and the other studies and courses we will offer over time will help you grow
7. When combine quite time, an interactive small group and some of the classes we offer, you will grow, but only if you are willing to put in some effort to learn