

STRONG ENCOURAGEMENT

Hebrews 5:12-14, 6:1-4, 13-18

March 3, 2024

- Strong (Gk. *ischyros*): forcible, boisterous, mighty, powerful, valiant.
- Encouragement (Gk. *parakesis*): comfort, consolation, exhortation

If there's anything we need in this ever increasingly "shifting sand world" that we live in is God initiated **strong encouragement**. Strong encouragement is that which prepares us to face a fallen world, its temptations and trials with Holy Spirit injected "steroidal" faith. The strong encouragement the church of Jesus Christ needs is that which emanates from the loving, faithful, never failing God whose promises to us are always "Yes and Amen". They are rock solid and immovably sure for that is exactly who our Father is.

What Defines Our God to Us? Really.

- *Our feelings?*
- *Our health?*
- *Our general sense of well-being?*
- *Our bank accounts?*
- *Our relationships?*
- *Perhaps, our God?*

Exodus 34:6-7 *The Lord passed before him and proclaimed, "The Lord, the Lord, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, ⁷ keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but who will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children and the children's children, to the third and the fourth generation."*

On the Menu: Milk or Meat?

Hebrews 5:12-14 *For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the basic principles of the oracles of God. You need milk, not solid food, ¹³ for everyone who lives on milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, since he is a child. ¹⁴ But solid food is for the mature, for those who have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil.*

Hebrews 6:1-6 *Therefore, let us leave the elementary doctrine of Christ and go on to maturity...*

Reductio ad absurdum (to reduce to the absurd) a method of proving the falsity of a premise by showing that its logical consequence is absurd or contradictory. **Oxford Dictionary**

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1. If the believer falls away, Christ's sacrifice must be repeated (v. 6; 10:26).
2. But Christ's sacrifice can never be repeated (10:10-14).
3. Thus, the believer cannot fall away (3:14)

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Who's Holding Onto Whom?

Hebrews 10:14 *For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified.*

John 10:27-30 *see screen*

Romans 8:35-39 *see screen*

Whose Idea Was Our Salvation, Anyway?

1 Corinthians 1:30 *And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption,³¹ so that, as it is written, "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord."*

Ephesians 1:4 *For He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless in His presence.*

1 Peter 1:23 *Since you have been born again, not of a perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God.*

Philippians 1:6 *I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.*

"If anybody said he had eternal life and lost it, he would be flatly contradicting himself. It could not be eternal, or else he must still have it. Further, if Christ had intended to cast us away because of our sins, why did he ever take us on (to begin with)?

Charles Spurgeon, Eternal Security, Sept. 5, 1889

A New Covenant, a New Life, Some New Enemies and a Steep Learning Curve!

Gal. 3:23 *the Law has become our tutor to lead us to Christ, that we may be justified by faith (NASB)*

Romans 11:6 *But if it (salvation) is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works; otherwise, grace would no longer be grace.*

Gal. 2:21 *I do not nullify the grace of God, for if righteousness were through the law, then Christ died for no purpose.*

Romans 10:4 *For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness for everyone who believes.*

Romans 3:19-21 *see screen*

How Saved Are You?

- Some are not saved and they know it
- Some are not saved and they think they are.
- Some are saved but their security still rests on their nonbiblical understanding of their having a role to play in their “keeping it.”
- Some are saved and know that their standing in Christ is fully dependent upon Christ’s faithfulness and promises, not their own.

Faith AND Patience

Hebrews 6:13-15 *For when God made a promise to Abraham, since he had no one greater by whom to swear, he swore by himself,¹⁴ saying, “Surely I will bless you and multiply you.”¹⁵ And thus Abraham, having patiently waited, obtained the promise.*

God didn’t make an oath by Moses or the Law, nor did he swear by an angel or consult with the high priest, since there was no one higher to make an oath by, he made an oath by himself. And that oath he made with the blood of his son.

Hebrews 11:1 *Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.*

(But for how long not seen?)

Genesis 12:1-4 *Now the Lord said to Abram, “Go from your country and your kindred and your father’s house to the land that I will show you.² And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing.³ I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.*

- **Abraham was 75 years old when God made this promise to him.**

Genesis 21:5 *Abraham was 100 when Isaac was born.*

Genesis 17:4 *“Behold, my covenant is with you, and you shall be the father of a multitude of nations.*

Genesis 22: 16-17 *See screen*

Hebrews 6:16-18 For people swear by something greater than themselves, and in all their disputes an oath is final for confirmation.¹⁷ So when God desired to show more convincingly to the heirs of the promise the unchangeable character of his purpose, he guaranteed it with an oath,¹⁸ so that by two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled for refuge might have strong encouragement to hold fast to the hope set before us.

- **An Oath AND a Promise: Two unchangeable things!**

Numbers 13:19 God is not a man that he should lie or a son of man that he should change his mind. Has he said, and will he not do it? Or has he spoken and will he not fulfill it?

Titus 1:2 In hope of eternal life, which God who never lies, promised before the ages began and at the proper time manifested his word...

- **And Forever Faithful**

Lamentations 3:22-24 The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases; his mercies never come to an end they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. "The LORD is my portion," says my soul, "therefore I will hope in him."

Hebrews 10:23 Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful.

1 Thessalonians 5:23-24 May the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it.

Our God who is fully and forever faithful is the author and finisher of our faith. He is our Alpha and Omega. He is in every second of the "Dash" between the moment of our birth and our death. He is with us when we are totally aware that he is. when we don't believe he is, think he is and even when we foolishly wish he weren't. As our Great High Priest Jesus lives to make intercession for us. That was his decision from eternity past, it is his decision now and will be for eternity future. There is as much chance of that changing as there is for the Father, Son and Holy Spirit to divorce one another!

2 Timothy 2:13 If we are faithless, he is ever faithful, for he cannot deny himself.

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***The glory of God's faithfulness is that
none of our sins have made him
unfaithful. Charles H. Spurgeon***