

Hebrews Part 3

Leader Guide

(NASB AND ESV)

*JESUS, THE AUTHOR AND
PERFECTER OF OUR FAITH
(CHAPTERS 11–13)*

Hebrews Part 3 Leader Guide (NASB and ESV)

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USING LEADER GUIDES

Leader Guides are intended for you, the leader, to guide your Precept Upon Precept® and In & Out® discussions. They are designed to help you reason through the content of the lessons and to ensure you have understood what your group should have learned from their study. The guides offer effective plans for leading discussions.

The Holy Spirit is your guide as you prepare. He is the one who knows what your group needs to apply to their lives. Pray for them as they study and for yourself as you prepare to lead the discussion.

These guides can be used for either the NASB or the ESV edition of the courses. ESV words follow the NASB after a slash / or are set off with parentheses.

Leader Guides include the following:

- Lesson emphasis
- A logical order for the discussion
- Discussion questions
- Suggested visual aid(s)

Practical tips for using the Leader Guide:

- **Don't simply "do" the lesson.**
Stay with the lesson until you have a good understanding of it. This will give you a better grasp of how the Leader Guide takes you through the lesson.
- **You don't have to ask every question in the guide.**
Often one question will be covered while discussing another question so there is no reason to ask it. Your goal is not to ask every question, but to ask enough questions to make sure your group understood the lesson and to help them apply the truths to their lives.

Using the Leader Guide with In & Out


When your entire group uses In & Out

Compare an In & Out lesson with the Leader Guide. Use what relates to the In & Out lesson as a guide for the discussion. Don't teach what's not in In & Out lessons. Remember your goal in the discussion is for your group to discuss what they've learned, not for you to lecture on what you learned.

For groups studying both Precept Upon Precept and In & Out

Use the Leader Guides as designed for PUP, knowing that the In & Out assignments will be covered in the discussion. Make a note in the Leader Guide of what is not in the In & Out.

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HEBREWS PART 3

LEADER GUIDE

Lesson 1

Lesson emphasis

- Hebrews 11

REVIEW

Tell your group to look at the Hebrews at a Glance chart and ask what Hebrews is about, chapter themes and segments.

This is a letter written to Jewish, Hebrew, believers in Jesus as the Messiah, Christ. They were going through trials and some persecution. Some had even turned away from the faith.

It's a word of exhortation that Jesus is the High Priest of our confession.
It's an exhortation to hold fast that confession of Him as Messiah until the end.
Don't fall away because of persecution or hard times.

There are warnings about turning away and facing judgment.

Hebrews 1:1-4:13

God spoke in His Son, better than angels. Listen to Him.
If you hear His voice, don't harden your hearts in unbelief.

Hebrews 4:14-10:18

Jesus, the Son, is our great high priest according to the order of Melchizedek.
Press on to maturity.
Better priest, covenant, tabernacle, sacrifice, offering—able to save forever.

Hebrews 10:19-39

"Therefore" . . . confidence to enter the holy place
Draw near in full assurance.
Don't go on willfully / deliberately sinning—judgment.

HEBREWS 11

What is this chapter about?

This chapter explains what faith is and tells examples of righteous people who lived by faith and were approved / commended by God.

Verses 1-3

What and who are these verses about?

This gives the definition of faith as the assurance of things hoped for.
It also says it's the conviction of things not seen.
Assurance and conviction are words of surety which increase one's confidence.

The first illustration of believing something God says is creation.
Believers understand it by faith.

As a visual aid, write the definition of faith from verse 1.
Also note from verse 2 that men gain approval / commendation from God by faith.

Verses 4-7

Who are the faithful in these verses? How is their faith described?

Abel's sacrifice was by faith and it proved he was righteous.

Enoch was pleasing to God; therefore, he didn't die.

To please God one has to have faith.

Noah built the ark because of his faith.
He believed God's Word to him of coming judgment.

Add to your visual aid that it's impossible to please God without faith.

Give your group time to discuss application at relevant points. Help them to relate these faithful people to their lives.

Verses 8-22

Who are these verses about? What does this teach about faith?

Abraham was a righteous man who lived by faith.
He obeyed God's call by following it, although he didn't know where he was going.
He believed God's promise of an inheritance and the land he went to.

Sarah also had faith to believe God's promise for her to have a son. She considered God—the promise maker—faithful.

God fulfilled His promise and gave Abraham and Sarah descendants as numerous as the stars and the sand.

But they died in faith before seeing all God's promises fulfilled.

Abraham so believed God's promises about his son Isaac that he knew if he sacrificed Isaac, God would raise him from the dead. His faith led to obedience to what God said.

Isaac and Jacob both blessed their sons by faith.

Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau.
Jacob blessed his twelve sons who became the twelve tribes of Israel.

Those blessings were fulfilled.

Joseph had faith that his people would return to the land of promise. When he was dying, he asked that his bones be taken from Egypt to Israel.

Verses 23-29

Who and what are these verses about?

Moses and the exodus of Israel from Egypt

His parents had faith in that they hid Moses from being killed because of the king's edict. Moses also had faith when he was grown and chose to be associated with God's people rather than called the son of Pharaoh's daughter.

He was looking in faith to the reward. He compared the wealth of being reproached for Christ—the promised Messiah, anointed one—to the treasures of Egypt and chose Christ.

His faith is also seen by him leaving Egypt without fear of the king and keeping the Passover. He put the blood on the door as the Lord said to do. He believed the firstborn would be spared.

He led the people of Israel to cross the Red Sea on dry land as they left Egypt.

Verses 30-38

Who else is in this list of faithful people? How was their faith demonstrated?

The walls of Jericho fell because Joshua led the people of Israel to do what the Lord told him. He and they trusted God to do what He said.

Even Rahab the harlot / prostitute is an example of one who had faith in God and found approval / was commended by Him because of it.

Some of Israel's judges and prophets are in verses 32-34.

Then in verses 35-38 the author wrote of those who had faith but were not delivered from persecutions and trials in this life.

Verses 39-40

How does this chapter end?

They all gained approval / were commended because of their faith, but they did not receive what was promised—the kingdom, the king (Messiah).

They were all in the past showing us in the present how to endure and live by faith. They show how to look to the hope of the future.

To end your discussion you might ask your group to summarize the exhortation in Hebrews 10:19–12:3.

We have confidence to enter the holy place by Jesus' blood. Let us draw near.

Remember that you endured a great conflict in the past.

Don't throw away your confidence, which has a great reward.

You still need to endure . . . in faith.

Gaining God's approval / commendation

Looking to His promises

Run with endurance the race set before you.

Jesus endured the cross.

Don't grow weary and lose heart / fainthearted.

Encourage your group that they'll study more about faith in the next lesson.

But ask them how this lesson spoke to them.

HEBREWS PART 3 LEADER GUIDE Lesson 2

Lesson emphasis

- Hebrews 11
- Faith throughout Hebrews

REVIEW

Your review for this discussion can be the main points about this letter, and then the points about “faith” up to chapter 11.

As a visual aid for this discussion, you might list some of the main points about faith. See the last page of this guide for an example.

Ask your group what Hebrews is about and why it was written.

It’s a word of exhortation primarily about Jesus, our merciful and faithful high priest.

It was written to Hebrew believers who needed to endure in their trials.

Some had turned away or fallen back to the Old Covenant of the Law.

HEBREWS 1–4

What do these chapters say about “faith”?

These chapters primarily present Jesus as the faithful one.

2:17

He became flesh and blood to be the merciful and faithful high priest.

3:2-6

He’s faithful over God’s house—believers.

Moses was also faithful as a servant to God.

God spoke in / by His Son Jesus. Pay close attention to what He said.
If you hear His voice, don’t harden your heart in unbelief.
The evil, unbelieving heart falls away from the living God.

Those who didn’t believe didn’t enter His rest.

According to chapters 3 and 4, disobedience is unbelief.

HEBREWS 5–10

What do these chapters teach about faith?

6:1

This mentions “faith toward God” as some of the elementary teaching / doctrine about the Christ. But believers are to press / go on to maturity.

6:12

Believers are to imitate others who inherit the promises, of what God said, through faith and patience.

Growing in faith is part of maturity.

10:22-23

Because of our faithful high priest, believers can draw near to God in full assurance of faith with a clean conscience.

God who promised is faithful.

Faith comes from God; He’s the source and the example.

10:38-39

The righteous live by faith, even when judgment is coming and things are hard.

Perseverance and endurance in faith lead to the preserving of the believer’s soul.

HEBREWS 11

Ask your group what the definition of faith is.

Pistis, same root word as “believe.”
A conviction resulting in conduct.¹

Verse 1 says it’s assurance and conviction of things hoped for but not seen.

What is faith necessary for?

Approval / commendation by God

To please Him

Preserving the soul

¹W. E. Vine, Merrill F. Unger and William White, *Vine’s Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words* (Nashville: T. Nelson, 1996). 2:222.

Salvation

How was faith lived out or manifested in the lives of the witnesses in Hebrews 11?

Abel

He was a righteous man who lived by faith, and his offering was approved / commended by God. Though he's dead, he's still an example of a righteous one who lived by faith.

Enoch

He didn't die and was also a man who pleased God by faith.

One man of faith died, and one did not.

Noah

He believed what God told him about the coming judgment of the flood.
In obedience he built the ark which saved him and his household.
He was a righteous man who lived by faith, even in light of coming judgment.

Ask your group if they believe what God says to the degree that Noah did.
If not, why not?

Abraham

His faith grew from following God to a foreign land to believing that God would give him a son.

His faith grew so that when tested to offer Isaac he considered God who promised is able to raise the dead.

God is able to accomplish all that He promised, all He spoke.

Sarah

She was an example of faith as she considered God faithful to His promise, even when it looked impossible for her to have a son.

God's promises of blessing went from Abraham to Isaac to Jacob, whose name God changed to Israel.

Joseph was also mentioned as a man of faith in verse 22.

Moses

His parents were people of faith who protected him from death.

He was an example of not indulging in the pleasures of life, but enduring ill-treatment with the other people of God. Compare this with Hebrews 10:32-34.

Endurance is part of faith and leads to reward. Compare this with 10:35-36.

By faith Moses led his people out of Egypt, not fearing the king.
This is an example of endurance and diligence and confidence.

Rahab the harlot

As Jericho was destroyed by the faith of Joshua who led Israel at that time, Rahab also trusted God. She was a resident of Jericho.

Her faith spared her and her family from death.
She didn't perish with the disobedient.

What other lessons about faith are in verses 32-34?

By faith

- conquered kingdoms
- performed righteousness / enforced justice
- obtained promises
- shut / stopped lions' mouths
- quenched fire's power
- escaped the sword
- made strong in weakness
- became mighty in war

Give time for your group to share the principles of faith they observed in this chapter.
Let them give illustrations from their own lives of how they have lived by faith.

What are verses 35-39 about?

The result of faithful living, of righteous living, is not always being rescued from harm in this life.

Other people of faith in the Old Testament were

- tortured
- mocked
- scourged / flogged
- imprisoned
- stoned
- cut in two
- tempted
- killed
- destitute
- afflicted
- ill-treated / mistreated
- wandering

but they gained approval / were commended by God because of their faith.

HEBREWS 12–13

What do these chapters say about faith?

Jesus is the author / founder and perfecter of faith.

He endured the cross, then sat down at God's right hand.

Our faithful high priest is the perfect example of faith.

He's the source of our faith and the One who completes it.

You might close your discussion with 13:7 as an exhortation to your group about their faith.

Remember those who led you,

those who spoke the Word of God to you.

Consider what the result or end of their conduct has been.

If good, then imitate their faith.

FAITH

God is faithful to His promises / His Word

Jesus is faithful

Endurance—righteous live by faith

Assurance and conviction

Others were faithful in hard times

Approved by God

He is pleased by faith

HEBREWS PART 3 LEADER GUIDE Lesson 3

Lesson emphasis

- Hebrews 12

REVIEW

Ask your group questions to briefly review the main points about Hebrews, and then ask how Hebrews 12 fits into the author's purpose for writing.

As a visual aid for this part of your discussion, tell them to look at their At A Glance charts.

What is Hebrews about, and why was it written?

It's a word of exhortation primarily about Jesus, our merciful and faithful high priest.

It was written to Hebrew believers who needed to endure in their trials.

Some had turned away or fallen back to the Old Covenant of the Law.

Hebrews 1–2

God spoke in / by His Son. The Son is God.

Pay close attention to what He said.

The Son Jesus became a man, our merciful and faithful high priest.

Hebrews 3–4

The Son is faithful over God's house.

We are His house if we hold fast to the end.

If you hear His voice, don't harden your heart in unbelief.

The evil, unbelieving heart falls away from the living God.

Those who didn't believe didn't enter His rest.

In chapters 3 and 4 disobedience is unbelief.

Hebrews 5–10

Our great high priest is seated in the heavens, better than OT priests.

Draw near with confidence to throne of grace for help.

Press / go on to maturity.

Jesus gives a clean conscience, New Covenant.

No sacrifice for willful sin.

Righteous live by faith; endure, don't throw away confidence.

Hebrews 11

Faith is assurance, conviction of things not seen.

Men of old gained approval / commendation by faith.

They endured ill-treatment.

HEBREWS 12

How does this chapter begin? What is the reference to Hebrews 11?

We have a great cloud of witnesses—ones who testify from their own experience.¹

The righteous who lived by faith, in Hebrews 11, are the witnesses of endurance.

They endured, Jesus endured, so believers can endure ill-treatment.

endurance—*hupomone*, “from *hupoménō* . . . remain under . . . patience”²

Verses 1-2

What's the first exhortation in verse 1?

Let us lay aside every encumbrance / weight and the sin . . . entangles us / clings closely
encumbrance / weight—“a mass”³; “impediment, something that gets in one's
way”⁴

¹Timothy Friberg, Barbara Friberg and Neva F. Miller, *Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament*, Baker's Greek New Testament Library (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Books, 2000). 254.

²Spiros Zodhiates, *The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament*, electronic ed. (Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers, 2000, c1992, c1993). G5281.

³Spiros Zodhiates, *The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament*, electronic ed. (Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers, 2000, c1992, c1993). G3591.

sin—“a missing of the mark”⁵

entangles / clings closely—“skillfully surrounding”⁶

Ask your group how they can do that. Give time for discussion of this application.
Help them to understand the difference between an encumbrance and sin.
Ask what they need to lay aside in order to endure and live their Christian life by faith.

What’s the other exhortation in verse 1?

Let us run with endurance the race set before us.

Ask if anyone in your group is a runner, then let that one share the endurance of running in a race. Then you might ask how this applies to the Christian life and give time for discussion.

As a visual aid for this part of your discussion, you might draw a stick figure of a runner in a race. Then add to it as your discussion progresses.

How does verse 2 relate to the exhortations in verse 1?

The witnesses tell that they endured, but Jesus is the supreme example of endurance.

To run with endurance believers have to fix their eyes on / look to Him.

Draw eyeballs looking to Jesus at God’s right hand in heaven. Use a cross as the symbol for Jesus.

If there is a runner in your group, ask him or her how important one’s focus is in running a race.

Ask what your group learned from their word studies about Jesus.

author / founder—“originator, founder, leader, chief, first, prince”⁷

perfecter—“completer, finisher”⁸; “particularly one who reaches a goal so as to win the prize”⁹

⁴Barclay Moon Newman, *Concise Greek-English Dictionary of the New Testament*. (Stuttgart, Germany: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft; United Bible Societies, 1993). 123.

⁵W. E. Vine, Merrill F. Unger and William White, *Vine’s Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words* (Nashville: T. Nelson, 1996). 2:576.

⁶James Strong, *The Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible: Showing Every Word of the Text of the Common English Version of the Canonical Books, and Every Occurrence of Each Word in Regular Order.*, electronic ed. (Ontario: Woodside Bible Fellowship., 1996). G2139.

⁷Spiros Zodhiates, *The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament*, electronic ed. (Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers, 2000, c1992, c1993). G747.

⁸Robert L. Thomas, *New American Standard Hebrew-Aramaic and Greek Dictionaries: Updated Edition* (Anaheim: Foundation Publications, Inc., 1998, 1981). G5051.

⁹Spiros Zodhiates, *The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament*, electronic ed. (Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers, 2000, c1992, c1993). G5051.

Jesus is the beginning of our life of faith, and He's the completer of it.

Believers can live by faith because of Him.

We can run with endurance because He endured the cross.

Verses 3-11

How do these verses continue the thought from 1-2?

Consider Jesus so that you don't grow weary and lose heart / grow faint-hearted.

He endured hostility—so can you. The author of Hebrews exhorted the recipients of his letter that they can press on, hold fast, endure.

Even though they had suffered a great conflict they had not at that point shed blood in resisting sin.

More quotes from the Old Testament, these about discipline, are in verses 5-6.

discipline—"the rearing of a child, training"¹⁰; "education"¹¹; "correction"¹²

How does discipline relate to endurance?

Verse 7 says that it's for discipline, training, that we endure.

The race we're running is pressing / going on to maturity.
We're in the process of maturity and training.

The Lord only disciplines those He loves, His children.

scourge / chastise—to flog or beat with a whip, punish¹³

If there is no training from the Lord, then one does not belong to Him.

The believer's responsibility is to be subject to the Father.

¹⁰Robert L. Thomas, *New American Standard Hebrew-Aramaic and Greek Dictionaries: Updated Edition* (Anaheim: Foundation Publications, Inc., 1998, 1981). G3809.

¹¹James Strong, *The New Strong's Dictionary of Hebrew and Greek Words* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1997, c1996). G3809.

¹²Timothy Friberg, Barbara Friberg and Neva F. Miller, *Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament*, Baker's Greek New Testament library (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Books, 2000). 291.

¹³James Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains: Greek (New Testament)*, electronic ed. (Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997). GGK3463.

The discipline from God is for us to share in His holiness—sanctity¹⁴, same root word as “sanctified,” “sanctification” in Hebrews 10:10, 14; 12:14.

When trained, righteousness is the fruit or result.

The righteous shall live by faith.

Give time for your group to discuss application of “discipline.”

Verses 12-17

What are these verses about?

One cannot run with feeble / weak knees or lame feet.
Helping one another in the process of endurance

There are several exhortations about relationships with other believers.

Esau was an example of a godless / unholy person who found no place for repentance.
Compare this with 6:6.

This illustration leads into the last warning in this letter.

Verses 18-29

You might ask how this warning compares with the others in Hebrews.

God spoke.

Comparison of Mt. Sinai and Mt. Zion, Old Covenant and New

God is the Judge.

Jesus is the mediator of a New Covenant.

Don't refuse Him who is speaking.

No escape.

What's the last exhortation in this chapter?

Therefore, since we receive a kingdom . . . let us show gratitude.

For our God is a consuming fire.
Compare this with Hebrews 10:27, 31.

¹⁴Robert L. Thomas, *New American Standard Hebrew-Aramaic and Greek Dictionaries: Updated Edition* (Anaheim: Foundation Publications, Inc., 1998, 1981). G41.

Close this discussion by asking how any of your group might have been spoken to specifically in this lesson.

HEBREWS PART 3
LEADER GUIDE
Lesson 4

Lesson emphasis

- Hebrews 12:1-17
- Living the Christian life

REVIEW

Ask your group questions to briefly review the main points about Hebrews.
As a visual aid for this part of your discussion, tell them to look at their At A Glance charts.

Ask what Hebrews is about and why it was written.

It's a word of exhortation primarily about Jesus, our merciful and faithful high priest.

It was written to Hebrew believers who needed to endure in their trials.

Some had turned away or fallen back to the Old Covenant of the Law.

Hebrews 1–2

God spoke in / by His Son. The Son is God.

Pay close attention to what He said.

The Son Jesus became a man, our merciful and faithful high priest.

Hebrews 3–4

The Son is faithful over God's house.

We are His house if we hold fast to the end.

If you hear His voice, don't harden your heart in unbelief.

The evil, unbelieving heart falls away from the living God.

Those who didn't believe didn't enter His rest.

In chapters 3 and 4 disobedience is unbelief.

Hebrews 5–10

Our great high priest is seated in the heavens, better than Old Testament priests.

Draw near with confidence to the throne of grace for help.

Press on to maturity.

Jesus gives a clean conscience, New Covenant.

No sacrifice for willful sin.

Righteous live by faith; endure, don't throw away confidence.

Hebrews 11

Faith is assurance, conviction of things not seen.

Men of old gained approval by faith.

They endured ill-treatment.

HEBREWS 12

How does this chapter begin? What is the reference to Hebrews 11?

We have a great cloud of witnesses—ones who testify from their own experience.¹

The righteous who lived by faith, in Hebrews 11, are the witnesses of endurance.

They endured, Jesus endured, so believers can also endure ill-treatment.

Verses 1-2

What is the illustration of the Christian life in these verses?

Run with endurance the race that is set before us

fixing our eyes on / looking to Jesus

As a visual aid for this part of your discussion, you might use stick figures and draw on the right side of a straight line several “witnesses” running toward a finish line and on the left side the cross. Then draw a runner in the middle of it. You might also draw Jesus in heaven and the runner’s eyeballs looking at Him.

¹Timothy Friberg, Barbara Friberg and Neva F. Miller, *Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament*, Baker’s Greek New Testament Library (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Books, 2000). 254.

Ask your group what they learned from the cross-references.

1 Corinthians 9:24-27

This passage says self-control is necessary to run in such a way as to win the wreath, crown. Paul says that he buffeted / disciplined his body to make it his slave (ESV—keep it under control).

At any relevant point during this discussion, give your group time to talk about application.

2 Timothy 2:5; 4:7-8

Here “according to the rules” is stressed.

The rules of living the Christian life are in God’s Word.

Obedience; living by faith in righteousness

Paul says he finished his course / race, and his prize is the crown of righteousness.

But he’s not the only one to whom that crown will be given.

It’s for all who love His appearing (His second coming), those eagerly awaiting Him.

It’s for all who keep the faith—the righteous live by faith.

James 1:12

James wrote that the one who perseveres / is steadfast in trial is then approved (ESV—stood the test) by God and receives the crown of life. It’s for all who love Him.

Paul also wrote the illustration of a good soldier who is not entangled with the affairs of everyday life / civilian pursuits.

Compare this with Hebrews 12:1; lay aside every encumbrance / weight.

Philippians 2:16 and 3:12-14

Paul looked to the day of Christ as the time of glory.

Holding forth / fast the Word of life while one runs the race assures that he did not run in vain.

He “pressed on” toward the goal for the prize.
Pressing on indicates that it takes endurance.

Forget what is behind and reach / strain forward to what lies ahead.

Let your group have a little time to discuss how they might apply these principles to their lives.

For example;

How do we hold forth / fast the Word of life?

How do we live more self-controlled lives?

How do we eagerly look forward to His coming?

Ask your group what they learned about the judgment seat of Christ / God and rewards.

The crown of life will be awarded at the end of this life.

1 Corinthians 3:10-17

After each man's work is tested, he'll be rewarded if his work remains / survives.

Otherwise, his work will be burned up because it was useless.

2 Corinthians 5:10 and Romans 14:10-14

This time of being recompensed (ESV—receive what is due) or giving an account of what we've done in this life is called the judgment seat of Christ or God. It's a time for believers to give the final account for their lives before Him.

How does 1 John 2:28 relate to this?

One either has confidence in His appearing, Jesus' coming, or he'll shrink away from Him in shame. Hebrews 10:35-39 is a parallel passage to this.

Those who shrink back face destruction.

They didn't please God because they had no faith.

Believers have faith to the preserving of the soul.

Their confidence in Him has great reward.

Confidence leads to endurance which leads to reward.

DISCIPLINE, VERSES 3-14

Ask what your group learned about discipline from Hebrews and the cross-references.

The author exhorted the Hebrews to endure so that they not grow weary and lose heart. Then he reminded them that they had not yet shed blood in resisting sin and had forgotten that the Lord disciplines His children.

There is discipline in the Christian life.

Proverbs 3:1-12

Hebrews 12:5-6 quotes from this passage. The context of the proverb is keeping God's commands to have a life of peace. Fear of the Lord brings healing to one's body.

Relate this to Hebrews 12.

Psalm 119:67, 71

Sometimes the discipline comes in the form of affliction, trials, or persecution.

Ask your group if they agree with what David wrote in Psalm 119 about affliction.

Deuteronomy 8:1-5; James 1:2-4, 12; 1 Peter 1:6-9

God tests His people to humble them. It's discipline, training, in obedience.

The testing of faith produces endurance / steadfastness.

The result of endurance is completion—Jesus the perfecter of faith.

Peter wrote that the outcome of faith, proven by tests of trials, is the salvation of one's soul. That's why believers can rejoice in the outcome of His discipline.

Isaiah 54:9-17

God Himself is the one who is in charge of all things, trials and comfort.
He also vindicates.

What is the result of discipline according to Hebrews 12?

Share in His holiness

The peaceable fruit of righteousness

Relate this to Isaiah 32:17. Let your group have a little time to discuss how to apply all of this they've discussed so far.

Why is "therefore" in verse 12?

The context from the end of Hebrews 10 is exhortation for endurance.

The hands, knees, and paths can be related to the illustration of the runner and discipline.
The text says, literally "make straight"

- hands that are weak / drooping hands
 - knees that are feeble / weak knees
 - paths for your feet
- so that healing instead of injury takes place.

Therefore, endurance is possible. All of this takes discipline.

Solomon tells in Proverbs 4:20-27 about this kind of discipline.

"Watch over / keep your heart with all diligence / vigilance."

"Let your eyes look directly ahead / forward."

"Do not turn / swerve to the right nor / or to the left."

Ask your group what they learned from their study about sanctification.

Sanctification and holiness are from the same root word in Greek.

Discipline is so that we share His holiness. We're to pursue sanctification; we're commanded to be holy like He is.

The pure in heart see God.

All believers were sinners before salvation, but we were washed and sanctified in Jesus' name and the Holy Spirit.

Those who continue in sin are sons of disobedience and have no inheritance in God's kingdom.

We are to continue in this sanctification by abstaining from any form of impurity, immorality.

ESAU, VERSES 15-17

What are these verses about? Why the illustration of Esau?

Many can be defiled by bitterness in one or a few people. Bitterness might come from trials or persecution. That prevents endurance.

Esau was an immoral and godless man who despised his birthright and sold it for temporary relief from hunger.

Esau found no place for repentance; he was immoral and godless and was rejected by God although he sought to inherit the blessing his brother had taken from him.

Esau had no repentance and those in Hebrews 6 who turned away didn't either.

Ask about the two kinds of sorrow and which they think Esau had. Which do they have for their sin?

Esau had only worldly sorrow which led to death, not salvation.
Without sanctification no one will see the Lord; no salvation.

HEBREWS PART 3

LEADER GUIDE

Lesson 5

Lesson emphasis

- The warning in Hebrews 12:18-29
- Observations of Hebrews 13

REVIEW

Ask your group questions to briefly review the main points about Hebrews.
As a visual aid for this part of your discussion, tell them to look at their At A Glance charts.
Ask what Hebrews is about and why it was written.

It's a word of exhortation primarily about Jesus, our merciful and faithful high priest.

It was written to Hebrew believers who needed to continue to endure in their trials.

Some had turned away or fallen back to the Old Covenant of the Law.

Hebrews 1

God spoke in / by His Son.

The Son is God, better than / superior to angels.

Hebrews 2

Pay close attention to what He said. Don't neglect salvation.

The Son Jesus became a man, our merciful and faithful high priest.

Hebrews 3

The Son is faithful over God's house.

We are His house if we hold fast to the end.

Hebrews 4

If you hear His voice, don't harden your heart in unbelief.

The evil, unbelieving heart falls away from the living God. They don't enter His rest.

Hebrews 5

Priests deal gently with the ignorant and misguided people.

Jesus is a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.

You have become dull of hearing.

Hebrews 6

Press / go on to maturity. Some have fallen away.

Show diligence / earnestness to realize full assurance of hope to the end.

Don't be sluggish, but imitate faith of those who inherit the promises.

Hebrews 7

Melchizedek, Levitical priests, and the Lord—priest forever.
Jesus is the guarantee / guarantor of a better covenant,
able to save forever those who draw near to God.

Hebrews 8

Main point—Jesus, our high priest, is seated in heaven at God’s right hand.
Earthly things copy and shadow of heavenly things.
Jesus obtained a more excellent ministry, better covenant, better promises.

Hebrews 9

Jesus entered greater and more perfect tabernacle / tent in heaven
through His own blood—the blood of the New Covenant.
He cleansed your conscience from dead works to serve a living God.

Hebrews 10

Jesus’ body was offered once for all to sanctify and perfect us.
Therefore, we can draw near with confidence to throne of grace for help.
There is no sacrifice for willful / deliberate sin; don’t continue in it—God will judge.
Righteous live by faith; endure, don’t throw away confidence.

Hebrews 11

Faith is assurance, conviction of things not seen.
Men of old gained approval / commendation by faith, as they endured ill-treatment.

Hebrews 12

Therefore, run with endurance the race set before you.
Jesus, the author / founder and perfecter of faith, endured.
Then He sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.
Endure His discipline to share in His holiness and righteousness.

HEBREWS 12:18-29

How does this warning relate to Hebrews 12:1-17 and the previous part of this letter?

From the last warning in Hebrews 10 the context has been exhortation to live by faith and endure the discipline of God as His children, those He loves.

Don’t take God’s discipline lightly or faint when reproved.

Be subject to the Father of spirits and live.

12:15 “See to it that no one comes short of (ESV—fails to obtain) the grace of God”

12:25 “See to it that you do not refuse Him who is speaking.”

Verse 25 is similar to 2:1-3 and the warnings in chapters 3 and 4, “if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts” in unbelief.

Direct your group to look at the chart in the lesson contrasting Mt. Sinai and Mt. Zion. Ask what it was like when God spoke to Israel at “the mountain.”

It was a mountain that can be touched, an earthly one.

Exodus 19

It was in the 3rd month after God led Israel out of Egypt that they came to the wilderness of Sinai. The Lord came down to the mountain on the 3rd day.

It was a terrifying scene for the people.
Even Moses said, Hebrews 12:21, that he was full of fear and trembling.

The top of the mountain was like a cloud of fire and smoke, and it quaked violently.

There were boundaries set so that no one touched the mountain, even the animals.

God spoke the Ten Commandments from the top of the mountain so that all the people heard His voice. But they didn’t want to hear it anymore because of the terror connected with it. So, from that time God spoke to Moses and Moses told the people what He said.

Exodus 20:20 says God came to test them and so that the fear of Him would remain in them so that they didn’t sin.

This was an awesome scene of the holiness of the living God.
He is a consuming fire.

Ask your group what they think about this awesome picture.

How does Deuteronomy 4 relate to Exodus and Hebrews?

This passage was 40 years later when Moses prepared the children of those who came out of Egypt to go into the land of promise. Only those who were under 20 years of age in Egypt were still alive at that point in time.

He reminded them of what took place at Horeb, Mount Sinai.

Moses used what happened when God spoke as a warning to that generation who had seen their parents die in the wilderness. They were killed by God for breaking His covenant they had agreed to at Mount Sinai.

He told them to watch themselves, lest they act corruptly. Specifically that warning was against making idols and worshiping them.

The author of Hebrews also used the event as a warning to those who might not listen to God who spoke in His Son.

Don't refuse Him who is speaking because there is no escape for those who turn away.

How does Hebrews contrast Mount Zion with Mount Sinai?

Believers in the New Covenant come to Mount Zion, the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God—the Judge of all.

Myriads of / innumerable angels are before Him in the general assembly / festal gathering.

The church, believers, are those who are enrolled in heaven.

The spirits of the righteous made perfect might be a reference to believers who had died or to all believers.

Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant brought better blood to sacrifice. It's through His blood that those who are part of the new covenant are righteous.

What are verses 26-27 about?

God said through Haggai that He'll shake the heavens and earth once more.
He'll also shake the nations and fill His house, the temple in Jerusalem with glory.

Haggai prophesied as the second temple was rebuilt by the Jews who returned from the seventy years of the Babylonian exile. He encouraged them, but also warned them of coming judgment.

The author of Hebrews used the quote from Haggai for the same purpose, a warning.

The created things will be removed and what remains are the things which cannot be shaken—the things of God's own kingdom. These things are still future, something for those Jewish believers to look forward to.

What does Revelation say about the new heaven, earth, and Jerusalem, also future?

God will dwell among His people.
No tears, death, mourning, crying, pain.
All things new.
The overcomers / ones who conquer—those who endure—will inherit these things.
Nothing unclean will go into the new Jerusalem.

Ask what your group thought of as they evaluated verses 28-29 and how they can show gratitude to God. That was Day Five of the lesson. Give time for them to discuss the application of this.

HEBREWS 13

With whatever time you have left, discuss the main points of observation from this chapter.

Very specific instructions are given in verses 1-9.

Continue loving the brethren.

Show hospitality.

Remember Christians who are in prison.

Honor marriage. God will judge adulterers and fornicators / sexually immoral.

Don't love money; be content with what you have.

Imitate the faith of those who spoke the Word of God to you.

Don't be carried / led away by varied / diverse and strange teachings.

Verses 10-14 have to do with going outside the camp to bear Jesus' reproach. This is something which will be studied more in the next lesson.

Verses 15-16 relate very much to 12:28.

Obey and submit to leaders, and pray for them.

The recipients of this letter were specifically asked to pray for the author that he might be restored to them. Maybe that meant to be released from prison as Timothy was.

Then verses 20-25 are his closing statements of benediction and greeting.

HEBREWS PART 3 LEADER GUIDE Lesson 6

Lesson emphasis

- Hebrews 13

REVIEW

Ask your group what Hebrews is about and why it was written. What is the statement in chapter 13 which tells its purpose?

It's a word of exhortation primarily about Jesus, our merciful and faithful high priest.

It was written to Hebrew believers who needed to endure in their trials.

Ask what they remember as some main points in Hebrews 1–12. Give a brief time for discussion.

HEBREWS 13

Verses 1-3

Ask what Hebrews 13:1 says and what your group learned about it.

As a visual aid for this discussion, you might list the main points of the lesson.

The writer of this letter told the Jewish believers to continue in their love of the brethren, other believers.

1 Thessalonians 4:9-10

God Himself teaches believers to love one another.

1 John 3:16-19 and 4:20–5:3

John wrote in his letter to believers that love comes from God.

Love is laying down one's life for another. Sharing the world's goods with brothers who need it demonstrates God's love within believers. Keeping God's commands towards one another is loving them.

What is the definition and outworking of love according to 1 Corinthians 13:4-8?
As your group discusses this, ask how it is relevant to our Christian life.

Love never fails in the Christian life and will never end.

Patient
Kind

Not jealous / envy
Not brag / boast
Not arrogant
Not act unbecomingly / rude
Not seek its own / insist on its own way
Not provoked / irritable, not take into account a wrong against one / not resentful
Not rejoice in unrighteousness / wrongdoing, but with the truth
Bears all things
Believes all things
Hopes all things
Endures all things

What “all things” does this mean?

One does not believe all false teaching, for instance.
The context is loving others.

What is the relationship of Hebrews 13:1 to verses 2-4?

Love is the basis for

- Hospitality
- Remembering prisoners
- Marriage

Ask your group what they learned about hospitality from their study.

NOTE: There is a connection in the Greek words for “brotherly love” and “show hospitality to strangers.” Both words begin with “philos,” which is a fond affection kind of love. The first is toward brothers, and the second is toward strangers and translated “show hospitality” toward them.

The actual command in verse 2 is “do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers.” At that time, travelers were kept in homes because there were so few inns.

This was a manifestation of love.

The second part of the verse refers to entertaining, showing hospitality to, angels. In the Bible angels appeared in the form of men. They were held in very high esteem by Jews at that time.

Genesis 18:1–19:1

This is clearly a reference to showing hospitality to angels. It seems that Abraham knew two of the men were angels and one was the Lord.

Romans 12:9-13; 1 Timothy 3:1-2; Titus 1:5-9; and 1 Peter 4:9
Peter and Paul both wrote about showing hospitality to people.

Overseers / elders are to practice this.
All believers are called to do the same toward one another, without grumbling.

Give your group time to consider how they are doing in this area.

Lead your discussion back to Hebrews 13.
How does verse 3 relate to verses 1-2? Discuss cross-references.

Ephesians 5:29-30; 1 Corinthians 12:12-27; and Philippians 2:3-4

This all relates to brotherly love toward believers, fellow-members of Christ's body the church. We are all one in Him. Therefore, we're to show the same care for each other. If one member suffers, all suffer with him.

Look out for the interests of others as well as our own.

Humility toward others

The Hebrews had been doing well in this area, Hebrews 6:10; 10:32-34.
But as Paul wrote the Thessalonians about love, they could excel still more.

Ask your group how they are doing in this area of manifesting Christian love toward one another.

Verse 4

What is this verse about? Also, discuss cross-references.

Marriage is another relationship for which love is the basis.

Husbands and wives are to honor one another's sexual needs above their own.

Adultery (sexual union with a person married to someone else¹) and fornication / sexual immorality (sexual sin of any kind²) of all forms will be judged by the Lord. Death was the penalty under the Law.

God's people are to be holy in all areas of life.

Give time to discuss this subject and how to apply the truth of God's Word in this area.

Verses 5-6

How do these verses relate to 1-4?

Again, the word "love" is used in verse 5. So far, this has been the thread connecting verses 1-6.

¹W.E. Vine; Merrill F. Unger; and William White: *Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words*. electronic ed. (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1997, c1996), S. 2:14

²Spiros Zodhiates, *The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament*, electronic ed. (Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers, 2000, c1992, c1993). G4202.

Be free from the love of money, and be content with what you have.

What do the cross-references add about being content?

1 Timothy 6:6-11

Paul also wrote about contentment to Timothy.

If we have food and covering, then we should be content.

He told of his example in Philippians 4:11-19.

Paul learned to be content as the Philippian church shared with him to provide for his needs.

God supplies His children's needs according to His riches.

1 Timothy 6:6-11

There is a contrast between being content and the love of money.

It causes all sorts of evil.

Flee from the love of money and wanting to get rich.

Pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, perseverance / steadfastness, and gentleness.

This sounds a lot like what the author of Hebrews wrote.

1 John 2:15-17

John wrote about the things in the world—which includes money and the things it can buy. Don't love the world, its lusts / desires and pride.

The world is passing away, but the one who obeys God lives forever.

That also sounds like what the author of Hebrews wrote.

Matthew 6:19-34

Don't store treasures up on earth because you'll lose your focus of the heavenly things if you do. You can't serve God and money / wealth.

Your heart is where your treasure is: earth or heaven.

This also sounds like Hebrews.

Don't worry about your life, food, clothing.

God will take care of all that. Relate this to Hebrews 13:5-6.

Seek His kingdom and righteousness.

Colossians 3:5

Greed amounts to idolatry. (ESV says covetousness is idolatry.)

Give time for discussing the application of any of this about money.

How does Hebrews 13:16 relate to verses 1-6?

Sharing with others pleases God—like the Philippians did.
It demonstrates loving the brethren.

Verses 7-8

What are these verses about?

Jesus never changes—His character remains the same.
Hebrews describes not only what He did, but part of who He is.

Consider the lives, character, and actions of those who spoke His Word to you.
If those lives have faithful character, then imitate it. Be like Him.

Hebrews begins with “God spoke in / by His Son . . . listen to Him” and ends with remembering those who led you and spoke God’s word.

Imitate them—share the Word with others, lead them in the faith.

What did Paul write about being an example of those who believe?

In giving the gospel to others he became a father in the gospel and exhorted others to imitate him as he imitated Christ.

He also called believers to watch others who lived according to the same pattern.

Then he called Timothy to be an example, let his progress or growth in faith be evident to all.

Verses 9-14

As contrasted with those who spoke the Word of God to the Hebrews, what might the strange teachings of these verses have been? What might they be now?

It had to do with foods

Paul wrote about the same kind of legalism in Colossians, 1 Timothy, and Romans.
Sound doctrine does not promote legalism of any sort.

Those who are weak in faith might hold to not eating certain foods, esteeming one day above others and not drinking wine, etc.

Jesus suffered outside the camp like the sacrifice on the Day of Atonement was burned outside the camp—literally, the cross was outside the old city walls of Jerusalem. He did so that He might sanctify, purify, cleanse the people. His was a better sacrifice.

Therefore, let us go out to Him outside the camp, bearing His reproach.

We should be looking to the future, not to things of the here and now that might make us “look more holy.” Those who tend toward legalism want to be more holy. But it comes through obedience and grace.

Verses 15-16

What are the sacrifices which believers should make, as opposed to what we’re not to do in verses 9-14?

Sacrifice of praise—give thanks in all things.
God causes all to work for the good of those who love Him.
He is in control, even in our trials.

Verses 17-19

What are the exhortations?

Obey and submit to leaders in the faith.
Pray for them to conduct themselves honorably.

Paul wrote that we’re to appreciate them and esteem them highly in love.

We’re to live at peace with one another.
That makes it easier for the leaders.

Leaders are to watch over souls and give an accounting to God.

Teachers will be judged more strictly for how they handle God’s Word.

Those who build with the gospel are merely servants, though leaders.

To summarize, we’re all to submit to one another—part of brotherly love.

Verses 20-25

How did the author end this letter?

The God of peace

The great Shepherd of the sheep
Jesus our Lord

through / by the blood of the eternal covenant

equip you to do His will

what is pleasing to Him, faith

To end this discussion you might give time for you group to share what they've learned from this study of Hebrews.

Has it helped them know how to press / go on to maturity?

Has it helped them know how and why to draw near to God?

Has it taught them what it means to endure?

Do they know better what living by faith means? And how to do it?

Do they better understand why they are disciplined by God?

Do they better know their High Priest Jesus?