

A photograph of runners at a marathon, with a semi-transparent text overlay. The runners are wearing bib numbers 231, 336, 391, and 400. The text overlay is white and contains the title 'PRESSING ON TO MATURITY' and the subtitle 'A Study of the Book of Hebrews'.

# PRESSING ON

TO MATURITY

*A Study of the Book of Hebrews*

**PRESSING ON TO MATURITY  
OVERVIEW OF HEBREWS**

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April 15, 2018**

**Introduction:** In today's culture, anyone who claims that his religion is "superior" to any other religion in the world is immediately deemed to be intolerant at best and a hate-monger at worst. Yet, the author of the book of Hebrews argues that understanding the superiority of Christianity to every other belief system is essential to embracing and sharing Christ's offer of salvation.

## **I. Why Hebrews and Why Now?**

### **A. The Changing Composition of Our Church**

### **B. The Tolerance of Our Culture**

Hebrews 8:1, 6 <sup>1</sup>“Now the main point in what has been said is this: we have such a high priest, who has taken His seat at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, <sup>6</sup> but now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, by as much as He is also the mediator of a better covenant, which has been enacted on better promises.”

### **C. The Maturity of Our Congregation**

1 Corinthians 3:1-3 <sup>1</sup>“And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual men, but as to men of flesh, as to babes in Christ. <sup>2</sup> I gave you milk to drink, not solid food; for you were not yet able to receive it. Indeed, even now you are not yet able, <sup>3</sup> for you are still fleshly. For since there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not fleshly, and are you not walking like mere men?”

Hebrews 5:12-6:1 <sup>12</sup> “For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you have need again for someone to teach you the elementary principles of the oracles of God, and you have come to need milk and not solid food. <sup>13</sup> For everyone who partakes only of milk is not accustomed to the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. <sup>14</sup> But solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil. <sup>1</sup> Therefore leaving the elementary teaching about the Christ, let us press on to maturity, not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God,”

Hebrews 1:1-3 <sup>1</sup> “God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, <sup>2</sup> in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world. <sup>3</sup> And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high;”

## II. Background Information

### A. Author

### B. Date

### C. Audience

Hebrews 9:11-12 <sup>11</sup> “But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things to come, He entered through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this creation; <sup>12</sup> and not through the blood of goats and calves, but through His own blood, He entered the holy place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption.”

### D. Theme

**Jesus Christ is a superior priest who has offered a superior sacrifice in order to secure a superior salvation.**

## III. Outline of the Book

### A. Christ is Superior to the Prophets (Hebrews 1:1-4)

Hebrews 1:1-2 <sup>1</sup> “God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, <sup>2</sup> in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world.”

### **B. Christ is Superior to the Angels (Hebrews 1:5-2:18)**

Hebrews 1:5-6 <sup>5</sup> “For to which of the angels did He ever say, ‘THOU ART MY SON, TODAY I HAVE BEGOTTEN THEE’? And again, ‘I WILL BE A FATHER TO HIM, AND HE SHALL BE A SON TO ME’? <sup>6</sup> And when He again brings the first-born into the world, He says, ‘AND LET ALL THE ANGELS OF GOD WORSHIP HIM.’”

### **C. Christ is Superior to Moses (Hebrews 3:1-6)**

Hebrews 3:5-6 <sup>5</sup> “Now Moses was faithful in all His house as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken later; <sup>6</sup> but Christ was faithful as a Son over His house whose house we are, if we hold fast our confidence and the boast of our hope firm until the end.”

### **WARNING: Do Not Harden Your Hearts! (Hebrews 3:7-4:16)**

Hebrews 3:7-12 <sup>7</sup> “Therefore, just as the Holy Spirit says, ‘TODAY IF YOU HEAR HIS VOICE, <sup>8</sup> DO NOT HARDEN YOUR HEARTS AS WHEN THEY PROVOKED ME, AS IN THE DAY OF TRIAL IN THE WILDERNESS, <sup>9</sup> WHERE YOUR FATHERS TRIED ME BY TESTING ME, AND SAW MY WORKS FOR FORTY YEARS. <sup>10</sup> THEREFORE I WAS ANGRY WITH THIS GENERATION, AND SAID, “THEY ALWAYS GO ASTRAY IN THEIR HEART; AND THEY DID NOT KNOW MY WAYS; <sup>11</sup> AS I SWORE IN MY WRATH, THEY SHALL NOT ENTER MY REST.” <sup>12</sup> Take care, brethren, lest there should be in any one of you an evil, unbelieving heart, in falling away from the living God.’”

### **D. Christ is Superior to the Levitical Priesthood (Hebrews 5:1-10:39)**

Hebrews 10:1-4 <sup>1</sup> “For the Law, since it has only a shadow of the good things to come and not the very form of things, can never by the same sacrifices year by year, which they offer continually, make perfect those who draw near. <sup>2</sup> Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered, because the worshipers, having once been cleansed, would no longer have had consciousness of sins? <sup>3</sup> But in those sacrifices there is a reminder of sins year by year. <sup>4</sup> For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.”

### **E. Christ is a Superior Object of Our Faith (Hebrews 11:1-13:19)**

Hebrews 12:1-2 <sup>1</sup> “Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance, and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with the endurance the race that is set before us, <sup>2</sup> fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.”

### **IV. The Benefits of Studying the Book of Hebrews**

#### **A. Explains the Old Testament Sacrifices**

#### **B. Affirms the Inspiration of Scripture**

#### **C. Supports the Doctrine of Eternal Security**

Hebrews 6:4-6 <sup>4</sup> “For in the case of those who have once been enlightened and have tasted of the heavenly gift and have been made partakers of the Holy Spirit, <sup>5</sup> and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, <sup>6</sup> and then have fallen away, it is impossible to renew them again to repentance, since they again crucify to themselves the Son of God, and put Him to open shame.”

Hebrews 5:9 “And having been made perfect, He became to all those who obey Him the source of eternal salvation,”

Hebrews 9:12 “And not through the blood of goats and calves, but through His own blood, He entered the holy place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption.”

Hebrews 9:15 “And for this reason He is the mediator of a new covenant, in order that since a death has taken place for the redemption of the transgressions that were committed under the first covenant, those who have been called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.”

Hebrews 10:14 “For by one offering He has perfected for all time those who are sanctified.”

Hebrews 2:3a “How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?”

Hebrews 12:6 “FOR THOSE WHOM THE LORD LOVES HE DISCIPLINES, AND HE SCOURGES EVERY SON WHOM HE RECEIVES.”

Hebrews 7:25 “Hence, also, He is able to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.”

Conclusion