

JESUS OVER EVERYTHING

HEBREWS READING GUIDE

WEEK 18



JESUS OVER EVERYTHING

WEEK 18
OCTOBER 2, 2023



CHURCH IN THE SQUARE

©2023 CHURCH IN THE SQUARE
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

EVERY DAY ...

... A PASSAGE TO READ,

... SOME COMMENTS TO CONSIDER,

... THREE QUESTIONS TO ASK,

... A PRAYER TO PRAY.




WEEK 18

HEBREWS 10:19-31



DAY 1
HEBREWS 10:32-33
REMEMBER SUFFERING
5

DAY 2
HEBREWS 10:34
REMEMBER JOY
7



DAY 3
HEBREWS 10:35-36
REMEMBER THE PROMISE
9

DAY 4
HEBREWS 10:37-38
REMEMBER THE COMING ONE
11



DAY 5
HEBREWS 10:39
REMEMBER FAITH
13

DAY 1 REMEMBER SUFFERING

First read Hebrews 10:32-33.

Suffering is inevitable. Yet, it often surprises us. Through environments or seasons of comfort, we're tempted to forget that suffering is an unavoidable fixture of this broken world (see John 16:33). So the writer of Hebrews invites his readers to remember their **"hard struggle"** (v.32). Instead of falling **"into the hands of the living God,"** as he previously warned, they should **"recall the former days"** when they were exposed personally and communally to **"reproach and affliction"** (v.31,32,33).

This is odd, *isn't it?* Unique to the Christian ethic is the instruction to remember suffering. Not only our own, but the Apostle Peter tells us to remember that **"Christ suffered in the flesh"** (1 Peter 4:1). We're instructed to remember suffering. But we want to forget, *don't we?* Much of our modern musings are spent avoiding discomfort and leaving pain behind us. So, *why would God want us to remember our reproach and affliction?*

Well, first we should admit that burying our suffering does little to heal our wounds. Only when we name our pain can we begin to be freed from its power. Specifically when we identify our pain in the context of Christ's suffering, a deeper meaning for our grief emerges. It draws us to our Lord, and our Lord to us (see Psalm 34:18). Being honest about our suffering nurtures dependency and strips away fear, because **"suffering produces endurance"** (Romans 5:3b).

DAY 1 REMEMBER SUFFERING

1. Why do you think God allows suffering?
2. Why are you tempted to avoid and forget suffering?
3. How does Jesus' suffering empower you to "remember" yours?

Heavenly Father ...

I don't want to suffer. Physical, emotional, and spiritual pain disrupt peace and joy. So, by your grace, shape in me a deep appreciation for your Son and the power of his suffering which steadies my hope in the middle of pain.

In Jesus' Name, Amen.

DAY 2

REMEMBER JOY

First read Hebrews 10:34.

According to Swiss Re (a global insurance company), human beings spent over \$7 trillion on insurance premiums in 2022. That's how much money we leveraged to protect our property. In direct contrast, Hebrews is telling us that our brothers and sisters in the first century somehow learned to **"joyfully accept the plundering of [their] property"** (v.34). You see, they not only didn't try to protect their property but accepted its theft. *Why?* Because they **"knew that [they] ... had a better possession and an abiding one"** (v.34b). They not only had something that was more valuable than worldly goods, but it was also better protected.

Our greatest possession puts all other property in proper perspective. Of course, that doesn't mean we celebrate the injustice of theft. Instead, it means we rest assured that ...

In Christ, our joy is never in jeopardy.
In Christ, our peace is never in peril.
In Christ, we are safe even if our stuff is stolen.

What can be lost is never as valuable as something that's ours forever. Jim Elliot was guided by this truth in his missionary work in Ecuador. He justified his risky call of evangelism based on this value principle. He said, "He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose." Elliot joyfully accepted even the loss of his life because he had **"a better possession and an abiding one"** (v.34b). The gospel gives us a secure spiritual inheritance that no amount of insurance can afford.

DAY 2

REMEMBER JOY

1. How does your security in Christ bring you joy?
2. What possession do you protect the most? Why? What's that reveal about your heart and what you value?
3. Why is Jesus our great and abiding possession?

Heavenly Father ...

I love my stuff. Help me to love my possessions less today and love you more.

In Jesus' Name, Amen.

DAY 3

REMEMBER THE PROMISE

First read Hebrews 10:35-36.

Promises are meant to stabilize our lives. When someone makes us a promise, they're inviting us to live with confidence in something about which we may otherwise be unsettled. For instance, the vows of marriage are meant to give the couple confidence about building their life together. The marriage promise empowers two people to build, love, cry, work, forgive, vacation, and parent without fear of abandonment and isolation and competition—*as one*.

God makes promises too. Earlier in Hebrews we were reminded that God promised Abraham, ***“Surely I will bless you and multiply you”*** (6:14). God's promises are for our good and so we're encouraged to ***“hold fast to the hope [he has] set before us”*** (6:18). Taking God at his word is about building our lives around his word, remembering what he has vowed. On the surface this means we keep in mind that God will take care of us (see Philippians 4:19), he'll provide for our physical needs (see Matthew 6:26,30), and he'll be with us (see Matthew 28:20). But more than anything we're invited to remember that in Christ ***“all the promises of God find their Yes”*** (2 Corinthians 1:20). Jesus is God's kept promise. Jesus is our “confidence” in this life and our “great reward” in the age to come (v.35).

Unlike human promises—even vows of marriage—God always keeps his promises. Therefore, in Christ, we can build our lives with complete confidence that we will indeed ***“receive what is promised”*** (v.36).

DAY 3

REMEMBER THE PROMISE

1. What does God's kept Word reveal about his character?
2. How do God's promises and faithfulness to keep his word bring you conviction and comfort?
3. In what way(s) is Jesus God's kept promise?

Heavenly Father ...

Today give me a heart that's confident in you and not in my own ability. Give me eyes to see your Son as my greatest reward, not possessions or money. Give me a mind that remembers your promises and isn't anxious with fear or faithlessness.

In Jesus' Name, Amen.

DAY 4 REMEMBER THE COMING ONE

First read Hebrews 10:37-38.

Jesus' resurrection starts something. While some believe his plan was to "snatch people away from earth to heaven" through some immediate or future homecoming, that's not at all what happened to his first followers (see Acts 1:9-11). Rather what Jesus began was "to colonize earth with the life of heaven" (*Surprised by Hope*). Being a Christian then isn't about waiting around for death so we can go to heaven. We're supposed to join this divine project now, working to see the promises of the next age come true in this one.

This is hard work. Waiting for Jesus' kingdom to come and his will to be done is exhausting and can be incredibly discouraging (see Matthew 6:10). And so we're supposed to keep our eyes fixed upon Christ's second coming in the same way our spiritual forebears anticipated his first coming. You see, what Jesus starts at his resurrection, he completes at his return. Quoting from the prophet Habakkuk, the writer of Hebrews reminds us that "***the coming one will come and will not delay***" (v.37). When Christ returns to earth he will bring the fullness of heaven with him (see Revelation 21:1-2). We won't be waiting anymore.

Remembering the Coming One keeps our minds and hearts encouraged and fixed on the purposes God has for us in our work, family, and ministry. Knowledge of his return empowers us to not only "***live by faith***" but also not "***shrink back***" in fear or faithlessness (vv.37,38).

DAY 4 REMEMBER THE COMING ONE

1. Why do you think God wants us to live by faith?
2. Do you think much about the return of Christ? Why or why not?
3. How would regularly remembering that Christ is coming back change the way you live day-to-day?

Heavenly Father ...

Remembering your Son is coming back is healing, encouraging, and hopeful ... but I still forget. All the time. When I forget I live without the wholeness, joy, and faith you desire. Forgive me. Help me. And graciously remind me of the beauty and truth of the Coming One.

In Jesus' Name, Amen.

DAY 5 REMEMBER FAITH

First read Hebrews 10:39.

Many think religion in general and Christianity in particular are oppressive. Moral boundaries can seem restrictive and even destructive to a soul that's meant to be free to define and actualize for itself. This is exactly what Hebrews warns us about.

For the second time the writer cautions believers about ***“shrinking back”*** (vv.38,39). At first blush, this might seem like a warning about lacking courage in a spiritually oppressive context and instead withdrawing within the Christian community. However, the context offers us a different perspective.

We've been instructed about ***“not neglecting to meet together,”*** to not ***“go on sinning deliberately,”*** and not trampling ***“underfoot the Son of God”*** (vv.25,26,29). Shrinking back is not about “the community's withdrawal from the world” but rather the believer's withdrawal from righteousness.

Hebrews is highlighting a misguided survival reflex. We often think God's holiness is a weight too heavy to carry. And so when we feel tired or pressured, we shrink back from righteousness. But Hebrews explains that it's abandoning obedience that destroys us. The weight of sin is what crushes us. Jesus' yolk of righteousness is easy and light (Matthew 11:29). Learning to lay aside sin and take up righteousness is what it means to have biblical faith in a morally complex and fractured society.


DAY 5 REMEMBER FAITH

1. Why does God's righteousness sometimes feel like a burden?
2. What sin is God inviting you to "lay down"? What act of obedience is God calling you to "take up"?
3. How does Jesus demonstrate not "shrinking back" from obedience and righteousness?

Heavenly Father ...

Give my strength and faith to lay down sin and take up righteousness ... to not shrink back.

In Jesus' Name, Amen.



JESUS OVER EVERYTHING

To receive updates about this reading guide and discover more gospel resources to help you enjoy the truth and beauty of Jesus, please visit churchinthesquare.com.



CHURCH IN THE **SQUARE**

©2023 CHURCH IN THE SQUARE
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.