

Get On With It (Get #12),

**Hebrews 13:20-21, Richard Saint**

As we finish our series on Hebrews, we have not finished our journey. Rather we have arrived at a checkpoint, and we are in that period of 30 seconds when we must decide what we are to do next, what will our route ahead look like, and how are we going to get there?

Our series in the book of Hebrews was not an academic exercise, as with other epic journeys we must review our journey to this point and, prayerfully, identify three things:

1. What is God asking you to be transformed by and take forward on your journey
2. Where is God directing you, what is your next checkpoint?
3. What does your route there look like?

## Get Active#2 (Get #12), Faith In Action vs Faith Inaction

### Hebrews 13:1-6, 16, Keith Brindle

This sermon and questions follow on from Get Active#1.

1. After listening to Keith's talk what resonates with you most, what do you find challenging, what questions do you have? (Keith apologies for the excess use of the word 'excrement', but also points out that he avoided some more offensive options)
2. Keith shared the story of Catherine and William Booth, founders of the Salvation Army. For you, what from their story, remains applicable today?
3. In his Get Active #1 talk Keith listed 8 ways to live and maintain an Active Faith. These were (1) Use it or lose it (2) Faith is like water [Flowing it gives life. Stagnant it kills] (3) Life and faith in the same place (4) Don't get too comfortable (5) It's not about being perfect, it's about being present (6) An Active faith is a faith with and for others (7) Victory doesn't always look like victory (8) Live by faith and you die with it. Working through each one of these can you identify and comment on how they are true of the Booths.
4. Catherine Booth once said, 'To better the future we must disturb the present.' To better the future, what bit of your comfortable present is God wanting to disturb?

Get Inspired (Get #11),

**Hebrews 12:1-15, Thelma Edwards**

1. Are you a lover of crowds or do you prefer your own space? Has this changed over the years? Can you recall an occasion when you were encouraged by a crowd? Does it help you in life to think of the 'crowd of witnesses' who have gone before and finished their race?
2. Hebrews calls 'Discipline' a word of encouragement. But for some the experience of discipline has been painful. Do you think discipline has changed over the years and why?
3. The NIV version of verse 6 says 'The Lord disciplines the one he loves and he chastens everyone he accepts as his son' The paraphrase of this verse from Message may help us to understand how discipline can also be loving as it reads "God is educating you. The trouble you're in isn't punishment, it's training."
  - a. What is the difference between punishment and discipline? Do we get them mixed up?
  - b. How does Thelma's illustration of pruning assist in our understanding of discipline?
4. Is there a difference between inspiration and motivation? Does inspiration come from within, something that rises up like a breath, and motivation come from outside of ourselves, by something we see we want to copy?
  - a. Can you think of examples that might illustrate a difference?
5. Inspiration leads to action. What/who has inspired you recently and what have you done as a result of it?

## Get Active#1 (Get #10), Faith In Action vs Faith Inaction

### Hebrews 11:1-40, Keith Brindle

Read Chapter 11.

The church NIV Bibles titles Chapter 11 as 'Faith In Action'. Keith went through 8 'tips' on how to do Faith In Action and avoid Faith Inaction: *#1 Use it or lose it. #2 Faith is like water (stagnant vs flowing). #3 Life and faith in the same place. #4 Don't get too comfortable. #5 It's not about being perfect, it's about being present. #6 An active faith is a faith with and for people. #7 Victory doesn't always look like victory. #8 Live by faith and you'll die with it.*

5. After reading Chapter 11 through, what resonates with most, what do you find challenging, what questions do you have?
6. The first 'by faith' appears in verse 3. Read it. How do you understand verse 3? Can it be seen as the ultimate 'by faith' statement? How does do we square this statement of faith with a scientific understanding of the visible universe?
7. In Chapter 11, the author of Hebrews, is showing what faith looks like, by showcasing the faithful lives of those who have gone before. This is done to encourage the original Jewish recipients of the letter, who were likely undergoing persecution? Why would the author use real-life examples to encourage to live 'by faith'? Who is/are your real-life example(s) of someone who lived 'by faith'? Share their story in your CG, as if it were a paragraph in Chapter 11, start with, 'By faith NAME....'
8. Discuss how the different people mentioned in Chapter 11 illustrate the 8 'tips' Keith went through in his talk. (Are there any that contradict the 'tips'.)
9. Thinking about yourself and those you know, which of the 8 'tips' are you/we most susceptible to not getting right? (For example, Keith is aware that a lot of his life is spent in front of a computer and wonders about the impact on his faith re 'tip' #6.)
10. If you look at yourself today, what 'by faith' do you still need to change, what 'by faith' are you still having to endure, where 'by faith' the next part of the journey is taking you, and what 'by faith' are you now longing to create? Use your group answers to these questions to direct your prayers.

## Get Together (Get #9) How do we persevere, we do it together!

### Hebrews 10:19-25, 32-35, Mike Wilmott

Read the passage.

11. The writer urges his listeners 'to hold unswervingly to the hope we profess'? (v23) What is this hope? How would you describe it?
12. Why do you think the writer addresses his listeners in the plural – 'us' and 'we' not 'You'? (v 22-25)
13. Why do you think the writer urges his listeners to 'not give up meeting together'? (v 25) Why is it important to meet together?
14. How easy is it to be distracted when watching a service online? How connected to the church does it make you feel? What role do you think online services should play in the life of a church?
15. What are we expecting when we gather together? Are we focusing on what we can get out of it? What can we bring? Are there perhaps seasons for each of us – times to give, times to receive?
16. The Queen of Sheba (2 Chronicles 9 1-12) was an outsider drawn in and went away with more than she came. How can we draw outsiders in and ensure that they leave with more than they came with?
17. What new ways can you see God working in our church since we left the building as People of Hope in March last year? Are we open for what new things he may call us to as we come back together?
18. The people to whom this letter was addressed had clearly been through a time of persecution (v 32-35). We are going through a pandemic. Do these words offer any encouragement? How important is it to understand that our faith does not insulate us from suffering? How helpful is it to have others alongside us at these times?
19. As the body of Christ, each with a part to play, consider how 'we may spur one another on towards love and good deeds'. (v24)

You may want to reflect on this throughout the week.

## Get Even (Get #8)

### Hebrews 9:24-10:18, 06/06/21, Richard Saint

1. If you had previously given any thought to the sacrificial system of the Old Testament, what were your views of it? What things colour or influence our perceptions of sacrifice?
2. “Sin broke our relationship and connection with God, the source of life, and so with sin came death”
  - a. What do you think of this association?
3. What do you think of the analogy of paper and a candle flame to illustrate how sin cannot be in the presence of God?
  - a. How might you describe it?
4. God desires a relationship with his people; therefore the sacrificial system was instituted by God to make it possible for us to be in his presence.
  - a. What does this say to you about God’s character?
5. Read the following passages from Hebrews: 9:25, 9:26, 9:28, 10:10, 10:12, 10:14
  - a. What point is the writer trying to make?
  - b. What are some of the differences between the Old Testament sacrificial system and the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross?
  - c. What is the significance of these differences?
6. Read Romans 6:23
  - a. What are your thoughts about the two halves of this verse?
7. What do you think about the cross being the only way to reconnect with the source of eternal life?

#### Questions for personal reflection:

- Do you trust in the efficacy and effectiveness of Jesus’ sacrifice?
- What are the ways that you may try to strive to obtain perfection or restore yourself?  
(The things that might be very good for us to do but that are unable to bring us to perfection)
- Reflect on Romans 6:23 – perhaps consider (re-)accepting God’s gift of eternal life

## Get It Right (Get #7)

### Hebrews 6:13-20, 30/05/21, Sarah Mallett

1. What do you think about the idea of the difference between earthly (uncertain) hope, and Biblical (certain) hope?
2. How has your hope in God helped you feel anchored in difficult times, particularly perhaps during the pandemic?
3. Read God's promise of the future in Revelation 21, how does this make you feel and how should it affect our day to day lives?
4. Have you received a specific promise from God that you would like to share? Have you seen it fulfilled or are you waiting?
5. Look up some of the promises of God in the Bible, do any of them speak to you specifically, for example:
  - Isaiah 41:10
  - Psalm 32:8
  - Jeremiah 29:1
  - Romans 8:28
6. What things other than God do we sometimes put our hope in?
7. Where have you seen break-ins of God's Kingdom in the past week?
8. Where do you think God is asking you to get involved in bringing his Kingdom in here and now?

## Get It Right (Get #6)

### Hebrews 4:14-5:10 and Chapter 7, 16/05/21, Richard Saint

1. Did you have any preconceptions of Levites and Priests, why do you think you had these?
2. Two requirements for priesthood in the OT were being chosen by God and being able to sympathise with the people who they represented before God.
  - a. What do you think of these requirements? Why do you think they are important?
3. Chapter 7:16 says that priests were appointed based on the “legal requirement of physical descent” from the order of Aaron, Chapter 7:28 says, “the law appoints as high priests those who are subject to weakness”, and Chapter 7:19 says that the system was “weak and ineffectual (for the law made nothing perfect).”
  - a. Why do you think the OT priesthood system founded on law was ineffectual?
4. Read Hebrews 7:1-4 which describes King Melchizedek, King of Salem.
  - a. What strikes you about this description? Do you notice any similarities with the character, nature, or descriptions of Jesus?
5. Richard said, “Jesus knows what life on earth is like, he knows our struggles because he faced them, he knows our fears, anxieties, and concerns because he had them, and he knows our temptations, because he felt them. But Jesus did not give in to sin, he remained un-tainted and un-corrupted. Because of this, Jesus is not subject to death as on the cross, death was unable to defeat him.”
  - a. Does it make a difference to you to know that Jesus experienced life as we experience it?
6. The role of High Priest was to be “the way” for the people to approach God, to bring the people into the presence of God, and to intercede for them. However, because of the corruption of sin, “the way” provided by the priests of the order of Aaron could not obtain perfection.
  - a. Read John 14:1-7. How does this passage relate to the concept of “the way”? Who is the true way to God?
7. Hebrews 7:24-25 says, “But [Jesus] holds his priesthood permanently, because he continues for ever. Consequently, is able for all time to save completely those who approach God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them.”
  - a. What do you think of this statement? What do you think are the critical words?
8. Read Hebrews 4:14-16
  - a. Spend some time letting the power and wonder of these verses permeate your heart and mind. Allow them to strengthen your faith and confidence in the one we put our trust in, Jesus Christ.
  - b. Spend some time praising God for the fact we can boldly enter into his presence because of our Great High Priest from the order of Melchizedek, Jesus Christ.

## Get Down (Get #5)

Hebrews 4:1-13: 09/05/21, Anthony Rose

Read Exodus 2:1-10

Question for Sunday's service:

1. Apart from church, what is your favourite Sunday activity?

Connect Group questions:

1. What immediately comes to mind when you hear the word 'Sabbath'? Is it a positive or a negative word for you?
2. Are you able to make a day a week special, either Sunday or another day?
3. Do you think our society is lacking a sense of 'rhythm' by treating Sunday like any other day?
4. What do you think of the idea that God rested on the seventh day after creation? What about the thought that he was enjoying his 'being' rather than 'doing', and was delighting in his creation?
5. Why do you think the Children of Israel found it so hard to believe, and therefore enter the 'rest' that God wanted for them?
6. Eugene Peterson says of Hebrews, *"In the letter, it is Jesus-and-angels, or Jesus-and-Moses, or Jesus-and-priesthood. This letter deletes the hyphens, the add-ons. The focus becomes clear and sharp again: God's action in Jesus. And we are free once more for the act of faith, the one human action in which we don't get **in** the way but **on** the Way."* Can you think of 'add-ons' that either you or people you know bring to the equation and get in the way of truly resting in the salvation Jesus achieved on the cross?
7. "We work out of rest, not merely rest from work." Do you agree? And how does that idea apply to how we do God's work in the world?

## Get Lost? (Get #4)

### Hebrews 3:1-19: 02/05/21, Richard Saint

1. The writer of Hebrews contrasts Jesus with Moses saying, “Now Moses was faithful in all God’s house as a servant [...] Christ, however, was faithful over God’s house as a son”
  - a. How do you understand this contrast?
2. What differences does it make to the members of a household when the leader is fickle or untrustworthy compared to one with a faithful leader?
3. God is eternally faithful over his house but there is a requirement to being a member of God’s house, “We are his house *if...*”
  - a. What is required to be a member of God’s house? (v. 6)
  - b. How do you feel about there being an “if”?
4. Heb 3 contains the warning, “Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion, as on the day of testing in the wilderness” and uses the example of the Israelites in the wilderness to illustrate the impact of not holding firm. The Israelites had just witnessed God’s mighty deeds in rescuing them from captivity and yet they went astray.
  - a. Are we as likely to go astray in our hearts today?
5. Richard used the illustration of “Spatial Disorientation” to demonstrate how taking your focus off the instrumentation and small alterations can lead to becoming lost.
  - a. What are some of the ways that we can begin to distrust the instrumentation in front of us (our faithful and trustworthy Father in heaven)?
  - b. What small alterations do we sometimes make that might lead us to going astray?
6. We are more susceptible to becoming disorientated and hardened on our own. Why do you think this is?
7. Thankfully, the answer to the warning returns to the concept of being part of God’s house. We are not on our own, God has made us part of his house and as fellow members we are to help one another, “exhort one another every day, as long as it is called today, so that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.”
  - a. How might we exhort, encourage, and support each other to hold firm?

### Personal Reflection:

1. Read Ezekiel 36:26, “A new heart I will give you, and a new spirit I will put within you; and I will remove from your body the heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh.”
  - a. Ask our faithful God to help you identify the hard places of your heart and to soften and renew them. There is no heart that is too hard to be replaced. God is willing.

HEBREWS  
CONNECT GROUP QUESTIONS

Get You (Get #3)

Hebrews 2:5-2:18: 25/04/21, Keith Brindle

1. What resonated from the talk?
2. What irked you or you felt unsure about?
3. What left you with more questions?
4. Keith spoke about how the identity, structures, norms, and practices of the original recipients of Hebrews was rooted in the Old Testament. What impact would this have on the culture of the time? As well as the OT, would there have been other influences on the culture of the time? How might, for Jews (and Jews turned Christian), have turned to the OT in response to these other influences?
5. Keith spoke about how we no longer look to the OT to shape our identity, the structures we rely on, our norms and practices. Where does our culture now look to find these things (sometimes consciously, but often as unconsciously as when we breathe air in and out)? Where do you look to find these things? Are you aware of where you are unconsciously rooting your identity, structures, norms and practices?
6. Keith almost seemed to question the validity of using the things of the OT to demonstrate the supremacy of Jesus today. How would you want to support or critique this? Does it make a difference to how we speak about Jesus to those around us who don't know Him (or the OT)? (FYI Keith is does not think that we can be followers of Jesus without the OT, or that we can simply ignore it)
7. How does the argument that Keith presented, that in Jesus we find our primary identity, value, purpose and salvation, fit with Hebrews?
8. Does the argument that Keith presented, that in Jesus we find our primary identity, value, purpose and salvation, still have validity today? How so/not so? What about the argument from atheism/humanism?
9. Consider how your identity in Jesus is sealed by Him choosing to identify with you; through his incarnation, life (where like us he was tempted), death and resurrection; and he identifies us a brothers and sisters with him, of the same holy family. (Hebs 2:10-12)

## Get Happy (Get #2)

Hebrews 1:3b-2:4, 18/04/21, Mike Wilmott

### Background

The writer of this 'sermon' is keen to make clear that Jesus is the ultimate revelation of who God is and what he is like. He is superior to the angels who the Jews believed were the messengers who gave Moses the law and the commandments on Mount Sinai; He is superior to the prophets who spoke to their ancestors in the past. He builds his case by highlighting some of the passages in the Old Testament that he says speak about Jesus, his work in creation, his nature and his power. The writer challenges his hearers to stand firm, not to ignore the good news announced by Jesus, but to pay careful attention to it, to avoid drifting away.

Although Hebrews was not written by Paul, it shares some of his themes – warning against trusting/falling back into the 'old ways' of ritual procedure and adherence to laws and tradition; and of the need instead to trust in the Jesus as the one who alone can transform us.

1. The author of Hebrews selects seven Old Testament (OT) references (no less than five from the Psalms) that he states testify about Jesus. What does this tell us about the importance that the early Christian leaders attached to the OT?
2. Read John 5.v 39 and Luke 24 v 44. What did Jesus see in the Old Testament? How important do you think the OT is for us today?
3. What do the OT scriptures quoted in Hebrews 1 tell us about Jesus?
4. What do we need to escape from? (Hebrews 2 v 3)
5. Who announces the Great Escape? (Hebrews 2.v3)
6. How do we avoid drifting away? To what must we pay great attention? What does this mean in practice on our 'front lines' at home; work?
7. What did the writer say testified to Jesus and the truth of his mission? (Hebrews 2. V 4). What convinces you of the truth of the Good News today?
8. What do you want to do differently after hearing/reading this passage? You may wish to ask a friend to ask how you are getting on in a few weeks.

HEBREWS  
CONNECT GROUP QUESTIONS

Get Ready (Get #1)

Hebrews 1:1-3a,11/04/21, Richard Saint

1. Hebrews begins, “Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son...” In this single sentence, Hebrews summarises what we call the Bible; the Old Testament (OT) record of God speaking to His people and the New Testament (NT) record of His Son, fulfilling what was written.
  - a. Do you think that the NT and Jesus have made the OT redundant?
  - b. Richard described the relationship of the OT and NT as the foundations of the house (OT) and the visible brick house (NT). What are your thoughts regarding this metaphor? Do you agree? What are its strengths and weaknesses?
2. Hebrews 10:1 says, “For since the law has but a shadow of the good things to come instead of the true form of these realities, it can never by the same sacrifices that are offered year after year make perfect those who draw near.”
  - a. How is the OT law like a shadow of an actual person?
  - b. As the law is just a shadow, does that mean that it is now irrelevant?
3. In Matthew 5:17 Jesus says, “Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets; I have come not to abolish but to fulfil.”
  - a. What is the difference between abolishing and fulfilling?
4. If the law was not sufficient, how is it that the final revelation and fulfilment found in Jesus was sufficient?
5. Hebrews aims to depict the absolute supremacy of Jesus above everything, and the opening verses state three facts relating Jesus to creation.
  - i. All things were created through Jesus
  - ii. Jesus’ powerful word sustains all things
  - iii. Jesus is the heir of all things.
  - b. We live within creation; how do these three realities explain Jesus’ supremacy?
6. Some of the recipients of Hebrews were beginning to doubt the identity of Jesus as fully God. The opening verses provide two metaphors seeking to illustrate the point.
  - i. The radiance of God’s glory (the sun’s rays)
  - ii. The exact imprint of God’s very being (the wax seal and signet ring)
  - b. What images would you use to identify Jesus as fully God?

Personal Reflection Question

Richard spoke about the aim of Hebrews being to magnify Jesus. Not as falsely making Jesus bigger than he is but enabling us to draw near, like approaching the foot of a mountain, so that we come to realise the reality of who Jesus is as absolutely sufficient and having absolute supremacy. How close to the foot of the mountain are you?

Get Ready! We are going to draw nearer!