



LC STUDY GUIDE
“Strong to the Finish” Series
 The Passage: Hebrews 2:10-18
 May 23 – June 5

Intro: We continue in our series “Strong to the Finish” while approaching the conclusion of our LC year. Like many things in life, it’s gone by fast and slow at times and has contained both frustrations and joys. Our hope however, is that there was much to gain.

The book of Hebrews is written with a similar backdrop. Its focus was to encourage Christ-followers to endure the hardships of life and persecution and to grow in their trust of their savior Jesus.

Hebrews is rich in both Old Testament connections and what is called “Christology”—the theological study of Jesus. The focus of this study is to examine two other ways of seeing Jesus, one as older brother and the other as high priest. Both metaphors are used in this passage to help us appreciate Jesus and his saving work for us.

Our Central Idea tonight is understanding that Jesus, as our older brother and our high priest, helps us appreciate God’s love for us and encourages us to be faithful to the end, especially in times of pain and suffering.

Hebrews 2:10-18

10 In bringing many sons and daughters to glory, it was fitting that God, for whom and through whom everything exists, should make the pioneer of their salvation perfect through what he suffered. **11** Both the one who makes people holy and those who are made holy are of the same family. So Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers and sisters. **12** He says,

“I will declare your name to my brothers and sisters;
 in the assembly I will sing your praises.”

13 And again,

“I will put my trust in him.”

And again he says,

“Here am I, and the children God has given me.”

14 Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might break the power of him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil— **15** and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death. **16** For surely it is not angels he helps, but Abraham’s descendants. **17** For this reason he had to be made like them,

fully human in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people. **18** Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.

O – What connections do you see between the language of Jesus’ saving work and the language of family? Count the references and reflect on the significance of this.

I – In verse 10, what thoughts come to mind when Jesus is described as acting as “the pioneer of their salvation”?

(In Greek culture, the term “champion” was often used to describe the actions of a warrior fighting for his countrymen. Today we might have described him as our “Superman.” Interpreters likely chose “pioneer” over “champion” not only to move past the pagan connections of warrior-culture but also to describe Jesus’ work as being unprecedented.)

Just a note—In case someone is using an older version of the NIV, in the NIV 1984 edition, the word “author” is used but the better interpretative understanding is “pioneer.”)

A – We should note in verse 11, the one making people holy and the ones being made holy are given the same plane and are included in the same family. What does this mean to you in your understanding of theology? What does this mean to you on a practical level?

(Theologically, it’s amazing that we would be included in the same sacred holy place as Jesus but that’s what his work does for those who call upon his name—it makes us holy. On a practical level, it could help us understand our sacred worth to God through the redemption of Jesus. We are not just creatures who were saved, we are likened to siblings of Jesus himself.)

I – Verses 12 and 13 are quotes from the Old Testament. The first is from Psalm 22, from which Jesus quotes throughout his ministry and from the cross. Identify the two audiences being spoken to and reflect on their significance.

(In v. 12, the audiences are God the Father and all of humanity/creation. Part of the significance is Jesus declaring his trust to the Father and his loyalty to us, his siblings. We become family through our faith in his sacrificial work for us.)

In verse 13, the writer of Hebrews is describing Jesus declaring his trust to God on behalf of himself and his family, using the context of Isaiah 8:17-18. What do you see as meaningful here?

(In v. 13, the context is Isaiah professing his trust in the face of the coming Assyrian army intent on destroying Israel. Similarly, Jesus is declaring his trust to the destroying work of Roman crucifixion. Again, we see Jesus’ loyalty to his siblings. One of the key understandings Hebrews is trying to show us is that there is no closer place to be to Jesus than as a brother or sister.)

O – Verses 14-18 describe Jesus’ humanity. Consider out loud what the contrast would be if God never became one of us. How would that affect our perception of how He understands us? How does Jesus’ humanity help us understand him and his work?

I – The writer of Hebrews begins to shift the metaphor from Jesus as brother to Jesus as “high priest.” What do you think is the significance of Jesus being our “high priest?”
(In the Old Testament, the function of the high priest was to stand before Yahweh, confess the sins of the people, advocate for His mercy and offer a sacrifice for their forgiveness. Jesus’ sacrifice is so complete that no other blood sacrifices are needed again. He is the last high priest in this Old Testament order.)

I – Why is the writer of Hebrews insisting upon the importance of Jesus becoming human like us, suffering and dying and being the atonement for all of humanity?
(An important perspective in understanding the “Incarnation of Jesus,” the Second Person of the Trinity becoming human, is that only humans can die, and only humans can become priests. We also see the importance of Jesus’ dying, because remaining alive does not overcome death; only dying and being raised back to life demonstrates the power of God over the devil’s power of death, sin and evil.)

A – Verse 18 describes Jesus’ suffering upon being tempted. It is not the temptation towards morally failing but the temptation towards losing one’s faith in God during intense times of suffering. (Think of Jesus praying and agonizing in the Garden of Gethsemane before his arrest and crucifixion.)

How can we be more like Jesus when being tempted not to keep our faith in our moments of suffering? And what can we do for each other when we see others enduring trying times?

(Resisting the natural despair with the power of prayer and clinging to God would be something we could draw from in Jesus’ life. Another would be Christian community coming alongside the broken-hearted and not allowing them to feel alone.)

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- a. Please note that not all these questions are to be asked in a single meeting. Take some time to prayerfully discern what will serve your LC the best. Select and reword the questions that best fit your voice and your Life Community group.
 - b. Complement these questions with “process questions” (what else? what more? what do others think?)
 - c. When you ask questions, give people ample time to think and respond. Wait. Take your time; don’t rush people but encourage participation. Avoid answering your own questions!
 - d. Application: Pace the study to conclude with difference-making application.
 - e. Secondary texts—use other texts sparingly, even if they are relevant. Such texts will push you into “teaching” rather than facilitating, causing people to feel distracted or de-powered.