

April 20. Read Hebrews 2:1, Hebrews 3:13, Hebrews 6:1, Hebrews 12:1-3. If you're an athlete, you're familiar with the phrase "hit the wall." It simply expresses the moment when an athlete experiences a sudden loss of energy in a long race or in an athletic competition. The book of Hebrews is written to a group of believers who "hit the wall." They have become stuck where they are, and they are unwilling to grow spiritually. This could be because they have endured some form of persecution. It could also be because they are most likely Jewish Christians who are tempted to turn away from Christ and go back into Judaism. Either way, as a result, they risk forfeiting—not their salvation—but the blessings God has in store for them. The author of Hebrews understands his audience so he draws extensively from the Old Testament to build a case that Jesus Christ is greater than the angels, Moses, the Old Covenant, its priests, and its sacrificial system. The writer argues that the superior beauty of Christ, the greatness of His sacrifice on our behalf and the promise of the unshakeable kingdom that He is bringing should encourage believers to have faith and stand firm in the midst of their suffering. The Christian life is not easy. It is often filled with trials and tribulations, suffering, persecution and adverse circumstances. Are you facing any of these hard times right now? Are you tempted to give up? Maybe you're asking if this Christian life is worth it. I want to encourage you to not throw in the towel. God has not abandoned you, and He's there to help you persevere through the tough times. Keep your eyes fixed on Jesus, and rejoice in your great salvation because Jesus is better and superior than anything else you could run to. Do you have any pain points in your life right now? Stop and pray right now, and ask God to help you endure and overcome them.

April 21. Read Hebrews 1:1-4, John 19:28-30, 2 Corinthians 5:21. Do you remember layaway? Layaway is an agreement in which the seller of an item holds it for a customer until that customer pays for the full price for the item in installments. The customer would pay a little bit here and a little bit there and would keep doing this until all the necessary payments were paid for the item. However, sometimes a customer would never make all the payments, and the item would never be secured.

There is an important yet overlooked fact concerning the Day of Atonement in the Old Testament. When the priest went into the Holy of Holies, in order to sacrifice an animal to atone for the sins of the people, there was no chair. You will not find a chair in the description of the tabernacle. There was no place for the priest to ever sit down. Why? Because his work was never finished. This was a task he repeated over and over again. It was God's layaway plan. The priest had to atone for sins here and atone for sins there. But he could never make the payment in full. There was no permanent solution to the problem of sin in the Old Testament. Right away, the book of Hebrews sets the focus on Jesus Christ and His uniqueness to encourage us not to give up. We see Jesus is the heir of all things, the creative power and exact representation of God, the sustainer of life and the perfect atonement for our sins. After He finished His work of redemption by dying as our sin bearer, He rejoined the Father in heaven, and He sat down. Once Jesus died on the cross, a chair entered into heaven because this did not ever have to be repeated again. It was once for all. Let me put it another way. The book of John says Jesus' last word was *tetelestai*, which means "it is finished." Why would Jesus say that? Because the debt was paid in full and our salvation was secured. How does Jesus' last words encourage you?

April 22. Read Hebrews 1:4-14, Colossians 2:8-19, Revelation 22:8-9. Have you ever noticed the overwhelming infatuation with angels? Just walk into any Christian bookstore, and you will find countless books dealing with angelic beings. Just turn on any TV network, and there will be numerous TV shows and movies centered around the supernatural. There is nothing wrong with wanting to learn more about angels, but we must be careful not to let our curiosity turn into the worship of them.

This is what happened to some of believers in the book of Hebrews. Some were falling away to angel worship because the strong role angels played in the Old Testament. They worshipped angels because of their role in bearing and revealing God's Word. They thought that by worshipping angelic figures, they might draw on their power and protection and the angels might carry their requests directly to God. Yet, in doing so they mistakenly placed a messenger in a place of honor that should only be occupied by God Himself. Worshipping angels equates to idol worship, and it diminishes the message of Christ. In Hebrews 1:4-14, the writer reminds us that Christ is superior to angels, and we should only worship Him. He points out that God never said to an angel, "You are My Son" because this name and title, God's Son, only belongs to Jesus. Plus, the angels themselves are instructed to worship His Son. Not only that, but God also calls the Son "God." The Son is also the everlasting Creator of the heavens who has been seated at God's right hand with His enemies under His feet. Since Jesus is the Son, we can conclude that Jesus is superior to angels in every way. Angels' primary purpose and ministry is to assist human beings toward reaching their final deliverance over their spiritual enemies. This includes protecting and strengthening believers, as well as delivering messages from God. The writer of Hebrews is reminding us that the Person whom the message is coming from is always greater than the messenger! Why should we avoid worshipping angels?

April 23. Read Hebrews 3:1-6, Acts 7:17-38, Exodus 33:11, Ephesians 2:11-22. If you look back over your life, who is the greatest leader you have ever worked under or been around? How would you describe them? Do others agree about their leadership? If you asked the ancient Jews this question, the answer would be answered unanimous as Moses—the greatest leader and prophet they had ever known. If you were a first-century Jew, Moses was your hero. He delivered God's Word to Israel and oversaw the establishment of the tabernacle and the sacrificial system. So, these Jewish Christian readers revered Moses as the great patriarch and shepherd of Israel during the exodus. Moses faithfully served God. But as great as Moses was, Jesus is still superior. The writer of Hebrews shows us the Son's superiority over Moses by comparing the builder of a building with the building itself. No matter how grand a building may be, its creator or architect always gets the greater glory than the building itself. Although Moses served faithfully within Israel, Jesus Christ created Israel. A servant in the house of God is another way of saying that Moses is a member of the team. And while Moses was an important part of the household, we must recognize that Jesus built the house and is in charge over the house. So, you should respect and appreciate Moses, and even other great leaders in the faith, but don't put them next to Jesus because Jesus is in a class all by himself. How can you become a faithful member in God's household?

April 24. Read Hebrews 1:9, Hebrews 3:1, Hebrews 3:14, Hebrews 12:8, Philippians 2:8-11. Some airlines have a frequent flyer perk called “companion passes.” This perk allows you to bring another person for free on any flight you take. With it, when you pay the price for a ticket, you get to designate somebody to fly with you free from cost. That person gets to enjoy the flight and gets to travel to the same destination as you, but it’s on the house.

God also has a companion pass program. It’s called partakers. The Greek word for “partakers” is *metochos*. It is a combination of two Greek words, *meta* meaning “with” and *echō* meaning “to have” or “hold.” Therefore, *metochos* can be defined as having or holding something with another person. It refers to those who’ve been called to participate in Christ’s rule with Him. The writer of Hebrews wants us to persevere because that is the only way we get to participate in and to become a sharer in all that God has in store for believers who follow Him. Partakers are not just “saved people.” Accepting Jesus Christ as your sin-bearer gains you entrance into the kingdom, but it does not automatically grant you inheritance of the kingdom. There is a difference. To enter the kingdom, you have to accept Christ. But to inherit the kingdom means you are a companion of Christ who gets to participate in the benefits, privileges and rights of the kingdom.

So how do you become a companion? Through obedience. You become a partaker in God’s presence through adherence to Him. Jesus had to obey while He was physically here as well. That’s why you see examples of Jesus’ obedience throughout the Bible. He conformed to the will of God, justifying in His humanity, His right to be an inheritor. And because of Christ’s work, we can now become partakers with Him—that is, “partakers of a heavenly calling.” What an awesome promise that we can “partner” with Christ in His work!

What are some current ways that you are partnering with Christ in His work in your home, neighborhood, church, and workplace?