

Summit Woods Baptist Church
Sermon Study Equipping Class
FACILITATOR'S GUIDE

Hebrews 6:13-20

Remember, the “answers” provided below are not intended to be complete. They are to give you a bit of guidance on key elements to highlight in the discussion time and to help clarify the intent of some questions in case it wasn't initially clear. Not every question has an “answer” provided. Consider the comments more as insight and guidance rather than right vs wrong answers.

Remember to ask follow up questions, such as “Explain that further,” or “Who else has an answer?” to prompt additional input from the class or “Where do you see that in the text?” to remind everyone to be getting their answers from the Scriptures.

❖ Opening Prayer (3 min)

❖ Discussion (52 min)

Read Hebrews 6:13-20 aloud.

1. Why do you think that verse 13 starts with the word ‘for’? What is the author trying to prove or reinforce for his audience?
 - The author has just encouraged his audience on the importance of diligence in order to obtain the promises.
 - Now the author will show that we can have absolute, rock-solid confidence in God to fulfill His promises.
2. What is intended by ‘swearing by’ something? Why does it matter what God would swear by?
 - To ‘swear by’ something is to hang one’s truthfulness and validity on a higher authority, in order for others to have certainty of belief.
 - Technically, God need not swear because he is the most trustworthy and faithful Being.
 - If God could ‘swear by’ something greater than himself, then there would be something even more trustworthy than God that we could place our hope in.
 - God’s ‘swearing by’ himself is intended to remind us that he is the most trustworthy being in the universe.
3. What promise is being referred to in verse 13? Where do we find this in the book of Genesis?
 - The promise is given to Abraham after he nearly sacrificed Isaac.
 - It is found in Genesis 22:16-18, and it is summarized in verse 14.
4. When did Abraham obtain the promise? Does the book of Hebrews provide any clues for when this may have happened?
 - It is somewhat unclear if/when Abraham obtained the promise.

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- Hebrews 11:39 may provide a clue about when Abraham obtained the promise: “And all these, having gained approval through their faith, did not receive what was promised.”
 - Hence, the idea may be that Abraham did not obtain the promise in his lifetime, but he did obtain it.
5. How does the example of Abraham provide hope for us today?
- There is a certainty that Abraham did obtain the promise despite the uncertainty of when.
 - Abraham is an example of someone who waited patiently, through great difficulty, and his faith was rewarded.
6. How would you explain or paraphrase the idea expressed in verse 16?
- In order to prove their trustworthiness, men swear by things that are more trustworthy than themselves (never by things that are *less trustworthy*, because the goal is to make people believe the oath).
 - An oath that causes men to believe the statement is intended to end dispute, because it generates faith in the trustworthiness of the thing stated.
7. What may be God's 'purpose' in verse 17?
- God's 'purpose' is to fulfill his promises which he has given. This may have particular reference to the 'promise' mentioned in verse 14.
8. Who are the 'heirs of the promise' (verse 17)? What promise is referred to here?
- The 'heirs of the promise' are believers today. It is 'we who have taken refuge' (verse 18).
9. What do you think the 'two unchangeable things' are that are mentioned in verse 18?
- This question is challenging – expect answers to vary.
 - One possibility that God's Word itself, even without an oath, is absolutely certain. It is an 'unchangeable thing' by itself. Added to this is an oath by God, which is also unchangeable.
 - Another possibility is that one of the 'unchangeable things' is the promise that God has given to Abraham, the promise summarized in verse 14 and confirmed by an oath, so that it is 'unchangeable.' The other 'unchangeable thing' is the promise mentioned in Hebrews 7:21, that Jesus is a priest forever. This promise is also confirmed by an oath and hence is also an 'unchangeable thing.'
10. Why does this passage indicate that God swore an oath?
- God swore an oath so that we would have confidence in his purpose to fulfil the promise, and so that we would have no reason to doubt him. His 'oath' is a reminder that he is the most trustworthy Being.

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11. What is 'this hope' mentioned in verse 19?

- This question is challenging – answers may vary.
- This 'hope' may refer to Jesus himself, who is the one who 'entered' within the veil.
- With this idea, Jesus is our hope, and he offers us access to God.

12. What is the idea behind having 'an anchor of the soul' (verse 19)?

- An anchor is something which is immovable; those things which are connected to the anchor cannot drift or move.
- This 'hope' (which may be Jesus himself) is an anchor of the soul, something which will not be moved and offers stability for all attached to it.

13. What is referred to by 'the veil' (verse 19)?

- This refers to the veil of the temple which separated the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies. It separates the area that the priests regularly enter, from the area that only the High Priest himself could enter annually.

14. What is the significance of entering within the veil (verse 19)?

- The mercy seat and the presence of God is found in the Holy of Holies. The one who enters within the veil has access to God in a unique and profound way.

15. Where else do we see the idea of Jesus as a 'forerunner' in the book of Hebrews?

- Jesus is the author of salvation in Hebrews 2:10.
- Jesus is the 'firstborn' in Hebrews 1:6. He may also be referred to as the firstborn in Hebrews 12:23.

16. What is the significance of Jesus being a 'high priest' (verse 20) in this passage?

- As a high priest, Jesus is able to enter 'within the veil,' something that no one else has authority to do. Hence, for him to have access to God in this way, Jesus must be the firstborn.

17. How would this passage be encouragement for wavering Christians?

- Christians can trust in the absolute certainty of the Word of God, knowing that God intends to fulfill his promises and purposes to them. Even though Abraham did not obtain the promise immediately, he did obtain it, and hence, even when the promises seem distant, we can be certain that God will fulfill them.

18. How could you use a passage like this to encourage discouraged Christians?

- You could work through a passage like this with a Christian friend, reminding him that God always fulfills the promises.

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- It is significant that we are the 'heirs of the promise,' and you can point to biblical promises in general (or, perhaps, the specific promise mentioned in verse 14) to show that we are the heirs of this promise, and God intends to fulfill it.

❖ Closing Prayer (5 min)