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[0 : 00] The following message is given by Walt Alexander, lead pastor of Trinity Grace Church in Athens, Tennessee.! For more information about Trinity Grace, please visit us at TrinityGraceAthens.com.

Hebrews chapter 3 verse 12. Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God.

But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called today, that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.

For we have come to share in Christ, if indeed we hold our original confidence firm to the end. This is the word of the Lord.

Hallelujah. One article I read began surprisingly. It said, here's something you probably didn't do this morning. You probably didn't look in the mirror and say, am I a jerk?

[1 : 17] But it's a reasonable question. The article continues, there are genuine jerks in the world. And many of those jerks have a very high opinion of themselves.

They don't think of themselves as jerks because jerk self-knowledge is hard to come by. One psychologist added in the article, we tend to have a good self-knowledge about many things.

People who are more or less talkative tend to know it. People who are more or less athletic tend to know that as well, even if they're a little bit ashamed to admit it.

But people who are jerks tend to have a hard time coming by it. After all, how would you answer the question, are you a self-important jerk?

No, I'm not a jerk. What are you talking about? No way. But the reality is jerks tend to have blind spots.

[2 : 15] They tend to be blind to the fact that they are jerks. The problem is we have blind spots as well. Like the person who chews with their mouth open or yawns too loudly or makes every conversation about them and their experiences.

There are things about us that are obvious to everyone around us that are not obvious to us. But the problem is even more serious.

We have spiritual blind spots. We've seen the light, but we often do not see how destructive our words are. We've come to know God truly, but we often can't discern our own selfishness and pride.

The reason is, scripturally, though the power of sin has been broken in our lives, we have eyes to see. All those who are in Christ have eyes to see sin and turn from it. The presence of sin has not been driven completely out of our lives.

1 John says, if we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. James 3 adds, we all stumble in many ways.

[3 : 28] The Christian life does not just begin with turning from sin. The Christian life is a personal commitment against sin for the rest of our lives. Now, last Sunday, we studied the topic of church discipline.

And the painful reality that the church must remove members from their fellowship who have turned from following Christ.

In order to purify the church and hopefully to save their soul from the wrath of God. This Sunday, I wanted to step out of 1 Corinthians. We wanted to step out of it to consider the question, how do we avoid becoming one of those people?

How do we guard our own hearts and lives? How do we help one another? How do we avoid the drift?

How do we bring light to our blind spots? And here's one way. Today is Jerks Anonymous. Actually, it's not so anonymous anymore.

[4 : 30] You came to a public meeting. I have news for you. If you're here, you are a bit of a jerk. And there's some things you need to know.

Aware of our blind spots. Aware of pockets of spiritual blindness. Aware of the fact that we do not always see ourselves rightly. I want to give us three words to apply. The first is a personal confession.

The second is a sincere invitation. And the third is a shared commitment. So, the personal confession that we must make, the personal acknowledgement we must make to ourselves and own is, I am my biggest problem.

I am my biggest problem. Perhaps you've heard the story about, in the early 1800s, a London newspaper ran the column, What is wrong with the world?

And they invited all these smart guys to pontificate about what is wrong with the world. People wrote in and said this or that. One man wrote in, Dear sirs, let me tell you what's wrong with the world.

[5 : 36] I am. Sincerely, G.K. Chesterton. Well, these verses are put in the Bible so that you would answer in the same way. So that we would answer in the same way.

Verse 12 begins with a sharp warning. You see it down there. Take care. It's a command. Take care. Brothers, beware. Watch out. Like a danger sign before a massive precipice, this verse is alerting us to grave danger if we don't heed it.

The warning is addressed to the whole church. Look down there with me. Verse 12. Take care, brothers and sisters, lest there be in any of you.

It's a warning for all of us. But it's also a warning for each of us. There aren't certain people that are out of the purview of this warning.

It's not just for the new believer. It's for every saint. Every follower of Christ. Lest we be confused, it is addressed to believers.

[6 : 47] He says, take care. Brothers, take care. Sisters. If we could look up from these verses, we would see what the author of Hebrews is saying. Look actually up in verse 7. He says, Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says, he's about to quote Psalm 95, but it's just fascinating.

He says, as the Holy Spirit says, not said back then, this idea that the scriptures are not a static, dead, dusty book, but a living word from God, who inspired every verse the Holy Spirit speaks through what is written.

And the psalm is a historical psalm. It's Psalm 95. It's a psalm of worship. It's a historical psalm, recounting the people walking through the wilderness, following the Lord, and yet hardening their hearts against them.

In the wilderness, they began to grumble and complain, as we know the stories. If you want some fun family devotions, go to Numbers. Numbers 11 through 14, they are some fascinating verses to give a biblical perspective of complaining.

This sin that we just sweep under the rug. But God did not sleep under the rug. So these people that were delivered from Egypt grumble against the Lord, rebel against the Lord, and they do not enter the promised land.

[8 : 06] The first generation dies in the wilderness because of the judgment of God. Now let that sink in. These were the people who escaped out of Egypt.

They were there when the blood was put on the doorpost that night of the Passover. And the firstborn of all those in Egypt died. They were there following the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night.

They passed through the Red Sea. You know, that fabulous miracle when the Lord calls the waters to part. They walk through them. These are those people. They ate manna by day.

Isn't that fascinating? They went out, and the Lord provided, just dropped down from the sky like dew on the ground. They ate it. They drank water from the rock of Moses when the Lord struck the rock, and yet they did not enter because they hardened their heart.

So despite many deliverances, they grumbled and complained. They rejected God's rule. They turned away in the wilderness, and they died.

[9 : 11] And so too, the author of Hebrews says, all of us who are in the church, who are singing the songs, have something very serious to watch out for.

He says, take care lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart. I don't know about you, but when they tell me to follow my heart, I don't often think of it as evil and unbelieving, but yet that's a

scriptural reality.

These verses urge us to make a personal confession. I am my biggest problem because of the sin that remains within me. The 1960s classic sitcom, *The Andy Griffith Show*, you probably know it, is situated in the small town of Mayberry, stars Andy Taylor and Barney Fife, one of the greatest characters ever invented.

Don Knotts as Barney Fife. In one episode, the local church invites in a guest preacher from the big city. You know, New York or something like that.

Sunday comes, and everybody's excited. Everybody's trying to put on their Sunday best, make a good impression on this guest speaker to be in rapt attention.

[10:30] Everybody's sitting on the edge of their seats to listen to this guy. I pontificate and elaborate and deliver his sermon. But as he begins, they quickly begin to fade.

The boy Opie catches a fly with his hand and puts it up to his ears so he can hear it buzzing.

Gomer, who's just a wonderful character too, begins to fall asleep.

And Andy's sitting next to Barney, elbows Barney. Barney elbows Gomer, is like, what are you doing? You're falling asleep right now? And then just as you would expect, a few moments later, Barney falls asleep.

As they're leaving the service and shaking hands with the preacher, Andy said, they're all kind of uttering there, they didn't really understand the sermon, but they're giving some applause, and Andy says, you really hit the nail right there this morning, preacher.

Barney adds, with a bit of a nervous grin since he slept through half of the sermon, he said, yes sir, that's one subject you just can't talk enough about. Sin! Andy looked at Barney and said, you dope!

[11:46] The message wasn't about sin! He's just an idiot, you know? But the truth is, sin may be a message we can't, we just can't hear enough about.

It alerts us to an enemy within. Sin remains the biggest hindrance to following Christ with all our hearts. The New Testament repeatedly used ungodly desires of the heart to describe what is wrong with us.

The flesh wages war against the desires of the Spirit to satisfy his desires. Each person is lured and enticed by his own desires, but the medicine does not go down very easy.

We're all too quick to ignore sin, believing that if we lived in a different city or at a different job that life wouldn't be so bad. We're quick to minimize sin, watering it down with a catalog of words like quirks, flaws, missteps.

We're all too quick to excuse sin, highlighting in yellow the ungodly sins of the culture, and yet sweeping under the rug our sins of anxiety, pride, stinginess.

[13:03] We're all too quick to psychologize sin, excusing culpability in words like perfectionism. That's control. Workaholism.

That's idolatry. Obsessive compulsive disorder and so many other things. The idea is the reason we need to hear about this is if we don't get the problem right, we'll get the solution wrong.

And so the Christian life begins with realizing that our main problem is sin. Sometimes we talk about sin like it's just missing a mark. Like I'm sorry for not being perfect. You know, I can't hit bullseye every time.

Or sometimes we think of just breaking a rule. Like you know, we're all going to color outside the lines one time, but that's not really what sin is. Sin really in its essence is rejecting the rule of God. It's living according to my own desires and my own flesh living in this never-ceasing desire of the heart to be first, celebrated, and admired, the willingness to do whatever I have to do for me to be number one.

[14:01] It is the reason we always look for ourselves in every picture. Always look for ourselves first in every picture we look at. It's the reason we never lose an argument in our own heads.

Because there's one person that we always give a fair shake and that's us. We won't let anything stand in our way. That's what sin does. But the Lord says, my glory I will not give to another.

He punishes those who exalt themselves against Him. And so we have to get the problem right and the solution to the gospel will be dead wrong.

The Christian life therefore begins with understanding that our main problem is sin. But growth in the Christian life is made by realizing that sin continues to be our main problem.

John Owen, who wrote quite a bit on this, said, let not that man think he makes any progress in holiness who walks not over the bellies of his lust.

[15:06] So if falling in Christ is all peaches and cream, it's probably because you're not identifying the problem. The devil's fine with peaches and cream Christianity.

But when you're walking over the bellies of your lust, what's that mean? You're taking out the sword, taking them down, and walking over them. That's the Christian life. I don't know if that was the vision you had when you started the Christian life.

But that is, so we have a personal confession to make every day. Maybe not get in front of the mirror and say, am I a jerk? But you can get in front of the mirror and say, I am my biggest problem. Think about it. How would your life change if you made this confession every day? How would your marriage change if you did not focus on the speck in your spouse's eye, but the log in your own? How would friendships change if you're more aware of your sins against God than their sins against you? How would the way you talk about the world change?

[16:11] You know, sometimes in the Christian lingo, it's so easy to talk about the world, people in the world with such crass terms when the reality is the world is in here.

There's enough iniquity in here to damn me to hell. How would your relationships with non-believers change? We take away this, oh, I could never and this realization that the only way that hasn't been my way is the grace of God.

So it's a wonderful confession. Perhaps you should say it to your wife or your husband around the dinner table. I am my biggest problem. I know sometimes it doesn't seem like I believe that, but I'm trying to believe it.

You know, the second one, this is a sincere invitation we need to make. An invitation we must learn to express to others, I need you to see my biggest problem, i.e. myself.

You know, I need you to see my biggest problem, which is myself, as we've already established that. And so, the author of Hebrews begins with this strong conjunction.

[17:25] Look down there in verse 13. So he says, take care lest there be an evil, unbelieving heart leading you to fall away from the living God, but exhort one another every day as long as it is called today.

That none of you be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. So verse 12 is this sharp warning and verse 13 is an exhortation for how to help people keep the warning.

Essentially, the command is to exhort one another. The thread of exhortation runs through the book of Hebrews because he's urging the church to press on, to continue in the faith, to not give up.

You know, we often don't think we need it, but we need exhortation. This is a precious command in so many ways. What we've been doing this morning is exhorting one another. We exhort one another by singing, singing to one another.

We exhort by praying. We exhort by reading the word, taking the sacrament, so much of it is trying to exhort us to press on in the faith.

[18:29] Martin Luther says somewhere that the church is really, what the church is, it's just one Christian slogging through the mud, yelling out to another Christian, keep on!

Keep going! Like Winston Churchill said, when you're going through hell, keep going. I have a mug in my office that just says, keep going, Winston Churchill.

keep slogging through the mud. The time of the command, so the command is, exhort one another. The time of the command is every day, not just the Lord's day, but every day.

Look at verse 13, exhort one another every day, as long as it is called today. Exhort one another every day, as long as it is called today. Now that's a little bit silly when you read it the first time.

What is going on there? Why is it, as long as it is called today, didn't you already say that? We really need to add as long as it is called today. But the author is not trying to say the same thing twice.

[19:32] He's saying something very important. Today is a reference to verse 7. Look there with me. Quoting Psalm 95.

Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says, today, if you do not harden your voice. The idea is, the author of Hebrews is making clear, the reason you don't need to harden your heart or you shouldn't harden your heart today is because today, because of Jesus Christ's death, resurrection, ascension to the right hand of the Father is a day of salvation.

So, wonderfully, that day is today. That's what he's saying. Today can be the salvation of God if you do not harden your heart. The idea is, armed with all that he said in chapters 1 and 2, Christ is at the right hand of God the Father.

He's offered his sacrifice. He's sat down. He's delaying his judgment. He invites you to come. He invites me. He invites us to come through his substitutionary death to receive salvation.

The idea is so precious what's going on here. In the Old Testament, the people were waiting for the day of the Lord and yet, when Christ comes, he announces that the first coming of the Lord will be a day of salvation.

[20 : 50] for God did not send me into the world to condemn the world, John 3, 17, but in order that the world might be saved. So wonderfully, today is a day of salvation, but soberly, that day has an expiration date.

That's what he's saying. As long as it's called today, because one day, the today will end when the Lord comes in judgment.

That song we sang this morning, the new song captures it so well. Our Lord Jesus Christ is the Savior of the world. He did not come to condemn the world.

He could have condemned the world and you and me in it, but he came that the world might be saved. But the awful reality is it's this one who came to save is going to come to judge.

Who will stand before the end of the last day will not be just the Lord generically, but our Lord Jesus Christ. We will stand before the judgment seat of Christ and all who are not found in him will perish.

[21 : 58] Everyone who's ever lost someone knows the crushing reality of not being able to say what you wanted to say. How much more not being prepared for the judgment of God.

He's alerting us. precious reminder to all of us. And so I do offer you the gospel of Jesus Christ. The good news that the only way we can face the judgment of God without fear is because God sent his son to bear the judgment of God.

Christ died. Christ was cursed for us in order that we might receive the promise of Abraham by faith.

The reason that even after salvation this command to exhort one another continues to be important is because sin deceits.

Look at what it says that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. Verse 12 alerted us that sin remains. like if you think you have a Christian life and sometimes it's taught in different places that the Christian life is just one time you'll reach this place where you don't sin anymore.

[23 : 19] Well that wouldn't line up with New Testament Christianity. This alerts us that sin deceives. Verse 12 said we could harden our own hearts.

Verse 13 alerts us that sin is seeking to harden our hearts. It was the deceitfulness of sin as we know that brought about the fall of humankind after the serpent convinced the woman to eat of the apple she was deceived and so sin continues to deceive sin tricks dopes and misleads no one sane wakes up and says I'm going to make today all about me and yet far too often that's exactly what we do.

We defend ourselves more than we defend the truth. We insist on our way more than we consider the needs of others. We boast about ourselves rather than build one another up and we do it without giving it thought.

It's like falling off a log. Sin is like oxygen. You don't have to think to sin. Sometimes you can think well if it's unintentional then it's not really sin. No that's not true biblically. You don't have to think to sin.

Even worse theologian Herman Baving says the dreadful misery of sin consists not in that we are blind but that we being blind nevertheless imagine that we see.

[24 : 39] So these verses are alerting us to this painful reality of blinded by sin and think we see. Sin remains with us and while it remains it deceives.

we think we're okay. So if we're following Christ I think we should have many realizations many self realizations of how sinful we are.

Maybe in the morning when you ask the Lord search my heart. I mean we were singing that song my judge and my savior I was like Lord what sin do I need to run from?

I immediately thought of some sins. I want to turn from them. Why? Because I want to treasure the savior. Sometimes the Lord brings about circumstances that reveal our sins. He is the author of our circumstances.

He often reveals them. I remember one occasion that was very vivid for me. My family and I love Tennessee football and so we've gone many years to the spring game.

[25 : 46] We've gone to the orange and white game. We love going to that game and it's popular now and it's a little bit harder to get in. Some years ago we went when the kids were little now knowing that they wanted to get their fill of the concessions that's really what they wanted to do buy a lot of concessions we fed them before we left and we were tight on finances we were doing cash envelopes which I wouldn't wish on my worst enemy.

Sometimes it's helpful though it is helpful somebody's going to yell at me but it is helpful so we fed the kids before leaving the house we didn't want to spend a lot of money on concessions we bought we brought water bottles and told them no concessions there's your generous dad free game and no concession.

A bit into the game we smelled the popcorn which I just cave to the smell of popcorn. I asked him to go get us one box of popcorn.

So we she went up and we all just stayed and watched the game and if you've ever been inside the bowl at Nealon you can see pretty easily and I remember looking up and she was coming back with the popcorn and she was coming back with two things of popcorn.

I was like in my heart what in the world? I asked her to get one box of popcorn.

[27 : 17] Doesn't she know we're on a budget? I became so angry in my heart. I wish well I don't wish you could see my heart in that moment.

It was popcorn. I was so angry. in God's kindness I didn't say anything. She came down the row and she had one box of popcorn and one that was empty so she could pour half into the other so that the family could share.

I remember it was a realization. It was like it was a light on the blind spot.

How could you be so arrogant? So judgmental? They're like playing the spring game. Everybody's having a lot of time. I just felt cornered by the Lord.

You're so self-righteous and selfish. selfish. I was thanking the Lord. After a little bit I was so humbled.

[28 : 34] But you know if we're following Christ for real there should be revelations like that. I'm so sorry. Why did I say that? Sometimes we say we didn't mean what he said.

The Bible says you don't. You know the word flows from your heart. So you can't say that. these discoveries. You know sometimes these realizations come personally in our devotions. Sometimes they come circumstantially but often times they come from other people.

You know these realizations that we are blind often means we need the help of another person. I remember a couple months after being saved being corrected for the first time by somebody. I wanted to take a bath and throw up at the same time.

It was so terrible. I felt so guilty and so humiliated. Well the idea is these verses should urge us to have a sincere invitation to others and say I need you to help me see.

I have a problem. I have a blindness problem. I need you to help me see my problem. Paul Tripp says so helpfully on these verses he says the reality of spiritual blindness has important implications for the Christian community.

[29 : 40] The Hebrews passage, the one we're studying, clearly teaches that personal insight is the product of community. I need you in order to really see and know myself.

That is huge. I need you in order to really see and know myself. Otherwise I will listen to my own arguments, believe my own lies, and buy my own delusions. And so this passage, not Paul Tripp, but this passage should give us the understanding that we need outside input to see truly ourselves.

See, you know, a few things are more helpful in the pursuit of following Christ and a friend who tells you what you do not want to hear, what you need to hear. Enemies stab you in the back, friends stab you in the front.

They look at you in the eye, they're honest with you, and they say what needs to be said. They point out your blind spots, they point out the things that are out of place in your life, they help you grow to be more like Christ.

But what I want you to see, and the reason I phrase this invitation, because it doesn't just happen. It doesn't just happen. We're human beings, we don't just walk around barging into people's lives.

[30 : 57] It's so sad when you see a little kid say, I do it, I do it, I do it, I do it, when they can't do it. You know what's even more sad? Seeing an adult, a grown man or woman saying, I do it, I do it, I do it, I do it, and they've driven away everybody else that can speak into their life.

Scripture says, he who isolates himself breaks out against all sound judgment. So if you don't have anybody in your life that's willing to step over the line and say something, it's not because of them, biblically, it's probably because of you.

And so, I want you to say, I need you to see my biggest problem. I need you to see myself clearly. Do you have friends that speak to you in that way?

They tell you what you need to hear. You have friends that tell you what you don't want to hear. And when they do, do you hear? Do you listen?

Yeah, I'm so guilty. I'm a talker. You know, so I can usher out the defense attorney very fast and tell you the 18 reasons why it's completely justified for me to do what I was doing. Is that the way we are?

[32 : 15] Do you seek out input? Do you ask others for counsel? You know, sometimes we can ask for counsel just looking for somebody to rubber stamp our decision in our life, but really asking for counsel. Without counsel, plans fail is what the scriptures say.

And so, counsel is not, you know, just a real performative act that we do as a church. We're after trying to walk in the light and please the Lord. And so, counsel gives us access to wisdom.

Do you seek it out? I have friends that ask for counsel and help in such a way I'm always challenged. Counsel about their marriage or about their finances, about a conflict, about parenting, you know.

I can't tell you how much gift it is to get counsel on my kids. Like, I don't want people to be afraid of saying something that might help me parent my kids better.

And so, it's just a tremendous gift. So, I need you to help me see my biggest problem. So, that's the invitation. Thirdly, a personal, I mean, a shared commitment we make together.

[33 : 26] So, personal confession, I am my biggest problem. A sincere invitation and a shared commitment. We need one another to see and Savior Jesus Christ.

We need one another to see and Savior Jesus Christ. Look down in verse 14 now. Each of these verses is carefully layered together. One is identifying something.

Two is kind of the, how do we respond knowing that we have remaining sin within us? And then, anchoring it all is verse 14. For we have come to share in Christ.

It provides the basis of the confession we make and the invitation we make to one another because we've come to share in Christ. We're trying to follow Jesus Christ.

We want to honor Him with our life. We've come to share in Him. I love that word, share. You know, the author of Hebrews would say, we've come to share in His joy. For the joy set before Him, Christ endured the cross.

[34 : 25] The joy of forgiveness, righteousness, peace with God. We've come to share in His inheritance. Once we were not His people, now we're brothers and sisters. He's brought them to glory.

We've come to share in His honor and glory. He died to death. We should have died. We've come to share in His unshakable kingdom. There are things that will be shaken in this life, but the things that are part of this kingdom will not and cannot be shaken.

It's so important in the context. I realize we've said a lot, and I was telling somebody on this text today, and they said, oh no, another message on sin. So I apologize.

Yes, another message on sin, but this is where it's so critical. We've come to share in Christ. Sin is not meant to be a slam door. It's not meant to be a dead end.

Sin, the reason we talk about sin, the reason we try to get the problem right is so that we can get the solution right. It's meant to be a doorway into the joy of forgiveness and the grace of God, sharing with God all that He's given us in Jesus Christ.

[35 : 32] The point of learning how to expose sin is to do it really quickly so that you can apply grace. You can live in the grace of God and celebrate it.

God and celebrate it. And so we've come to share in Christ. He continues, if indeed we hold fast our original confidence firm to the end, the reason we must honestly face the facts about remaining sin and the deceitfulness of sin is so that we can press on.

Now this is one of those verses that gets people in all sorts of knots. What does this mean? I thought we're saved by grace. If we're only saved and we hold our confidence to the end, doesn't that mean we're saved by works?

Doesn't that mean we're the ones keeping ourselves? Here's what I think is going on. The New Testament motivates us again and again towards rewards.

It motivates us in eternal life by rewards. Without faith, it is impossible to please God. Because you must believe that God exists and rewards those who seek Him.

[36 : 56] So we see that again and again. Jesus says, whoever gives even a cup of cold water in my name will gain their reward. And so the Christian life, or the New Testament, motivates us with rewards.

Well, I think what's going on here in Hebrews, Hebrews 3 and 6 and other places, is He's motivating us by warnings of death and destruction. So He's not turning over the message of salvation, but giving us warnings of death and destruction so that we press on.

So the idea is not that we're saved because we persevere. The idea is that saving faith is a persevering faith. That's what I think the author of Hebrews is trying to get at again and again and again.

So if once saved, always saves. Once saved, you sit in the cruise. That is not biblical. Once saved, always saves. Meaning by the grace of God, God produces in us in response to these warnings to chase hard after Him with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength.

And to alert us to the need to not waste any moment on peaches and cream Christianity, but to press on towards Christ.

[38 : 14] Before there was Michael Jordan, there was Steve Prefontaine. Some of you don't know who Steve Prefontaine often just went by the nickname Pre.

I remember being a freshman at UT and being with somebody. He's a track and field guy. Being with somebody who ran for the track and field team who had a massive poster of Steve Prefontaine on the wall.

And then I did a deep dive on Steve Prefontaine. In the 70s, he's a long distance runner. He ran for the University of Oregon. Then for the United States of America, he broke records at every distance from 2,000 to 10,000 meters from 1973 to 75.

He completed the 72 Summer Olympics, crushing it, trying to get to 321, I think his miles, what was his goal. He was preparing for the 76 Olympics.

Steve Prefontaine was a legend. Very similar to Jordan with the flu game and things like that. The things he would do, the runs he would do when people thought he was too washed up were amazing.

[39 : 18] In many ways, he and his track coach, Bill Bowerman, who was friends with Phil Knight if you're a nerd in these things, led to the jogging revolution of the 80s. I remember as I was a kid, my dad was jogging all the time.

That came in many ways because of Prefontaine, Bill Bowerman and Phil Knight. When he would run at Oregon's Hayward Field, the crowd would chant, go, pre, go.

Go, pre, go. Because it was just like catching a wind. He had long hair so it flowed behind him. Go, pre, go. In fact, he died of this car wreck in 75.

They put his body in the hearse. He had eight members of his team there as his pallbearers.

Loaded up in a hearse. They drove around Hayward Field one last time around the track.

Prefontaine's last lap saying, go, pre, go. Go, pre, go. In many ways, what the author of Hebrews is saying to us is, go, church, go.

[40 : 29] Go, church, go. Don't let anything stop you. Go, church, go. Again and again, he says it. You have a great salvation. You have Jesus Christ who ascended to the right hand of the Father on high, offered his sacrifice.

He's exalted far above all angels, all prophets, all priests, all kings. So go, church, go. You have this Savior. You have a merciful and faithful high priest able to sympathize with all your weaknesses, able to help you in your time of need.

So don't just stop. Go, church, go. You have a heavenly calling. You've been called out of darkness into light, and that light is a light of heaven. He's saying you have a great God in heaven who does not overlook any of your work, anything you do, any cup of water given out in his name, for his name.

So go. You have a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, an unshakable hope rooted in the promises of God who never changes. Hebrews 7. So go, church, go.

You have a better covenant made with better sacrifices, with better gains, better promises, better everything. You have a new and better way, a living way into the presence of God.

[41 : 45] So he's saying, go, church, go. You have an inheritance that awaits. There is a city that is ahead whose designer and builder is God. The riches of Egypt are nothing to be compared to the riches of God.

And no matter what you lose here, you cannot lose what you gain there. So he says, go. And then he says, you have a great cloud of witnesses. Everyone who's gone before. That's what these verses are yelling at you.

You have Abraham and Moses, Rahab and Ruth, King David, Peter, James, and John. Best of all, our Lord Jesus Christ saying, press on.

Lay aside every weight and sin which clings so closely and run the race of endurance that was set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith.

That's what's all out after. Remember the salvation we've received, the standing we have.

[43 : 03] Press on. So today, Jerks Anonymous, we need help. We have a big problem.

And it's not our nagging mother-in-law. It's ourselves. We need help. And we need a shared commitment to see and savor Jesus Christ, to worship him.

Father in heaven, thank you for these few minutes to sit under your word. We pray that you'd help us, God, now. Work out that which is pleasing in your sight.

Oh Lord, we pray. For your glory and for your honor. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen. You've been listening to a message given by Walt Alexander, lead pastor of Trinity Grace Church in Athens, Tennessee.

For more information about Trinity Grace, please visit us at trinitygraceathens.com. Amen.