

# CROSSROADS BIBLE CHURCH

GROWTH GROUP CURRICULUM

March 10, 2019

## "HEBREWS" - Week 6

For more information or to join a Growth Group, please visit our Growth Group page online at [cbclife.org/groups](http://cbclife.org/groups) or call the church office at 408.288.4115.

### QUICK REVIEW

For those who weren't there or even those who didn't understand it very well it will help them to get acquainted with the text and topic. These questions are also designed to be "softball" questions in order to get people to engage and participate.

1. Looking back at your notes from this week's teaching, was there anything you heard for the first time or that caught your attention, challenged or confused you?

This is an opportunity to clarify the teaching for those who may not have understood it. This can also be a jumping off point for great discussion. Sometimes groups don't get past this question and that's ok! Remember, you want to "scratch where it itches" so don't feel the need to rush past this.

2. What is one thing from Sunday's message you are likely to remember 2 weeks from now?

### GETTING TO KNOW YOU

1. Who's your go-to band or artist when you can't decide on something to listen to?

Remember; you don't need to get to every question. The curriculum is designed to have more than enough content for your groups discussion. Feel free to consider which questions will resonate with your group. You may also want to try adapting certain questions to your immediate context. An example would be if a recovery group augmented the discussion so that the discussion dealt directly with addiction. Whatever your situation try. To adapt to it as best you can.

2. We're going to do something a little different with this question. Take 60 seconds and write down as many sins you can think of without stopping (you won't have to share your answers in the group).

What was that experience like? Where was your focus? Was it easy or hard to do? Did it start with the "big" sins? Were you thinking about others or yourself? Did it affect you in a way that caused you to feel judgmental toward others? Towards yourself? More compassionate? Which ones would you say are the "big" sins?

The goal of this exercise is to help those in your group recognize that we all have a "big sin" list and a "small sin" list. While there is a difference between murder and gluttony, there are several aspects that all sin has in common. Sin drives us further from the will of God.

### DIGGING DEEPER

1. As we heard this weekend, we can easily fall into the trap of thinking “small sins” are no big deal. CS Lewis has this to say in his book *The Screwtape Letters*, as to why we need to be extremely careful of falling into this mindset.

*“It does not matter how small the sins are provided that their cumulative effect is to edge the man away from the Light and out into the Nothing. ...Indeed the safest road to Hell is the gradual one – the gentle slope, soft underfoot, without sudden turnings, without milestones, without signposts.”*

– *The Screwtape Letters*, CS Lewis

- How does Paul’s “sin list” in his letters to the Galatians and Ephesians reinforce our need to be aware of falling into the trap of some sins having less effect on us than others? (Galatians 5:19-21; Ephesians 5:3-7)

Galatians 5:19-21 (NIV)

19 The acts of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; 20 idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions 21 and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.

Ephesians 5:3-7 (NIV)

3 But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God’s holy people. 4 Nor should there be obscenity, foolish talk or coarse joking, which are out of place, but rather thanksgiving. 5 For of this you can be sure: No immoral, impure or greedy person—such a person is an idolater—has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.[a] 6 Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of such things God’s wrath comes on those who are disobedient. 7 Therefore do not be partners with them.

In both of the passages above Paul mentions what some might think of as “BIG and “little” sins interchangeably. Apparently, the BIG/little distinction is not on that Paul makes. This should tell us that these categories are erroneous.

- Looking back at these verses, which sins do you think people typically forget are on the list?

Again, people have a tendency to recall the more obvious, external sins while at the same time minimizing or dismissing the less obvious or internal sins.

- Are there any that could more easily trip you up than others?

These answers will be personal, however, you may find that the less obvious, internal sins tend to be the ones that believers are most likely to struggle with precisely because they are less apparent.

2. The idea that we are saved from wrath and judgement through Jesus sacrifice on the cross can be difficult for some people to understand. Frequently, people come to

Christianity with a self-imposed list of requirements. The Bible tells us that grace is a free gift that we can't earn and we don't deserve. However, the Bible also tells us how we can live in light of God's grace. Read the following verses and see if you can decide what the writers are saying about what it means to live in light of God's grace.

Hebrews 13:20-25, Acts 1:4-11, Romans 5:6-10, 7:15-8:17, 2 Timothy 1:7, Matthew 28:19-20

### **Hebrews 13:20-25 (NIV)**

20 Now may the God of peace, who through the blood of the eternal covenant brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, 21 equip you with everything good for doing his will, and may he work in us what is pleasing to him, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

22 Brothers and sisters, I urge you to bear with my word of exhortation, for in fact I have written to you quite briefly.

23 I want you to know that our brother Timothy has been released. If he arrives soon, I will come with him to see you.

24 Greet all your leaders and all the Lord's people. Those from Italy send you their greetings.  
25 Grace be with you all.

### **Acts 1:4-11 (NIV)**

4 On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: "Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. 5 For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit."

6 Then they gathered around him and asked him, "Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?"

7 He said to them: "It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. 8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

9 After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight.

10 They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. 11 "Men of Galilee," they said, "why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven."

### **Romans 5:6-10 (NIV)**

6 You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly.  
7 Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous person, though for a good person someone

might possibly dare to die. 8 But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

9 Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him! 10 For if, while we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life!

### **Romans 7:15-8:17 (NIV)**

15 I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do.

16 And if I do what I do not want to do, I agree that the law is good. 17 As it is, it is no longer I myself who do it, but it is sin living in me. 18 For I know that good itself does not dwell in me, that is, in my sinful nature.[a] For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. 19 For I do not do the good I want to do, but the evil I do not want to do—this I keep on doing. 20 Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me that does it.

21 So I find this law at work: Although I want to do good, evil is right there with me. 22 For in my inner being I delight in God's law; 23 but I see another law at work in me, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within me. 24 What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body that is subject to death? 25 Thanks be to God, who delivers me through Jesus Christ our Lord!

So then, I myself in my mind am a slave to God's law, but in my sinful nature a slave to the law of sin.

8 Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, 2 because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you[c] free from the law of sin and death. 3 For what the law was powerless to do because it was weakened by the flesh,[d] God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh to be a sin offering.[e] And so he condemned sin in the flesh, 4 in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

5 Those who live according to the flesh have their minds set on what the flesh desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires. 6 The mind governed by the flesh is death, but the mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace. 7 The mind governed by the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so. 8 Those who are in the realm of the flesh cannot please God.

9 You, however, are not in the realm of the flesh but are in the realm of the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, they do not belong to Christ. 10 But if Christ is in you, then even though your body is subject to death because of sin, the Spirit gives life[f] because of righteousness. 11 And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies because of[g] his Spirit who lives in you.

12 Therefore, brothers and sisters, we have an obligation—but it is not to the flesh, to live according to it. 13 For if you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live.

14 For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God. 15 The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship.[h] And by him we cry, "Abba,[i] Father." 16 The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. 17 Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.

### **2 Timothy 1:7 (NIV)**

7 For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline.

### **Matthew 28:19-20 (NIV)**

19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

Hebrews 13:20-25 - God will equip us for the work he has in store for us.

Acts 1:4-11 - God sends His Holy Spirit to help us.

Romans 5:6-10 - Christ died for us not because we were deserving. The fact that we are undeserving should reorient our heart. Our works and service are done not out of fear or obligation but out of gratitude.

7:15-8:17 - We are set free from the Law, there is no condemnation for this sin Christ. We also receive an inheritance. This means; not only are our sins paid for.

2 Timothy 1:7 - God's Spirit gives us self discipline. While we may not have been especially disciplined when we first come to Christ, the Holy Spirit will imbue this upon us.

Matthew 28:19-20 - Jesus will be with us as we minister to those God puts in our path.

3. On Sunday we explored the tension that some people experience when they try to balance understanding that salvation is by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone and that we are still called to obedience. Read Romans 6 and consider the following questions:

### **Romans 6 New International Version (NIV)**

6 What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? 2 By no means! We are those who have died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? 3 Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? 4 We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.

5 For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly also be united with him in a resurrection like his. 6 For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body ruled by sin might be done away with,[a] that we should no longer be slaves to sin— 7 because anyone who has died has been set free from sin.

8 Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. 9 For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, he cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over him. 10 The death he died, he died to sin once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God. 11 In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus. 12 Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. 13 Do not offer any part of yourself to sin as an instrument of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer every part of yourself to him as an instrument of righteousness. 14 For sin shall no longer be your master, because you are not under the law, but under grace.

15 What then? Shall we sin because we are not under the law but under grace? By no means! 16 Don't you know that when you offer yourselves to someone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one you obey—whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience, which leads to righteousness? 17 But thanks be to God that, though you used to be slaves to sin, you have come to obey from your heart the pattern of teaching that has now claimed your allegiance. 18 You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness.

19 I am using an example from everyday life because of your human limitations. Just as you used to offer yourselves as slaves to impurity and to ever-increasing wickedness, so now offer yourselves as slaves to righteousness leading to holiness. 20 When you were slaves to sin, you were free from the control of righteousness. 21 What benefit did you reap at that time from the things you are now ashamed of? Those things result in death! 22 But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the benefit you reap leads to holiness, and the result is eternal life. 23 For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

- - The crux of Paul's argument rests in vv. 16. Think back to before you were a Christian, how might you have responded to the idea that you were a slave?

Typically, modern western people revile the idea of slavery. It may be a challenge for some to recognize that we are enslaved to something. Another way of stating this would be to say that something is driving our decisions, and that "something" controls us in a way.

- As a believer, does the notion that we are "slaves to righteousness" raise any questions?

The most obvious question might be "what does this look like?" Being a slave to righteousness means many things. In essence it means that the Holy Spirit living in you will convict you of sin, develop righteousness in you and equip you to do good in the world around you.

- How would you explain vv. 14 to someone reading it for the first time?

It will be helpful for those in your group to be able to articulate this in their own words. You might challenge them to take a few minutes and rewrite the verse in their own words.

### **TAKING IT HOME**

4. Serve someone this week. This could be as simple as buying someone a cup of coffee, doing someones chores at home, or picking up someones slack at work. As you do it, consider that your pardon has been purchased by Jesus and that he invites you to serve others in the same way He serves you, not with a sense of compulsion but with joy.