

“Great High Priest and Anchor”

Session 4 – Hebrews 4:14-6:20

Bible Study Method:

Word Studies (Hold Firmly, Fully Realized)



Leaders Notes: This session covers a large section of text that moves from comfort to a stern warning, and finally to deep security. Your goal is to help the group see that while the Word "cuts" (from last week), our High Priest "heals." We will explore how "developing" our faith requires moving from the "milk" of basic knowledge to the "solid food" of a life anchored in Christ's finished work.

You know your group best and we trust you to lead as God leads you, but also want to offer some guidelines for skipping sections.

Notes for Skipping: The best parts to skip are those sections which are less central to the overall direction of the Bible passage.

- Prioritize section 2 for this session. DO NOT skip this section.
- You might skip one question out of Section 1.
- Section 3 – Reflection - could be skipped, used as a closing, or as an activity to practice during the week.

INTRO – 3min

Say It: (Lead your group by reading this section aloud to them.)

Jesus is not just a distant King; He is our "Great High Priest." The Hebrews understood that a priest was their mediator. He was the only one allowed into the "Most Holy Place." And he represented them before God. They wanted a priest who would deal gently (5:2) with them. . . one who understood them and could sympathize with their weaknesses. Jesus is the bridge between our weakness and God's holiness. Because He understands us, we are called to grow up in our faith and hold fast to a hope that is as steady as an anchor.

In the first verse of our reading (4:14) the author encourages these weary Christ followers to "hold firmly" to their faith in Jesus despite their persecution and struggles. In the following section, he explains why.

SECTION 1 – One Who Understands

Hebrews 4:14-5:10 - (4 Questions - 20min)

Read It: (Ask someone in your group to read this passage aloud.)

- Hebrews 4:14-5:10

Discuss It: The “Discuss It” sections of this guide should be the main course of your time together. The goal is 100% participation in discussion. We want everyone to feel like they are a part of the group.

- **What do you think the author meant in Hebrews 4:14 when he told them to “hold firmly” to the faith they professed and why would this have been important?**

Give members an opportunity to discuss and also share the “Say It” section below during your discussion.

Say It: Word Study: The Greek word translated as “hold firmly” is “Krateō” and it means to “seize” or “cling” to something “with all your might.”

It’s not just having faith; it’s the active choice to cling to Jesus Over Everything when life feels like a storm. It’s one thing to have a life raft, it’s another to trust it, climb inside, and put your whole trust in it. **"Faith isn't just having a life raft; it's the white-knuckled grip that keeps you inside it during the storm."** This would have been especially important for the Hebrews because there were other more popular “rafts” being offered to them – specifically their previous Jewish belief system.

- **Hebrews 4:15 says Jesus was tempted in every way that we are, yet remained without sin. How does it change your prayer life to know that Jesus isn’t just watching your struggle, but actually understands the feeling of it?**

It transforms prayer from a formal report into an honest conversation. You don’t have to explain the “how” or “why” of your pain to Him; He already knows the weight of it. We can stop trying to “inform” God and start relating

to a Savior who has shared our human experience. **Jesus doesn't just see your struggle; He shares the weight of it.**

- **Hebrews 4:16 tells us to "draw near with confidence." What is the difference between maintaining appearances before God and approaching Him with biblical confidence and authenticity?**

If you're running behind, this is a good question to skip. The others are more central to the passage.

Maintaining appearances is a performance where we hide our mess to feel accepted; biblical confidence is a position where we are honest about our mess because we are already accepted. One is a mask to protect our reputation; the other is a mirror that brings us into the light of His mercy.

- **Why do you think it was necessary for Jesus to suffer "loud cries and tears" (5:7) to become our perfect High Priest?**

It proved His humanity and created solidarity with us. To be a perfect mediator, Jesus didn't just observe human suffering; He tasted it. Those "cries and tears" ensure that when you are at your breaking point, you aren't talking to an unsympathetic observer, but a High Priest who has experienced the same pains and struggles.

SECTION 2 – A Call to Maturity

Hebrews 5:11-6:12 - (3 Questions - 17min)

Read It: (Ask someone to read aloud.)

- Hebrews 5:11-6:12

Say It (Lead your group by reading this section aloud to them.)

Word Study: In verse 6:11, the Greek word translated as "fully realized" is "*Plērophoria*" and it means "entire confidence." It's a deep-seated certainty that isn't based on our performance, but on God's character.

The author makes it clear that it requires diligence to walk in this kind of confidence. However, verses 5:11-14 make it sound like the Hebrews have drifted and are wavering from their persecution and struggle.

Discuss It: (Spend most of your time in discussion.)

- **Hebrews 5:11-14 describe a people who have drifted and verse 14 encourages “constant use.” (NIV) In our mission of maturing and developing faith, why is practice more important than knowledge or information?**

Information informs the mind, but practice transforms the character. You can memorize a map and still never go on the journey; spiritual "solid food" is only digested when we actually do what the Word says. Maturity isn't found in what you know, but in what you practice.

- **The warning in Hebrews 6:4-8 is intense. Why is "drifting" (from Session 2) so dangerous when it comes to our spiritual growth? How could someone who has “tasted the heavenly gift” (6: 4) still “fall away” (6:6)?**

Don't let this question take your group down a “lose your salvation” rabbit hole. The author's goal wasn't about a doctrinal debate, but simply a call to check direction and momentum.

Drifting is dangerous because it is passive and quiet. It isn't a sudden rebellion, but a slow leak of trust. Someone can "taste" the gift through religious experience but never "anchor" their soul in it. Without the anchor of constant practice, we don't just stand still; we drift toward convenience and whatever is easiest – usually old habits and safety nets.

- **Hebrews 6:10 mentions that God won't forget your work and the love you showed His people. How does sacrificial generosity toward others help prevent our own hearts from hardening??**

Generosity is the antidote to self-centeredness. A "hard heart" is often a closed heart. By looking outward and giving sacrificially (whether it's time, grace, or resources) we keep our perspective, see our own blessings, and prevent ourselves from growing stagnant in the practice of our faith.

SECTION 3 – Reflection

(2 Questions - 4min)

Reflect on It: (Optional Activity) Give your group a few minutes to quietly reflect on what God might be trying to say to them and specifically how He might want them to respond to His Word this week.

Say It: (Lead your group by reading this aloud to them.)

We just read that maturity comes from "constant use." We're going to take a few minutes of silence to listen and think about what God might be saying to us individually.

First, I want you to ask yourself, "Where are you currently "drifting" or settling for a comfortable routine instead of growing? Where are you drinking milk instead of eating solid food?

(Give them 2 minutes, and then say. . .)

Now ask God : If you were to take one "solid food" step this week (practicing a difficult truth, choosing a hard conversation, or a specific act of generosity), what would it be? Use this time to ask the Holy Spirit to show you one area where He wants to "develop" you right now.?

SECTION 4 – Jesus is the Anchor

Hebrews 6:13-20 (2 Questions - 12min)

Read It: (Ask someone in your group to read this passage aloud.)

- Hebrews 6:13-20

Discuss It: (Spend most of your time in discussion.)

- Hebrews 6:19 calls our hope an "*anchor for the soul*." When the world and "popular opinion" tells you God has forgotten you, how does this "*firm and secure*" anchor keep you from drifting?

An anchor's purpose is to hold a vessel steady against external forces it cannot control, like wind, tide, or waves. The difficult circumstances and opinions of the Hebrew's culture are the waves. This anchor (Jesus) keep us from "drifting" because it isn't hooked into our own fluctuating feelings or the shifting culture; it is grounded in the unchangeable character of God. **The world tells you to anchor your soul in what you can see; Hebrews tells you to anchor your soul in the One who sees you.**

- Hebrews 6:20 calls Jesus a "*forerunner*" who has entered on our behalf. A forerunner is someone who goes ahead to secure the path for others. How does

knowing Jesus has already "secured the destination" change the way you handle the "wilderness" moments of your week?

There's freedom in knowing that we don't have to forge our own path. We are simply walking out the path that Jesus has already paved.

DO IT – 5min

Ask your group members to choose two options to practice this week. Talk about your plan and encourage them to share their goals with one another. Plan to discuss their choices again next week. Create a little accountability within your group.

- **The High Priest Prayer:** Spend 2 minutes naming a specific weakness or "failure" from this week. Specifically ask your High Priest for the "mercy and grace" promised in 4:16.
- **Solid Food Challenge:** Instead of just reading a verse, choose one Biblical Truth to practice this week (e.g., forgiveness, generosity, or encouragement).
- **Maturity Check:** Identify one "basic" truth you know but haven't "practiced" lately. Commit to one act of sacrificial generosity or outward focus this week to strengthen your faith.
- **The Anchor Text:** Send a text to someone in the group this week with one "Biblical Truth" that has been an "anchor" for you lately.

PRAY IT: 4min

(Pray however your group prefers, but if your group struggles with prayer requests becoming a burden we are offering an alternative each week. Remember: The goal is always **Bible Study, Community, and Care**, so praying for one another is important, but it doesn't have to take place inside your meeting times. As a matter of fact, it's better if it reaches beyond your time constraints. You are the leader and guiding your group to healthy practices is important.)

Prayer: (Lead your group by praying this prayer this aloud with them.)

Lord Jesus, thank You that You are not a distant King, but a sympathetic High Priest. Thank You that our hope is not an "ideal," but an anchor firmly held by You. We are grateful for the milk we have received, but teach us to feast and hunger for the solid food found in Your word. Help us move past comfortable routines and develop the practices of a mature faith that holds fast to You in every storm. Amen.

TOTAL TIME: 65min