

Hebrews 6:11-12 Commentary

[PREVIOUS](#)

[NEXT](#)

CLICK VERSE

To go directly to that verse

[Hebrews 6:1](#)
[Hebrews 6:2](#)
[Hebrews 6:3](#)
[Hebrews 6:4](#)
[Hebrews 6:5](#)
[Hebrews 6:6](#)
[Hebrews 6:7](#)
[Hebrews 6:8](#)
[Hebrews 6:9](#)
[Hebrews 6:10](#)
[Hebrews 6:11](#)
[Hebrews 6:12](#)
[Hebrews 6:13](#)
[Hebrews 6:14](#)
[Hebrews 6:15](#)
[Hebrews 6:16](#)
[Hebrews 6:17](#)
[Hebrews 6:18](#)
[Hebrews 6:19](#)
[Hebrews 6:20](#)

CONSIDER JESUS OUR GREAT HIGH PRIEST

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[Swindoll's Chart](#), [Interesting Pictorial Chart of Hebrews](#), [Another Chart](#)

The Epistle to the Hebrews

INSTRUCTION Hebrews 1-10:18

EXHORTATION Hebrews 10:19-13:25

Superior Person
of Christ
Hebrews 1:1-4:13

Superior Priest
in Christ
Hebrews 4:14-10:18

Superior Life
In Christ
Hebrews 10:19-13:25

BETTER THAN
PERSON
Hebrews 1:1-4:13

BETTER
PRIESTHOOD
Heb 4:14-7:28

BETTER
COVENANT
Heb 8:1-13

BETTER
SACRIFICE
Heb 9:1-10:18

BETTER
LIFE

MAJESTY
OF
CHRIST

MINISTRY
OF
CHRIST

MINISTERS
FOR
CHRIST

DOCTRINE

DUTY

DATE WRITTEN:
ca. 64-68AD

See [ESV Study Bible "Introduction to Hebrews"](#)
(See also [MacArthur's Introduction to Hebrews](#))

Borrow [Ryrie Study Bible](#)

Hebrews 6:11 And we [desire](#) that [each one](#) of you [show](#) the [same diligence so](#) as to realize the [full assurance](#) of [hope until the end](#), ([NASB: Lockman](#))

Greek: [epithumoumen](#) (1PPAI) [de](#) [ekaston umon ten auten endeiknusthai](#) (PMN) [spouden pros ten plerophorian tes elpidos achri telous](#).

Amplified: But we do [strongly and earnestly] desire for each of you to show the same diligence and sincerity [all the way through] in realizing and enjoying the full assurance and development of [your] hope until the end, ([Amplified Bible - Lockman](#))

NLT: Our great desire is that you will keep right on loving others as long as life lasts, in order to make certain that what you hope for will come true. (NLT - Tyndale House)

Phillips: It is our earnest wish that every one of you should show a similar keenness in fully grasping the hope that is within you. (Phillips: Touchstone)

Wuest: But we are strongly desirous that each one of you exhibit the same diligence which will develop your hope into full assurance until the end (Eerdmans)

Young's Literal: and we desire each one of you the same diligence to shew, unto the full assurance of the hope unto the end,

AND WE DESIRE THAT EACH ONE OF YOU SHOW THE SAME DILIGENCE: [epithumoumen](#) (1PPAI) [de hekaston humon ten auten endeiknusthai](#) (PMN) [spouden](#):

- Ro 12:8,11 1Co 15:58; Gal 6:9 Php 1:9-11; 3:15 1Th 4:10 2Th 3:13 2Pe 1:5-8; 3:14)

We desire ([1937](#)) Earnestly long for, have strong desire for (1Ti 3:1)

What the Bible teaches – Having remembered their service of the past, and having assured them that he knew that that good work was continuing in the present, the writer will now look to the future. His expressed desire for them is not just a general thing, viewing them abstractedly as a company. His concern is for "each one" of them. His ambition for them is a noble one and he uses a very strong word for "desire", *epithumeō*, that same word used by the Saviour on the night of His betrayal, "With *desire* I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer" (Luke 22:15). When used in an evil sense the word would be translated by the word "lust" (Matt 5:28; 1 Cor 10:6; James 4:2). This but brings out the strength of the word and of the inner feeling which is implied. It is an intense earnest desire. With such feelings the writer anticipates the future for these saints whom he loves.

Desire ([1937](#)) (*epithumeo* from *epí* = upon, used intensively + *thumós* = passion) (Click for in depth study of related noun *epithumia*) means literally to fix the desire upon (whether things good or bad). It means to have a strong desire to do or secure something. Note that the preposition "**epi**" can express motion toward! And so it means to have one's passions or affections directed toward something (good or bad).

That is, we **desire** (continually - **present tense**) that each of you exhibit the same diligence to develop your hope, which is in danger of failing, into full assurance, unto the end of the present season of trial with its happy consummation... It is practically the same whether it is translated full development or full assurance. The two meanings coalesce. Hope develops into full assurance.

Each ([1538](#)) (*hekastos* from *hékas* = separate) every single one. This idea of separation or singling out is expressed still more strongly by *heís hékastos*. It means each and every one of you. The writer gets very personal and does not want to leave anyone out.

Show ([1731](#)) (*endeiknumi* from preposition *en* = in, to + *deiknumi* = to show) means to point out, to demonstrate, to put on display, to prove, to show proof, to show forth, to show oneself, to give visible proof, to show in anything and implies an appeal to facts. The preposition (**in**) in the compound suggests more than the simplest demonstration. It is like laying the index finger, as it were, on the object. It means to to show something **in** someone. It can mean to do something to someone, as Alexander the coppersmith "**did**" (*endeiknumi*) Paul much harm (2 Timothy 4:14 note). In the papyri it could have a quasi-legal sense of proving a petition or charge or of proving that a charge was wrong. Josephus used *endeiknumi* to describe Herod Agrippa's display of generosity to those of other nations (Josephus, Antiquities, 19:330).

The **present tense** calls for the saints to continually demonstrate this diligence demonstrated by the patriarchs (he illustrates this

diligence with "father" Abraham - see **notes** Hebrews 6:13; 6:14; 6:15). The **middle voice** indicates that we ourselves must each consciously initiate this action (empowered by the Spirit of course) so that we continually show forth or demonstrate a zealous urgency.

Just as there has been a continuance in work and love he desires for them a similar perseverance in diligence. **Diligence** signifies zeal and earnestness and carries also the thought of the careful haste which is appropriate when there are things requiring to be done. The writer here earnestly longs that such zeal in spiritual things would characterize these Hebrews in the days that lay ahead.

Diligence (4710) (**spoude** from **spseudo** = hasten, make haste) refers to eagerness, earnestness, willingness or zeal. It denotes quick movement or haste accompanying the eagerness, etc, in the interest of a person or cause. Thus **spoude** can refer to swiftness of movement or action and means haste or speed (like our expression "in a hurry"). It can refer to an earnest commitment in discharge of an obligation or experience of a relationship.

Spoude was often used in Greek and Roman literature and found on inscriptions in reference to extraordinary commitment to civic and religious responsibilities, which were frequently intertwined, and also of concern for personal moral excellence or optimum devotion to the interests of others.

Spoude is primarily an attitude which leads to an action. **Spoude** means to do something with intense effort and motivation, with quick movement and is in opposition to the attitude of slothfulness. The individual who is "spoude" who is eager to do something and ready to expend the necessary energy and effort.

Spoude describes zeal (eagerness and ardent interest in pursuit of something), passion (passion applies to an emotion that is deeply stirring-- how wonderful to so fully be in love with Christ so as to be fully governed by His Spirit).

Note that assurance comes from diligence. If we are diligent in living for Christ, our hearts are filled with assurance. If we are not diligent, then we cannot be assured that all things will be well. Living an up and down life—sometimes living for Christ and other times not living for Christ, sometimes living in sin and sometimes living in righteousness—causes doubt, questioning, and wondering about salvation. And it should. We should fear lest we fall away from Christ and His Word.

F B Hole writes that...

Being thus assured of the salvation of the mass of those to whom he wrote, there is but one word of exhortation at this point. The writer urges them to go on doing as they had done — to continue diligently in this good way to the end, in the full assurance that their hope was not misplaced.

Hope has a very large place in connection with the faith of Christ, just as it had in the bygone dispensation. Then, whether patriarchs or prophets or just the people of God, they all had their eyes directed forward to the good things to come at the advent of the Messiah. Now the good things have been manifested in Christ — full atonement has been made, our consciences have been purged, we have received the gift of the Spirit. Yet even so we are not in the full enjoyment of the good things. For that we await the second coming of the Lord. What we actually have at the present moment we have in faith, and we enjoy by the power of the Spirit, for He is the Earnest of all we shall inherit. We are saved, in hope of all that is to come.

It is very important for us to be clear as to this, and even more important it was for these converted Hebrews to be clear as to it. How often did they get reproached by their unconverted relations! How often taunted with their folly in giving up all the outward glories of the Mosaic system with its temple, its altar, its sacrifices, its priesthood — and for what? For a Master whom they could not see, for He had left them, and for a whole range of things as invisible as He! What fools they appeared to be! But were they really fools?

They were not. And if instructed in that which our chapter says they would be able to give very good reason for what they had done. They would be able to say, "It is really we and not you who are following in the footsteps of our father Abraham. Promises were made to him and you seem to have forgotten them, settling down as though contented with the shadow system of the law, which was given through Moses as a provisional thing. We have received Christ, and in Him we have the pledge of the fulfilment of every promise which ever was given, and we have fresh, and even brighter promises besides."

We need to have a hope which is resting upon a very well established basis if we are to hold it with full assurance. It is this thought which leads to verses 13-18. ([Hebrews Commentary Notes](#))

Here is an incredible illustration of diligence...

The Proceedings of the U.S. Naval Institute: The USS Astoria (CA-34) was the first U.S. cruiser to engage the Japanese during the Battle of Savo Island, a night action fought 8-9 August 1942. Although she scored two

hits on the Imperial flagship Chokai, the Astoria was badly damaged and sank shortly after noon, 9 August.

About 0200 hours a young midwesterner, Signalman 3rd Class Elgin Staples, was swept overboard by the blast when the Astoria's number one eight-inch gun turret exploded. Wounded in both legs by shrapnel and in semi-shock, he was kept afloat by a narrow lifebelt that he managed to activate with a simple trigger mechanism.

At around 0600 hours, Staples was rescued by a passing destroyer and returned to the Astoria, whose captain was attempting to save the cruiser by beaching her. The effort failed, and Staples, still wearing the same lifebelt, found himself back in the water. It was lunchtime. Picked up again, this time by the USS President Jackson (AP-37), he was one of 500 survivors of the battle who were evacuated to Noumea.

On board the transport Staples, for the first time, closely examined the lifebelt that had served him so well. It had been manufactured by Firestone Tire and Rubber Company of Akron, Ohio, and bore a registration number.

Given home leave, Staples told his story and asked his mother, who worked for Firestone, about the purpose of the number on the belt. She replied that the company insisted on personal responsibility for the war effort, and that the number was unique and assigned to only one inspector. Staples remembered everything about the lifebelt, and quoted the number. It was his mother's personal code and affixed to every item she was responsible for approving.

Fifty years ago, a mother's unheralded diligence in an anonymous wartime job assured her soon-to-be shipwrecked son's survival. But how much greater are the stakes in eternal matters, and how much greater is the challenge to diligence in eternal matters! "We want [literally, we long for] each one of you," says the writer in v11, "to show this same diligence to the very end, in order to make your hope sure."

SO AS TO REALIZE THE FULL ASSURANCE OF HOPE UNTIL THE END: *pros ten plerophorian tes elpidos achri* (until) *telousn*:

- Heb 3:6,14; 10:22 Isa 32:17 Col 2:2 1Th 1:5 2Pe 1:10 1Jn 3:14,19
- **Hope** - Heb 6:18-20 Ro 5:2-5; 8:24,25; 12:12; 15:13 1Co 13:13 Gal 5:5 Col 1:5,23 2Th 2:16,17 1Pe 1:3-5,21 1Jn 3:1-3
- **To the end** - Heb 3:6,14; 10:32-35 Mt 24:13 Rev 2:26

So as to realize - This is all one word in Greek, the preposition **pros** which normally expresses motion toward and in some contexts such as the present passage (cf Jn 11:4, Acts 3:10, 1 Pe 4:12) indicates or shows purpose. The purpose for our desire and diligence is your attainment of **full assurance of hope**.

See result of Abraham's faith...

Without becoming weak in faith he contemplated his own body, now as good as dead since he was about a hundred years old, and the deadness of Sarah's womb; yet, with respect to the promise of God, **he did not waver in unbelief** but **grew strong in faith**, giving glory to God, and being **fully assured (plerophoreo)** that what God had promised, He was able also to perform." (Ro 4:19-21-note)

Pleophoreo describes Abraham's assurance that God would keep His promise and give him a son.

MacDonald - Abraham did not know *how* God would fulfill His word, but that was incidental. He knew God and had every confidence that God **was** fully **able** to do **what He had promised**. In one way it was wonderful faith, but in another way it was the most reasonable thing to do, because God's word is the surest thing in the universe, and for Abraham there was no risk in believing it! (Believer's Bible Commentary)

Full assurance (4136) (**plerophoria** from **pleres** = full + **phoreo** = to bear ; cf **plerophoreo** = to fulfill) literally means complete carrying or bearing. In the NT it then comes to mean entire confidence, perfect certitude, full conviction. This noun carries a strong implication of certainty, a wealth of certainty, an absolute and entire confidence. Notice that full assurance for believers is linked to faith, understanding and hope....

(1) **Full assurance of faith**—we rest on God's word, His testimony to us (Hebrews 10:22-note). Faith gives us full assurance (like Abraham above in Ro 4:21)

(2) **Full assurance of understanding**—we know and are assured (Colossians 2:2-note). Understanding

(spiritual things) gives us full assurance.

(3) **Full assurance of hope**—we press on with confidence as to the outcome (Hebrews 6:11-note). Hope gives us full assurance.

McGee - Full assurance is an interesting expression; it literally means “to be under full sail.” It means that believers should be moving along spiritually—they should be moving along for God.

Herman Witsius, the seventeenth-century Dutch theologian, writes: **Plerophoria**, “full assurance,” is an expression which occurs more than once in the writings of the Apostle Paul. He speaks of *plerophoria suneseos*, “the full assurance of understanding” (Col. 2:2); *plerophoria tes elpidos*, “the full assurance of hope” (Heb. 6:11); and *plerophoria pisteos*, “the full assurance of faith” (Heb. 10:22). According to its etymology, this word denotes “a carrying with full sail”; the metaphor being taken, probably, from ships when their sails are filled with favourable gales. Thus it may here signify the vehement inclination of the mind, impelled by the Holy Spirit, towards an assent to the truth perceived.

Plerophoria - 4x in 4v - conviction(1), full assurance(3). This noun is not found in the Septuagint or the secular Greek writings.

Colossians 2:2 that their hearts may be encouraged, having been knit together in love, and attaining to all the wealth that comes from the **full assurance** of understanding, resulting in a true knowledge of God's mystery, that is, Christ Himself,

1 Thessalonians 1:5 for our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full **conviction**; just as you know what kind of men we proved to be among you for your sake.

Hebrews 6:11 And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence so as to realize the **full assurance** of hope until the end,

Hebrews 10:22 let us draw near with a sincere heart in **full assurance** of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

Comment: To be near to God, then, means that we have total confidence in His promises, absolute assurance of His provision, and full trust in His sovereignty. The more we doubt Him, the more we question Him, the farther away from Him we drift.

How does one in fact “**realize the full assurance of (the) hope**”? It is thru faith and patience and so the writer gets very pragmatic, reminding his predominantly Jewish audience of one they would be very familiar with (Abraham) and in fact quoting directly from the Lxx of Ge 22:17, as probably the ultimate example of Abraham's faith... he had believed God in Ge 15:6 but God's call to sacrifice his son Isaac was the ultimate test of Abraham's faith (obedience) by which he became the father of all those who believe.

J Flanigan adds “In such diligent continuance in well-doing they could enjoy the fullness of the hope that was theirs. A patient diligent pursuit of deeds of kindness and labors of love is the way to the real enjoyment of that **full assurance of hope**. This joy is not to be had in idleness or sloth, but in busy ministering to others. In such loving ministries the writer desires that they should continue, until, eventually, their hope is realised. He will speak of this hope again, further down this same chapter (Heb 6:18), but his immediate desire for them is that they should be in the fullness of the joy of it, and the sure way to this enjoyment is to be engaged busily in the work of the Lord. The hope is certain. It will be realised one day. For the present, while we await the fulfillment of it, we are to be in the fullness of the joy of it. And this exhortation is but a repetition of that similar exhortation of Heb 3:6. “Hold fast”, he had there exhorted, “the confidence and rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end”. We must persevere. We must continue. “**The end**” is undoubtedly the end of our pilgrimage. The realisation of our hope will come when we shall see Him, whom we have loved without seeing. In the certain hope of His coming and in the equally certain hope of a resurrection out from among the dead for those who have died in Christ, we live and labour and wait and watch, and thus engaged we arrive even now at the full enjoyment of all that for which we hope. (What the Bible teaches – Hebrews)

Only as we apply zeal and apply faith and patience can we have an assurance that we will one day “inherit the promises”. Without them, we become sluggish, and as such expose ourselves to the danger of apostasy. This idea of applying diligence is very important if you desire to sense “spiritual security”. Peter describes this need for diligence (2Peter 1:5; 2Pe 1:10; 1:11 see **notes** 2Peter 1:5; 1:10; 1:11)

Note hope is modified by the definite article the (**tes**) in the Greek so this is a very specific hope, not some generalization or “pie in the sky by and by”. This reflects the absolute certainty of future good, because as taught below Jesus has entered thru the veil and will be there as our High Priest forever. That is a sure & steadfast anchor for our souls when storms of life assail us, which are in fact guaranteed if we are truly His children (Philippians 1:29-note, Jn 16:33)

Hope (1680) (**elpis**) in Scripture is not the world's definition of "I **hope** so", with a few rare exceptions (e.g., Acts 27:20) but is an absolute certainty of future good. **Hope** is defined as a desire for some future good with the expectation of obtaining it or as Peter Anderson put it "Hope is faith in the future tense." **Hope** is confident expectancy. **Hope** is the looking forward to something with some reason for confidence respecting fulfillment. See related study on the **Believer's Blessed Hope**.

I like **John Blanchard's** definition of the Christian's hope = 'Hope' is biblical shorthand for unconditional certainty.

Hope as the world typically defines it is a desire for some future occurrence of which one is not assured of attaining. The ancient world did not generally regard **hope** as a virtue, but merely as a temporary illusion. Historians tell us that a great cloud of **hopelessness** covered the ancient world. Philosophies were empty; traditions were disappearing; religions were powerless to help men face either life or death. People longed to pierce the veil and get some message of hope from the other side, but there is none outside of Christ.

it. In the OT there are several Hebrew words translated "**hope**" but each has the idea of inviting us to look ahead eagerly with confident expectation, the same idea conveyed by **elpis**. Each Hebrew word for "**hope**" calls for patience, reminding us that the fulfillment of our hope lies in the future ("hold on... the best is yet to come").

Hope is by no means a passive attitude but a stimulant to action for **Thomas Brooks** writes that "A man full of hope will be full of action... Hope can see heaven through the thickest clouds."

John Calvin adds that "When hope animates us there is a vigour in the whole body."

Hope is a repeated theme in Hebrews. Study the 5 uses in context...

- Hebrews 3:6 (note) - but Christ was faithful as a Son over His house --whose house we are, if we hold fast our confidence and the boast of our hope firm until the end.
- Hebrews 6:11 (note) - And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence so as to realize the full assurance of hope until the end,
- Hebrews 6:18 (note) - so that by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have taken refuge would have strong encouragement to take hold of the hope set before us.
- Hebrews 7:19 (note) - (for the Law made nothing perfect), and on the other hand there is a bringing in of a better hope, through which we draw near to God.
- Hebrews 10:23 (note) - Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful;

Gabriel Marcel said, "**Hope** is for the soul what breathing is for the living organism."

A study of concentration camp survivors found that those prisoners who were able to hold onto their sense of hope ('things are going to get better' or 'we're going to get out of here one day') were much more likely to survive. Hope then is not optional but for these prisoners proved to be a matter of life and death.

Vincent writes that **hope** "in classical Greek, has the general signification of expectancy, relating to evil as well as to good. Thus Plato speaks of living in evil hope ("Republic," i., 330); i.e., in the apprehension of evil; and Thucydides, of the hope of evils to come; i.e., the expectation or apprehension. In the New Testament the word always relates to a future good." (Vincent, M. R. Word Studies in the New Testament Vol. 1)

Seneca, Rome's leading intellectual figure, tutor of the depraved emperor Nero (who forced Seneca to commit suicide!) and contemporary of Paul tragically defined **hope** as "an uncertain good", the antithesis of Biblical **hope**! What a difference the new birth in Christ makes in one's perspective.

The cynical editor **H. L. Mencken** also inaccurately defined **hope** as "a pathological belief in the occurrence of the impossible."

His cynical definition does not even agree with the secular Webster's Collegiate dictionary which defines "**Hope**" much like the NT declaring that hope means "to cherish a desire with anticipation, desire with expectation of obtainment, expect with confidence."

Biblical **hope** is not "finger crossing", but is alive and certain because of the **resurrection of Jesus Christ** from the dead. Life without Christ is a hopeless end whereas life in Christ is an endless hope.

The book of Hebrews defines **hope** as that which gives "full assurance" (see **note** Hebrews 6:11). Thus we can have strong confidence that God is going to do good to us in future. The opposite of hope is **despair**, (hopelessness; a hopeless state; a destitution of hope or expectation) which is all that those without Christ as Savior can know, for Paul defines hope as "Christ Jesus, Who is our Hope" (**1Ti 1:1**). Thus genuine Biblical hope is not a concept but a Person, Christ Jesus!

Jeremiah pleaded with God on the basis of His Name, "**Hope of Israel**" (God's Names all reveal some aspect or attribute of His character), declaring

"Thou **Hope of Israel**, its Savior in time of distress. Why art Thou like a stranger in the land Or like a traveler who has pitched his tent for the night?" (Jer14:8)

Again **Jeremiah** says

"O LORD, the **hope of Israel**, all who forsake Thee will be put to shame. Those who turn away on earth will be written down, because they have forsaken the fountain of living water, even the LORD." (Jer 17:13)

The **psalmist** declares

"Thou art my **hope**; O Lord GOD, Thou art my confidence from my youth." (Ps 71:5)

Paul uses makes an allusion to this OT name ("Hope of Israel") speaking to the Jews explaining that

"I requested to see you and to speak with you, for I am wearing this chain for the sake of the **hope of Israel**." (Acts 28:20)

Although the Old revealed spoke of the Hope of Israel and predicted His coming to save His people as well as Gentiles, there was no mention that the Messiah of hope would actually live within each member of His redeemed church. Paul explained that in the New Covenant, "God willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the **hope** of glory." (see **note** Colossians 1:27) The unsaved are born into the world but have "no **hope** and (are) without God in the world" (Ephesians 2:12 note, 1Thes 4:13- [note](#)) and if they die without Christ, he will be hopeless forever.

The Italian poet, Dante, in his Divine Comedy, put this inscription over the world of the dead: "Abandon all hope, you who enter here!"

In other words, life without Christ is a hopeless end whereas life in Christ is an endless hope.

Hope in Scripture is the absolute certainty of future good and believers are to be continually, actively, expectantly "looking for the blessed **hope** and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus." (see **note** Titus 2:13).

A living hope should motivate a "looking" hope, so that we are waiting anxiously for Christ's return at any time, this event providing great incentive to "discipline (one's self) for the purpose of godliness" (1Timothy 4:7-note) knowing that godliness "is profitable for all things, since it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come." (1Timothy 4:8-note)

G K Chesterton said that "**Hope** means hoping when things are hopeless or it is no virtue at all... As long as matters are really hopeful, hope is mere flattery or platitude. It is only when everything is hopeless that hope begins to be a strength."

Hope is an essential and fundamental element of Christian life, so essential indeed, that, like faith and love, Peter refers to it in this verse to designate the essence of Christianity

Hope is one component of the great triad of Christian virtues, along with faith and love.

"But now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love" (1Cor 13:13 see note 1Thessalonians 1:3; [5:8](#); Gal 5:5, 6; see notes Ephesians 1:15 1:16; 1:17; 1:18, Ephesians 4:2; 4:3; 4:4; 4:5; Colossians 1:4; 1:5; Hebrews 10:22; 10:23; 10:24; 1 Peter 1:21; 1:22).

Faith and **hope** are inseparably linked. We **believe** and so we **hope**.

Paul prayed for believers "that the eyes of (our) heart may be enlightened, so that (we) may know what is the hope of His calling." (see **note** Ephesians 1:18)

Hope is a "**helmet of salvation**" for we know that "God has not destined us for wrath but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ (see note 1Thessalonians 5:8).

Hope as you can see is a deep well, which is well worth lingering over if you have time. To renew your mind with this great Biblical truth go over the following Scriptures, asking what each teaches about the "source" of hope, the stabilizing effect of the truth, the sanctifying effect, etc. Then study the chart summary at the end of the references --

Job 8:13; 27:8, Ps 31:24; Ps 42:5-6; 71:5; Ps 119:49-50; Ps 130:7; Ps 146:5 Pr 10:28; 13:12 Jer 14:8; 29:11; Jn 5:45 Acts 2:26; Acts 23:6, 24:15; 26:6; 28:20; Ro 4:18; 5:1-2; 8:25; 12:12; 15:4; 15:13 1Co 13:13; 15:19, 21-23 2Co 3:12 Eph 1:15-18, 2:12; 4:2-5; Gal 5:5, 6 Col 1:4, 5, 1:27 1Th 1:3; 1Thes 2:19; 4:13-18; 1Thes 5:8; 2Thes 2:16; 1Tim 1:1; Titus 2:11-13; 3:7 Heb 6:11, Heb 6:18-20; 7:19; 10:22-24; 1Pet 1:3; 1:21-22, 1Pet 3:15;

MacDonald on until the end - He wants them to go on steadfastly for Christ until the final hope of the Christian is realized in heaven. This is a proof of reality.

A reliable sign of regeneration is a faith that does not fail and continues to the end of life. It may at times falter and grow dim as it faces various trials and pressures, but it cannot be wholly abandoned. One wag has observed, "If your faith fizzles before you finish, it's because it was faulty from the first!"

Ray Stedman - I recall once receiving a phone call from a young new Christian who said, "I've decided to give up being a Christian; I can't handle it anymore." Knowing him well, I said, "I agree. That's probably what you ought to do." There was silence on the line for a moment, and then he said, "You know I can't do that!" And I said, "No, I know you can't." And he couldn't—and he didn't!

End (5056) (telos) refers to the goal. It is used 5x in Hebrews...

Hebrews 3:6 (note) - but Christ was faithful as a Son over His house --whose house we are, if we hold fast our confidence and the boast of our hope firm until the end.

Hebrews 3:14 (note) - For we have become partakers of Christ, if we hold fast the beginning of our assurance firm until the end,

Hebrews 6:8 (note) - but if it yields thorns and thistles, it is worthless and close to being cursed, and it ends up being burned.

Hebrews 6:11 (note) - And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence so as to realize the full assurance of hope until the end,

Hebrews 7:3 (note) - Without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like the Son of God, he remains a priest perpetually.

Hebrews 6:12 so that you will not be sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises. (NASB: Lockman)

Greek: [hina me nothroi genesthe. \(2PAMS\)](#) [mimetai de ton dia pisteos kai makrothumias kleronomounton \(PAPMPG\)](#) [tas epaggelias.](#)

Amplified: In order that you may not grow disinterested and become [spiritual] sluggards, but imitators, behaving as do those who through faith (by their leaning of the entire personality on God in Christ in absolute trust and confidence in His power, wisdom, and goodness) and by practice of patient endurance and waiting are [now] inheriting the promises. ([Amplified Bible - Lockman](#))

NLT: Then you will not become spiritually dull and indifferent. Instead, you will follow the example of those who are going to inherit God's promises because of their faith and patience. ([NLT - Tyndale House](#))

Phillips: We do not want any of you to grow slack, but to follow the example of those who through sheer patient faith came to possess the promises. ([Phillips: Touchstone](#))

Wuest: in order that you may become not sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience are now inheriting the promises. ([Eerdmans](#))

Young's Literal: that ye may not become slothful, but followers of those who through faith and patient endurance are inheriting the promises.

THAT YOU MAY NOT BE SLUGGISH BUT IMITATORS: hina me nothroi genesthe (2PAMS) mimetai de:

- Heb 5:11, Pr 12:24, 13:4, 15:19, 18:9, 24:30-34, Mt 25:26, Ro 12:11, 2Pe 1:10

So that you - **Hina (2443)** introduces a purpose clause (**See importance of observing and interrogating terms of purpose or result** - so that, in order that, that, as a result). The purpose for his reader's diligence, zealously and eagerness (discussed in the previous verse) is that they might not fall into the trap of "sloppy spirituality", becoming veritable spiritual sloths.

Peter gave a similar sobering charge to **diligence**...

Therefore, brethren, **be all the more diligent** (aorist active imperative = not a suggestion but a command to do this now! Do it effectively! Don't delay!) to make certain (bebaios) about His calling (klesis) and choosing you; for as long as you practice these things, you will never stumble (see note 2 Peter 1:10)

May not be (1096) (**ginomai**) means to become or come into existence in aorist tense or momentary tense can indicate a decisive act with consequent results. They were already dull of **hearing**. The writer's desire here is that they might not become dull in **conduct**!

Spiritual sluggishness is an ever present danger for all believers and a tendency we must fight against (enabled by the Spirit, cp Ezekiel 36:27 - note the "balance" in God's promise of the New Covenant in Ezekiel - first God's part, then our part!), for just as friction stops a train that lacks a consistent source of power so will each of us wind down (or burn out) without complete dependence on His power (see **notes** Philippians 4:13, 2 Timothy 2:1, Ephesians 6:10 cp Philippians 2:12; 2:13)

Sluggish (3576) (**nothros** from negative **nê** = no + **ôtheô** = to push means no push in the hearing) is literally "no push" and thus means slow, sluggish, "numbed" in mind as well as in the ears. The idea is they are slow, slothful, slack, obtuse, languid, lazy, sluggish.

In NT **nothros** is found only here and **Hebrews 5:11**

Concerning him we have much to say, and it is hard to explain, since you have become **dull** of hearing. (note)

Nothros was used in secular Greek to describe the numbed limbs of a sick lion and the stupid hopes of the wolf that heard the nurse threaten to throw the child to the wolves! In the Greek papyri the corresponding verb is used of sickness. Plato calls some students **nôthroi** (stupid). "When they have to face study they are stupid (nothroi) and cannot remember." (Theaet. 144 B)

In the Septuagint (LXX) **nothros** is used only in **Proverbs 22:29** (slothful, lazy, sluggish men).

The great enemy of perseverance is sloth or laziness. **Diligence** yields **full assurance** of hope which protects against becoming sluggish (when one's hope is not in the world but on Christ Who is the personification of hope [1Ti 1:1], for then the cares of this world will grow dim in the light of His glory and grace - play [Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus](#)). It is almost like the writer is offering up a request a prayer that his readers not be sluggish, but instead become imitators of the faithful, patient saints who have preceded them.

Imitators (3402) (**mimetes**) describes one who follows. **Mimetes** basically means to copy or imitate someone's behavior and has many related words in English - "mime" (one who acts out an imitation of another person or animal), "pantomime" (a theater production which originally was without words), "mimeograph" (a machine which makes many copies from one stencil).

It is one who does what others do, so it's not lip service.

In ancient Greek **mimetes** referred to imitation. Aristotle used the word to describe how people imitated animals, postulating that at the beginning of civilization men learnt from animals-weaving and spinning from spiders, and house-building from swallows.

Richards writes that **mimetes** "is a call to reproduce in our own way of life those godly qualities that result from salvation and that we see in others. The idea is intimately linked with the thought that teachers and leaders ought to be clear, living examples of the practical implications of commitment to Jesus. ([Richards, L O: Expository Dictionary of Bible Words: Regency](#))

W. Bauder - Very early on (in Democritus of the pre-Socratics) the words were used to express ethical demands made on men. One should take as one's model the boldness of a hero, or one should imitate the good example of one's teacher or parents... The Rabbis were the first to speak of imitation of God in the sense of developing the image of God in men. In the Pseudepigrapha in addition to the exhortation to imitate men of outstanding character (Test. Ben. 3:1; 4:1) one can also find the thought of the imitation of God (i.e. keeping his commands, Test. Ash. 4:3) and of particular characteristics of God (Aristeas 188, 210, 280 f.). ([Brown, Colin. Editor. New International Dictionary of NT Theology. 1986. Zondervan](#))

Teachers based their whole educational procedure on imitation, as students imitated the behavior of teachers. Slowly the idea developed that people should imitate the gods, and Plato emphasized this.

The basic meaning of **mimetes** is seen in a **mime**. An English woman went to France to study under the famous mime artist, Marcel Marceau. All day he taught his students how to make the movements of mime, and each evening they went to see him perform. Their performances were marked indelibly by the style of the master. This is an excellent picture of a Christian who imitates the Lord by exposure to Him.

A person who **mimes** acts a part with mimic gesture and action, usually without words. Let your actions speak louder than your words and then you will have a platform to proclaim the word of truth, the gospel. As believers in their message the Thessalonians began to pattern their lives after the example set by the missionaries. This fact rejoiced the heart of Paul as it was open evidence of the reality of the Thessalonian believers' conversion and therefore of their divine election. The Thessalonians had become third generation mimics of Christ. Christ is the first; Paul is the second; and the Thessalonians are the third. The Thessalonian believers imitated the Lord and Paul (Silvanus, Timothy) in that they responded to the gospel in spite of affliction. Note that Paul did not write what reportedly was said by one pastor "Do as I say; not as I do." Unfortunately this saying has characterized numerous preachers, many of whom have reputations as great teachers of God's Word. However, when their lives are measured by the Bible's qualifications for communication and character, such ministers come up woefully short. Make sure you mime the right model!

As an African chief once said: "A good example is the tallest kind of preaching."

Robert Morgan has an illustration entitled "It Stirs Me Up Much"...

Jim Elliot, who gave his life while trying to reach the Auca Indians, was largely shaped through the reading of Christian biography.

"I see the value of Christian biography tonight," he wrote in his journal, "as I have been reading Brainerd's Diary much today. It stirs me up much to pray and wonder at my nonchalance while I have not power from God. I have considered Hebrews 13:7 (note) just now, regarding the remembrance of certain ones who spake the word of God, 'consider the outcome of their life, and imitate their faith.'

I recall now the challenge of [Goforth's Life](#) and By My Spirit, read in the summer of 1947, the encouragement of [Hudson Taylor's Spiritual Secret](#), and The Growth of a Soul. There are incidents which instruct me now from the reading of J. G. Paton's biography, read last winter. And now this fresh Spirit-quickenened history of Brainerd. O Lord, let me be granted grace to 'imitate their faith.' "

It has since been through the reading of Elliot's journals that scores of young people have given their lives to the service of the Gospel. ([Morgan, R. J. Nelson's Complete Book of Stories, Illustrations, and Quotes: Thomas Nelson Publishers](#)) (I highly recommend reading **Hudson Taylor's "Spiritual Secret"** which can be downloaded free at [here](#))

OF THOSE WHO THROUGH FAITH AND PATIENCE INHERIT THE PROMISES: *de ten dia pisteos kai makrothumias kleronomounton (PAPMPG) tas epaggelias:*

Those who - The patriarchs like Abraham and prophets like Daniel and Isaiah would surely come to the mind of his Jewish readers.

Through ([1223](#)) (**dia**) describes the channel through which the promises are inherited. Through trusting the promise keeping God and clinging fast to His promises we become inheritors of those same promises! Indeed, these promises are all from Him, to Him and through Him. To God be the glory. Amen!

Faith ([4102](#))(**pistis**) is synonymous with trust or belief and is the conviction of the truth of anything, but in Scripture usually speaks of belief respecting man's relationship to God and divine things, generally with the included idea of trust and holy fervor born of faith and joined with it.

Larry Richards has an excellent discussion on faith writing that...

Originally this word group seems linked with a more formal contract between partners. It stressed faithfulness to the agreement made or trustworthiness in keeping promises. In time the use expanded. In the classical period, writers spoke of trust in the gods as well as trust in people. In the Hellenic era, "faith in God" came to mean theoretical conviction about a particular doctrine, a conviction expressed in one's way of life. As different schools of philosophy and religion developed, the particular emphasis given pistis was shaped by the tradition within which it was used. The NT retains the range of meanings. But those meanings are refined and reshaped by the dynamic message of the gospel.

The verb (pisteuo) and noun (pistis) are also used with a number of prepositions. "To believe through" (dia) indicates the way by which a person comes to faith (Jn 1:7; 1Pe 1:21 a). "Faith **en**" indicates the realm in

which faith operates (Eph 1:15; Col 1:4; 2Ti 3:15). The most important construction is unique to the NT, an invention of the early church that expresses the inmost secret of our faith. That construction links faith with the preposition **eis**, "to" or "into." This is never done in secular Greek. In the NT it portrays a person committing himself or herself totally to the person of Jesus Christ, for our faith is **into** Jesus. (**Ed note:** Leon Morris in ["The Gospel According to John"](#) agrees with Richards writing that *"Faith, for John, is an activity which takes men right out of themselves and makes them one with Christ"* indicating that Morris likewise understands the Greek preposition **eis** in the phrase **pisteuo eis**, to be a significant indication that NT faith is not just intellectual assent but includes a *"moral element of personal trust"*)

One other aspect of the NT's use of faith words is fascinating. Usually the object of faith is **Jesus**. Only twelve verses have **God** as the object of faith (Jn 12:44; 14:1; Ac 16:34; Ro 4:3, 5, 17, 24; Gal 3:6; 1Th 1:8; Titus 3:8; Heb 6:1; 1Peter 1:21). Why? The reason is clearly expressed by Jesus himself: "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the father except through me" (Jn 14:6). God the Father has revealed himself in the Son. The Father has set Jesus before us as the one to whom we must entrust ourselves for salvation. It is Jesus who is the focus of Christian faith. ([Richards, L O: Expository Dictionary of Bible Words: Regency](#))

Wuest in his study of **pistis** and the related words in this family, **pisteuo** and **pistos**, explains that "When these words refer to the faith which a lost sinner must place in the Lord Jesus in order to be saved, they include the following ideas; the act of considering the Lord Jesus worthy of trust as to His character and motives, the act of placing confidence in His ability to do just what He says He will do, the act of entrusting the salvation of his soul into the hands of the Lord Jesus, the act of committing the work of saving his soul to the care of the Lord. This means a definite taking of one's self out of one's own keeping and entrusting one's self into the keeping of the Lord Jesus. ([Hebrews Commentary online](#))

William Barclay notes that - "Faith begins with receptivity. It begins when a man is at least willing to listen to the message of the truth. It goes on to mental assent. A man first hears and then agrees that this is true. But mental assent need not issue in action. Many a man knows very well that something is true, but does not change his actions to meet that knowledge. The final stage is when this mental assent becomes total surrender. In full-fledged faith, a man hears the Christian message, agrees that it is true, and then casts himself upon it in a life of total yieldedness. ([Daily Study Bible Series](#))

Faith is relying on what God has done rather than on one's own efforts. In the Old Testament, faith is rarely mentioned. The word **trust** is used frequently, and verbs like **believe** and **rely** are used to express the right attitude to God. The classic example is Abraham, whose **faith** was reckoned as righteousness (Ge 15:6). At the heart of the Christian message is the story of the cross: Christ's dying to bring salvation. **Faith** is an attitude of trust in which a believer receives God's good gift of salvation (Acts 16:30,31) and lives in that awareness thereafter (Galatians 2:20-note).

Note that this discussion of **pistis** is only an overview and not a detailed treatise of this vitally important subject. Those interested are directed to respected, conservative books on systematic theology for more in depth discussion (eg, Dr Wayne Grudem's book [Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine](#) is an excellent, uncompromising, imminently readable resource for the lay person. See especially Chapter 35 which addresses the question "What is saving faith?" in an easy to understand manner.) Much of this "definition" deals with the general word group for faith (**pistis** = noun, **pistos** = adjective, **pisteuo** = verb)

Clearly **faith** is a key word in Hebrews. Study the 31 uses of **pistis** in Hebrews in context ...

Hebrews 4:2 - For indeed we have had good news preached to us, just as they also; but the word they heard did not profit them, because it was not united by faith in those who heard.

Hebrews 6:1 - Therefore leaving the elementary teaching about the Christ, let us press on to maturity, not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God,

Hebrews 6:12 -so that you will not be sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

Hebrews 10:22 - let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

Hebrews 10:38 - BUT MY RIGHTEOUS ONE SHALL LIVE BY FAITH; AND IF HE SHRINKS BACK, MY SOUL HAS NO PLEASURE IN

Hebrews 10:39 - But we are not of those who shrink back to destruction, but of those who have faith to the preserving of the soul.

Hebrews 11:1 - Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.

Hebrews 11:3 - By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is

seen was not made out of things which are visible.

Hebrews 11:4 - By faith Abel offered to God a better sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained the testimony that he was righteous, God testifying about his gifts, and through faith, though he is dead, he still speaks.

Hebrews 11:5 - By faith Enoch was taken up so that he would not see death; AND HE WAS NOT FOUND BECAUSE GOD TOOK HIM UP; for he obtained the witness that before his being taken up he was pleasing to God.

Hebrews 11:6 - And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.

Hebrews 11:7 - By faith Noah, being warned by God about things not yet seen, in reverence prepared an ark for the salvation of his household, by which he condemned the world, and became an heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.

Hebrews 11:8 - By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed by going out to a place which he was to receive for an inheritance; and he went out, not knowing where he was going.

Hebrews 11:9 - By faith he lived as an alien in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, fellow heirs of the same promise;

Hebrews 11:11 - By faith even Sarah herself received ability to conceive, even beyond the proper time of life, since she considered Him faithful who had promised.

Hebrews 11:13 - All these died in faith, without receiving the promises, but having seen them and having welcomed them from a distance, and having confessed that they were strangers and exiles on the earth.

Hebrews 11:17 - By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises was offering up his only begotten son;

Hebrews 11:20 - By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau, even regarding things to come.

Hebrews 11:21 - By faith Jacob, as he was dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, and worshiped, leaning on the top of his staff.

Hebrews 11:22 - By faith Joseph, when he was dying, made mention of the exodus of the sons of Israel, and gave orders concerning his bones.

Hebrews 11:23 - By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden for three months by his parents, because they saw he was a beautiful child; and they were not afraid of the king's edict.

Hebrews 11:24 - By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter,

Hebrews 11:27 - By faith he left Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured, as seeing Him who is unseen.

Hebrews 11:28 - By faith he kept the Passover and the sprinkling of the blood, so that he who destroyed the firstborn would not touch them.

Hebrews 11:29 - By faith they passed through the Red Sea as though they were passing through dry land; and the Egyptians, when they attempted it, were drowned.

Hebrews 11:30 - By faith the walls of Jericho fell down after they had been encircled for seven days.

Hebrews 11:31 - By faith Rahab the harlot did not perish along with those who were disobedient, after she had welcomed the spies in peace.

Hebrews 11:33 - who by faith conquered kingdoms, performed acts of righteousness, obtained promises, shut the mouths of lions,

Hebrews 11:39 - And all these, having gained approval through their faith, did not receive what was promised,

Hebrews 12:2 - fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Hebrews 13:7 - Remember those who led you, who spoke the word of God to you; and considering the result of their conduct, imitate their faith.

Patience (3115) (**makrothumia** from **makros** = long, distant, far off, large + **thumos** = temper, passion, emotion or **thumoomai** = to be furious or burn with intense anger) is literally long-temper (as opposed to "short tempered"), a long holding out of the mind before it gives room to action or passion. It describes a state of emotional calm or quietness in the face of provocation, misfortune or unfavorable circumstances.

Makrothumia is the capacity to be wronged and not retaliate. It is the ability to hold one's feeling in restraint or bear up under the oversights and wrongs afflicted by others without retaliating. It is manifest by the quality of forbearance under provocation. It is used of God's patience toward sinful men (see note Romans 2:4) and of the attitude which Christians are to display.

Patience is the spirit which never gives up for it endures to the end even in times of adversity, exhibiting self-restraint such that it does not hastily retaliate a wrong.

Vine says **makrothumia** is the opposite of anger. It follows that a lack of patience often leads to wrath or revenge.

Makrothumia is often used in the OT to translate the Hebrew phrase ('erekh 'appayim) which is literally "long of nose" (or "breathing"), and, as anger was indicated by rapid, violent breathing through the nostrils, "long of anger," or "slow to anger." This Hebrew phrase ('erekh 'appayim) and the LXX translation as **makrothumia** (and the cognates makrothumos, makrothumeo) is included in the catalog of His attributes that runs through the OT like a refrain, a God "[slow](#) to [anger](#)" ([Click](#) 14 occurrences of this phrase in the OT).

J Vernon McGee writes that **makrothumia**...

"... means "long-burning"—it burns a long time. We shouldn't have a short fuse with our friends and Christian brethren. We shouldn't make snap judgments." ([McGee, J V: Thru the Bible Commentary: Thomas Nelson](#))

Evans writes that **makrothumia**...

"could be translated "large emotions," signifying wells of endurance that will not dry up, no matter how much is drawn from them. The Christian with this patience will have refreshing water to sustain continual effectiveness even in the face of unrelenting pressures. Those with such patience and faith are those who receive or "inherit the promises." ([Briscoe, D. S., & Ogilvie, L. J. The Preacher's Commentary Series, New Testament. 2003: Thomas Nelson](#))

Calvin said **makrothumia** refers to that quality of mind that disposes us

"to take everything in good part and not to be easily offended."

Larry Richards writes that...

The NT contains many exhortations to be patient. But just what is patience? The Greek word group (makrothumeo/makrothumia) focuses our attention on restraint: that capacity for self-control despite circumstances that might arouse the passions or cause agitation... This is not so much a trait as a way of life. We keep on loving or forgiving despite provocation, as illustrated in Jesus' pointed stories in Mt 18." ([Richards, L O: Expository Dictionary of Bible Words: Regency](#))

This long-suffering is not added to faith but is an integral part of it, because faith's vision will produce patient tenacity. To the storm-tossed, persecuted little church that was facing mounting waves, the message was clear: fix your eyes on Jesus (see [Fix Your Eyes On Jesus - 44 excellent meditations](#)), looking by faith (seeing the unseeable 2Co 4:18, see notes Hebrews 11:26; 11:27, Hebrews 12:1; 12:2) on the great unseen heavenly realities that await you and do so with longsuffering and do it diligently, which will make your hope sure.

Inherit (2816) (**kleronomeo** from **kleros** = a lot + **nemomai** = to possess) means receive a share of that which has been "allotted" to one and so to inherit a portion of something.

Peter uses this verb exhorting his readers...

not returning evil for evil, or insult for insult, but giving a blessing instead; for you were called for the very purpose that you might inherit a blessing. (see **note** 1 Peter 3:9)

The writer's strong desire is that they not miss their "lot" because of slothfulness, disobedience or impatience (unable to "wait" for those promises).

Kleronomeo is used in the **Septuagint (LXX)** translation of **Genesis 22:17** describing the inheritance of Abraham's offspring...

indeed I will greatly bless you (blessing I will bless you = this Hebrew construction stresses the intensive nature

of the action; i.e., I will bless you hyper-superabundantly!), and I will greatly multiply your seed as the stars of the heavens, and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your seed **shall possess** (Lxx = **kleronomeo**) the gate of their enemies. (Comment: This verse is quoted in part by the writer - "I WILL SURELY BLESS YOU, AND I WILL SURELY MULTIPLY YOU.")

Promises (1860) (**epaggelia/epangelia** from **epí** = upon or intensifier of meaning + **aggéllo** = tell, declare = to announce with certainty as to what one will do) is a declaration to do something with implication of obligation to carry out what is stated. **Epaggelia** was a legal term denoting promise to do or give something. It was a legally binding declaration giving one to whom it is made right to expect or claim performance of the specific act. Most often **epaggelia** is used to describe the promises of God. and provides firm assurance of His future action.

Epaggelia is used in Hebrews 14 times in 13 verses (27.4% of all 51 NT uses) (See **notes** Hebrews 4:1, Hebrews 6:12, 6:15, 6:17, Hebrews 7:6, Hebrews 8:6, Hebrews 9:15, Hebrews 10:36, Hebrews 11:9, 11:13, 11:17, 11:33, 11:39)

TDNT summarizes this word group writing that it has the following nuances -**a.** The first sense is "to indicate," "declare," "declaration," "report." **b.** When the state declares something, it becomes an "order." **c.** In law we find the senses "accusation" and "delivery of a judgment." **d.** We then find the senses "to declare an achievement," "to show one's mastery," "to profess a subject." **e.** Another sense is "to offer," "to promise," "to vow." As regards promises, tension between word and deed is felt, so that promises are often seen as worthless. **f.** A special type of promise is the "promise of money," and in this sense the idea of a "subscription" or "donation" arises (state liturgies, gifts to rulers at their accession, priests promising gifts in support of their candidature). **g.** In the Hellenistic period we also find a sacral use for the "proclamation" of a festival. Among all the instances, only one example has been found for the promise of a deity. ([Kittel, G., Friedrich, G., & Bromiley, G. W. Theological Dictionary of the New Testament. Eerdmans](#)) And so the writer proceeds forthwith to remind the Jewish readers of the example of "father Abraham" who serves as the prototype illustration of a man who through faith and patience **inherited the promises**. All the examples of faith in Hebrews 11 also serve to illustrate and motivate a long outlook of faith, for many of these examples are accompanied by patient waiting and endurance (see notes on Abraham Hebrews 11:9; 11:10). The example of Abraham also reaffirms that the promise of God is sure and trustworthy, because that promise is founded on the absolute faithfulness of the covenant keeping God. (**Related resource: Covenant: Abrahamic vs Old vs New**)

Instant Nothing - In a lighthearted Time magazine essay, Sarah Vowell tells that she signed up for a 3-hour, \$39 course called "Instant Piano for Hopelessly Busy People." Regretting that she didn't stick with music lessons as a child, she made it her goal to learn to play one piece by memory. What she found was that even this seemingly simple task required hours of practice. There is no such thing as "instant" piano. But as she continued to practice, a recognizable melody began to emerge from her fingers.

Her experience is a good reminder that though we often desire immediate results in our walk of faith, this too is a matter of patient practice. The writer of Hebrews encouraged Christians to be spiritually diligent throughout their lives. He urged them not to become sluggish but to "imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises" (Hebrews 6:12).

Our efforts do not make God's promises come true. But like Abraham, who patiently endured, we focus on the power and integrity of the living God, whose promises give us hope. "This hope we have as an anchor of the soul" (Hebrews 6:19).

Since there are no instant results, let's keep practicing the Lord's instructions as we walk patiently by faith toward the fulfillment of all He has promised. —David C. McCasland ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

We run with patience day by day,
By drawing strength from Christ our Lord;
And if we falter by the way,
He will renew us through His Word. —D. De Haan

We conquer by continuing.

The Treasure Chest -- When I was a young girl, my mother often let me rummage through her button box as I recovered from an illness. It always cheered me to come across old, familiar buttons and remember the garments they once adorned. I especially liked it when she picked out an old, overlooked button and used it again.

Similarly, I often leaf through my Bible during distressing times and recall familiar promises that have strengthened me. But I'm

always encouraged to find help from promises I've never noticed before.

I remember one dark morning during my husband's terminal illness when I was looking for a word from God to sustain me in our painful circumstances. In Hebrews 11, I noted that God had rescued His suffering people in some very dramatic ways. Yet I couldn't always identify with their particular situations. Then I read about some who "out of weakness were made strong" (Heb 11:34). God used that phrase to assure me that I too could be made strong in my weakness. At that very moment I began sensing His strength, and my faith was renewed.

Are you being tested today? Remember, there are many promises in the Bible, God's treasure chest. Generations have proven them true, and so can you. —Joanie Yoder ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Standing on the promises that cannot fail,
When the howling storms of doubt and fear assail,
By the living word of God I shall prevail,
Standing on the promises of God. —Carter

God's promises are treasures waiting to be discovered