



Something Better For Us

A Survey of Hebrews, Lesson #2
3:1 - 4:16

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Truths that Transform from Lesson #1

- Praise God that He has spoken.
- He is passionate about confirming His truth when it is preached.
- We are destined to rule and reign with Jesus as His joint heir.
- Jesus is not ashamed to own us, flawed as we are; why do we sometimes hesitate to own Him?

Hebrews 3:1

Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Christ Jesus, NKJV

- Always think about a 'therefore' and ask what it's there for.
- Because we have a merciful and faithful High Priest who has redeemed us and is willing to own us as brethren, think about who He really is.
- The writer specifically addresses the believing Hebrews (holy brethren) and the one who was already proved to be superior to angels will now be compared to Moses.

Hebrews 3:1

Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Christ Jesus, NKJV

- These 'holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling' are asked to consider (or think upon) Jesus and all that He is.
 - Put your mind on Jesus and let it remain there.
 - He died so that we can live.
 - He who knew no sin, became sin for us.
 - He left a place everyone wants to go to, in order to come to a place where He would be battered, bruised, and killed.
 - It is therapeutic just to meditate on Him.

Hebrews 3:1

Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Christ Jesus, NKJV

- There is no one quite like Jesus. Fixing your thoughts upon Him helps to put life into perspective.
- If you need encouragement to keep on in your ministry, just look to Jesus as an example of one who gave it all while being appreciated by none.
- Hebrews 12:1-2 Run the race before you and keep your eyes on Jesus at the finish line.

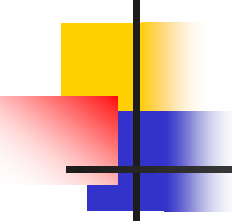
Hebrews 3:1-6

Jesus is better than Moses



- Just as the Hebrew people held angels in high esteem and had false assumptions concerning them, so too did they esteem Moses.
- The Hebrew mind associated Moses with everything that they had from God. They had assigned Him a place in their thinking very much like we assign to Jesus.
- Moses was in fact a great man of God and a man greatly used by God, **but he was not God.**

Hebrews 3:2-4



2 who was faithful to Him who appointed Him, as Moses also was faithful in all His house. 3 For this One has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as He who built the house has more honor than the house. 4 For every house is built by someone, but He who built all things is God. NKJV

- In verse #2 Moses is seen as faithful, but Jesus was more faithful. (Moses sinned, Jesus did not)
- Moses was a part of God's household, but Jesus made the household possible. (Vs 3)
- Moses was a servant in the household of God, but Jesus was a son in the household. (Vs 4)

Hebrews 3:7-19

Do Not Harden Your Heart

- The Bible is full of warnings to people of all ages and times to take God and His truth seriously.
- Sometimes the warnings are intended to keep the believer from sin and sometimes the warnings are to those who are dabbling in spiritual things.
- In this case, since the audience was the Hebrew people, the author is using a familiar Hebrew story to make his point.

Hebrews 3:7-19

Do Not Harden Your Heart



- An illustration from Israel's past.
 - All knew of the exodus story of wilderness wanderings because the people would not trust God.
 - David wrote the scripture that is quoted, but the event was from the day of Moses.
 - The writer of Hebrews used it about 1,000 years later and now here we are 2,000 years later yet reading a warning that is good for all time.
 - The basic admonition is this Hear today and believe today.

Hebrews 3:7-19

Do Not Harden Your Heart



- It's a serious warning. The time to obey God is always today.
- You might have had faith to obey yesterday (the Israelites leaving Egypt), but yesterday's faith is not enough for today.
- You might even intend to obey God in the future, but what good is tomorrow's faith if you have spiritual decisions to make today?
- To harden your heart is to intentionally decide that the truth is not for you whether we are talking **saving** faith or **living** faith.

Hebrews 3:7-19

Do Not Harden Your Heart



- God is a God of mercy, but He is not a God of games.
- All we need to do is look at Israel He proved Himself to them, and they went after Him, but then became distracted by their circumstances and stopped following Him.
- They paid a high price for that sort of half-hearted faith in that they were excluded from the promised land.
- Did God desire to bless them with the land? Yes, but they forfeited His blessing for His chastening.

Hebrews 3:7-19

Do Not Harden Your Heart



- In verse #12 a strong warning is given to the Hebrew readers. If the word of God given through Moses carried consequences for unbelief, then surely the word of God given through Christ carries consequences as well for unbelief.
- Unbelief is the worst of all sins because it has no remedy. Notice that an unbelieving heart is called an evil heart.
- If your heart is warm to the gospel and to the truth of God then, by all means, respond quickly because our hearts can harden to the point where His truth bounces off.

Hebrews 3:7-19

Do Not Harden Your Heart



- Verse #13 identifies (2) things that are true of us.
 - #1 we need constant encouragement
 - Word
 - Holy Spirit
 - Brethren
 - #2 sin is deceitful and causes hardening of the heart
 - We are easy prey without encouragement
 - Sin is deceitful, but we are frequently all too willing

Hebrews 3:7-19

Do Not Harden Your Heart



- Verse #14 lays the foundation for an issue that we will handle in a later class, that of whether or not one can lose their salvation.
- For now, let's look at the obviousIf you claim to be a 'partaker' (believer) of Jesus Christ and do not continue in the faith you are not a believer. The proof of faith is in our perseverance.
- Whether you believe you can lose it or not is not important at this point. What is clear is that if you no longer believe, then you are not a Christian. (1st John 2:19)

Hebrews 3:7-19

Do Not Harden Your Heart



- There is a great lesson for us here apart from the 'can you lose it or not' question; that lesson has to do with our willingness to obey God in all things.
- Who among us will deny that there are times when we notice a certain level of 'hardening' setting in upon our hearts?
- The quote of 'Today if you will hear His voice' was said about a people who were on a spiritual journey out of Egypt and heading towards the promised land.
- Is that not the same journey we are on?

Hebrews 3:7-19

Do Not Harden Your Heart



- So you see, the admonition is for us as much as it was for Israel.
- Surely we, perhaps more than any other people of any other time can hear the voice of God.
 - Multiple translations of the scriptures.
 - Scientific advances that continue to affirm the truths of the Bible.
 - The still, small voice within us in these 'last days'.
- Who can deny that we are hearing from God?

Hebrews 3:18-19

18 And to whom did He swear that they would not enter His rest, but to those who did not obey? 19 So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief. NKJV

- **Israel was shut out of the promised land because they would not 'believe' God for it.**
- **It would be hard to construct a Biblically sound argument that they were shut out due to some sin in their lives as that would have prevented even Joshua and Caleb from entering. (Rom 3:23)**
- **Clearly when God excluded His people from the promised land it was because they did not have faith in Him.**
- **If the promised land is a type of heaven like Egypt is a type of the world, then we can apply the same line of thought. People are not shut out of heaven because of sin, but because of unbelief.**

Hebrews 4:1-2

Therefore, since a promise remains of entering His rest, let us fear lest any of you seem to have come short of it. 2 For indeed the gospel was preached to us as well as to them; but the word which they heard did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in those who heard it. NKJV

- **Jesus said “Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest”, so the promise remains.**
- **So what is rest?**
 - **Rest can mean ceasing from our works.**
 - **Rest can mean freedom from worry and anxiety.**
 - **Rest can indicate confidence.**
 - **Rest can also mean ‘to lean upon’.**

Hebrews 4:1-2

Therefore, since a promise remains of entering His rest, let us fear lest any of you seem to have come short of it. 2 For indeed the gospel was preached to us as well as to them; but the word which they heard did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in those who heard it. NKJV

- **Notice the warning to us about missing the 'rest' that God offers us in Christ.**
- **If just hearing of the promised land would have been enough to get them to it, then they would all have made it.**
- **If just knowing that it existed would have been enough to get them to it, then they would all have made it.**
- **If having friends who believed (Joshua & Caleb) would have been enough to get them to it, then they would all have made it.**
- **The truth is hearing of heaven, knowing that it exists, and even having a lot of friends who are going is still of no help to the one who will not believe for himself.**
- **Just as there is no remedy for the sins of angels, there is no remedy for the human sin of unbelief.**

Hebrews 4:3-11

The Mystery of Rest

- The work necessary for us to enter into God's rest was completed long ago. Historically on the cross, but in the mind of God before creation.
- In fact, before God ever created a man who could fall, He had already decreed a savior who could save.
- This is no problem for God, time does not mean to Him what it does to us.

Hebrews 4:3-11

The Mystery of Rest

- **Again the call goes out that effectively says. “if you are alive and hearing the gospel act on it before it’s too late”.**
- **Your heart may harden, or you could run out of time.**
- **Statistics tell us that the older one becomes, the less likely they are to be saved.**
- **We live in a culture that immunizes it’s citizens against the gospel. (Just enough of the truth to build up a resistance to it)**

Hebrews 4:3-11

The Mystery of Rest

- Consider this It is illegal and very cruel to cry 'fire' in a crowded building because when there is no fire people will hurt themselves trying to escape something that does not exist.
- On the other hand, it would be immoral not to cry 'fire' when one is burning, but has not been seen.
- So why all of the warnings? Because there is a hell to be avoided and heaven to be gained, but until people know they exist and that they have a choice they will do nothing about either.

Hebrews 4:9

There remains therefore a rest for the people of God.
NKJV

- Rev 14:13 Then I heard a voice from heaven saying to me, "Write: 'Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on.'" "Yes," says the Spirit, "that they may rest from their labors, and their works follow them." NKJV
- While this section is filled with warnings about unbelief, it also focuses on a great promise That God has redeemed His people and has the ultimate destination awaiting those who will trust Him.
- So, if it seems like a very scary and uncomfortable section for us it's probably served it's appointed purpose.

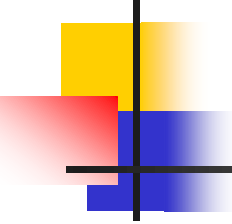


Hebrews 4:11-13

No Pretenders Admitted

- **Verse 12 is oft memorized, but seldom considered in it's context of the judgment of souls.**
- **Quite simply, the same word that saves is the same word that is used to judge. Do you believe what God has said?**
- **In the end, the test of salvation is whether or not you believed the gospel and there is no human test to expose and separate faith from unbelief.**
- **But the Word of God is able to probe and cut away all of the facades that we may use to fool people. (baptism, church membership, and the like)**

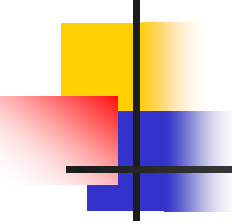
Hebrews 4:14-16



Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. 15 For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. 16 Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. NKJV

- **After all of the warnings comes the invitation.**
- **We have a great high priest unlike any you have ever known.**
- **He is sympathetic to our weaknesses because He has experienced them Himself.**
- **He was tempted and passed the test.**
- **He is uniquely qualified to be priest because He has put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.**

Hebrews 4:14-16



Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. 15 For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. 16 Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. NKJV

- In light of the context it would seem that the invitation to come boldly for grace to help has a special application to our need for faith.
- When I find myself struggling to believe I need to go to the only one who can help me to trust Him.
- I can go boldly because it is more than evident that He wants me to be saved as much, or perhaps more than I do.



Truths that Transform

- Hear today, and believe today.
- God is a God of mercy, but He is not a God of games.
- Just hearing of, knowing about, or having friends that are going to heaven does not mean that you are going.
- If I approach the throne when my faith is strong, then I really need to run there when my faith is weak.