

Hebrews Chapter 3A

You can ask my wife: If and when I watch TV, I generally tune into the news or some kind of police drama. I enjoy entertainment when it makes me think.

After watching a number of police dramas I have come to anticipate that intense moment when one of the officers comes face to face with a bomb.

- And even though he has never defused a bomb in his life the person on the other end of the phone is going to help him dismantle it. My heart is racing as the seconds tick away and at the last minute the red wire is finally cut.

Now I know if I am ever called upon to dismantle a bomb I will need to:

- Carefully follow the steps that are given to me by the expert on the other end of the phone.
- I have to proceed with great caution and absolute precision; I need to separate the wires in the device by their colors.
- I need to cut the wires in a certain order so that the bomb will be neutralized.
- What does all of this have to do with the book of Hebrews?

When I introduced this book I told you that there was a clear and present danger facing the recipients of this letter / sermon.

- They were NOT facing a bomb, the threat that they faced was a deadly combination of both physical and spiritual dangers.

Where did this threat come from?

The Physical danger came from Nero who was ruling in Rome at that time.

You might remember that Nero began persecuting Christians immediately after the burning of Rome.

- Much Like the world in which we presently live, Christians experienced an ever-increasing target on their back.
- The persecution initiated by Nero was a serious Physical threat to the church.
- BUT along with that physical threat there was a spiritual threat.
 - Throughout the history of the church whenever persecution arose it was accompanied by a temptation to abandon the faith.

LISTEN: At the time of the writing of this book Nero was persecuting Christians but the Jews were a protected group (authorized religion) under Roman law.

- So some of the Hebrew people in the church were seriously considering a return to the Jewish Synagogue and all of the rituals in order to escape persecution.
- These were the imminent dangers, the bomb threat (*if you will*) that Hebrew believers faced between the years 65 and 70 AD.

In an effort to strengthen the faith and encourage perseverance among true believers the author carefully, methodically dismantles his reader's confidence in the Judaistic rituals and practices.

- Dismantling this threat involved separating and cutting the wires that supported Judaism. In Chapter 1 the author cut:
- (The Wire that was marked "Prophets") The author said the revelation of God that came by Jesus Christ is greater than that which came through the Prophets.

Hebrews 1:1 **Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, 2 but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son,**

- (Next the writer cuts the wire tagged "Angels") The Old Covenant was mediated by angels, BUT Jesus is the mediator of a better covenant. (*better promises*)
 - Angels are called "servants," Jesus is called "God."
 - Angels are worshippers, Jesus is the object of their worship.
 - So we cut the wire tagged "Angels"

NOW If you are going to dismantle Old Testament Judaism the key wire, the wire that seems to power the whole system is the wire marked, "Moses."

- Here in Chapter 3 the author seeks to do just that.
- But I want you to take note of how delicately the writer handles Moses.
- He gives him the utmost respect for his faithful service to God, all the while exalting the Lord Jesus to the highest place.

Without question Moses is the greatest figure in the entire Old Testament, even greater than Abraham, greater than David.

- Moses is the author of the first five books, the foundational books of the Bible. Moses describes the creation, the Fall of our first parents and God's promise of redemption through the seed of the woman.
- Moses is the central figure, the deliverer in the Old Testament redemptive event known as the Exodus.

Exodus 14: 31 **Israel saw the great power that the LORD used against the Egyptians, so the people feared the LORD, and they believed in the LORD and in his servant Moses.**

- They believed in the Lord and in his servant Moses.

Moses was the fountainhead of all prophecy.

Deuteronomy 34:10 **And there has not arisen a prophet since in Israel like Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face,**

- Other men may have received and delivered God's Word to God's people BUT only Moses met with God face to face.

Numbers 12: 6 **And he said, "Hear my words: If there is a prophet among you, I the LORD make myself known to him in a vision; I speak with him in a dream. 7 Not so**

with my servant Moses. He is faithful in all my house. 8 With him I speak mouth to mouth, clearly, and not in riddles, and he beholds the form of the LORD.

- He was the only one that I know who actually had to cover his face with a veil because the glory of the Lord was reflected in such a real and powerful way.
- Moses watched as the finger of God wrote the commandments on tablets of stone.
- He was the one who painstakingly interceded on behalf of the rebellious people of Israel.
- As time progressed the name of Moses would become synonymous with the Law.
- There is no greater man in all of the Old Testament than Moses and yet he was just a man.

My outline for today is very simple and I believe very practical. The Author helps us:

1. Remember who we are. (*As believers in Christ*)
2. Remember who Jesus is. (*One greater than Moses*)

Remember who we are. (As believers in Christ)

Hebrews 3:1 **Therefore, holy brothers, you who share in a heavenly calling, consider Jesus, the apostle and high priest of our confession,**

This writer addresses believers as **“Holy Brothers, you who share in a heavenly calling.”**

- Holy Brothers – How many of you got out of bed this morning thinking, “Boy I really feel Holy this morning!”
 - If you can’t feel holy first thing in the morning, I hate to tell you it is only going to get worse as the day progresses.

You see, our concept of holiness is so often misconstrued because it is built on our performance rather than privilege; on religion rather than imputed righteousness.

- We often measure our holiness by what we eat and drink or by the worldly events that we participate in (movies, cards, dancing) rather than by what God has graciously provided for us in Christ.
- I believe that the address **“Holy Brethren”** is based upon a statement the writer made in Chapter 2:

Hebrews 2: 11 **For he who sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one source. That is why he is not ashamed to call them brothers,**

It is God who sanctifies, God who sets us apart for his use and that sanctification comes by the Lord Jesus Christ.

By the grace of God through the redeeming work of Christ believers have been set apart from the world and set apart to God. Church (ecclesia) – called out ones)

- The ongoing work of sanctification DOES however require our cooperation. we are called to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling.
 - But God has given us a new heart, he has placed a new Spirit within us and **it is He who is at work in us both to will and to do his good pleasure.**

Secondly, those of us who have been declared holy through faith in Jesus, those who have been adopted into the family of God. Are: “**sharers in a heavenly calling.**”

- Because of who Jesus is and what Jesus has done on our behalf we have become “Partakers together, full participants in “**a heavenly calling.**”

This “**Heavenly calling**” describes both the origin and the destination of our call.

- The origin of our calling is from heaven. God is the one who called us to himself.
- It is the effectual call of God that brings us from death to life, from spiritual darkness to light. Nowhere is this more clear than in Jesus call of Lazarus.

It was Jesus’ call that empowered HIM who was dead to come forth into the land of the living.

- It is the effectual call of the Lord Jesus which brings us from death to life.

If only we could fully realize, if only our minds could comprehend the gift of grace that we have received. That grace which has imparted eternal life and the gift of righteousness. If only we could walk in the confidence of our heavenly call.

If only we could live together in true brotherhood as believers without the petty squabbling and hindrances of this flesh.

• Oh what a testimony to the watching world of the transforming power of the Gospel. Oh to live in the reality that this world is not our home but that we are pilgrims, sojourners who share a heavenly call and a common destination.

Hebrews 3:1 **Therefore, holy brothers, you who share in a heavenly calling, consider Jesus, the apostle and high priest of our confession,**

- **Consider Jesus**, This is the FIRST command issued by the writer. (whole book)
- Chapters One and Two were packed with truth about Jesus and after laying out all of these points the author simply says, **Consider Jesus.**

I’m not sure “consider” is really the best translation in today’s vernacular.

If I were to say, “consider going to Guatemala with me.”

Many of you would immediately respond, no thank you.

BUT If I say, I would like you to personally contemplate, take time to reflect upon God’s call for us to carry the Gospel into all of the World, and I would like you to purposefully ponder your part in that work.

The word that is translated “Consider” means: To observe carefully, to look at Jesus in thoughtful reflection and contemplation, or meditate on his person and attributes.

- Understand to this point the author has provides us with a great deal of fodder for this contemplation.

- He has elaborated on the deity and the sonship of Christ, He has spoken clearly of his superiority to angels, his sovereignty, his eternity, his humanity and NOW he says consider, contemplate, meditate upon the Lord Jesus.

With this exhortation to “consider Jesus” we move from remembering who WE are to remembering who HE is.

Here in Vs 1 Jesus is described as: **the apostle and high priest of our confession**

In verses 2-4 Jesus is the builder of the house and Moses is the house

In verses 5-6 Jesus is the Son and Moses is the servant.

apostle and high priest This is the only place in the entire Bible where the noun “Apostle” is used for the Lord Jesus.

- But the term definitely fits Him: After all the word “Apostle” describes one who is sent out and Jesus was sent out by the Father.
- As a matter of fact the verb form of the word is used many times for Jesus

John 3:34 **For he whom God has sent utters the words of God, for he gives the Spirit without measure.**

John 4:34 **Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to accomplish his work. (There are many more)**

- So you see the idea of Jesus being the Apostle who was “Sent” by the Father is actually confirmed in many places.

As God’s Apostle He represents God to us. He speaks God’s Word to man. He reveals God’s will to God’s people.

- Then as the High Priest, He represents Man to God. He stands in the gap and He intercedes on our behalf.
- As the God / Man Jesus is uniquely qualified to represent God to man and man to God. So Jesus is both Apostle and High Priest.
- NOW let’s compare him to Moses:

Hebrews 3: 2 **who was faithful to him who appointed him, just as Moses also was faithful in all God’s house. 3 For Jesus has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses — as much more glory as the builder of a house has more honor than the house itself. 4 (For every house is built by someone, but the builder of all things is God.)**

You will notice here that the author doesn’t bash or belittle Moses. He actually says that both Jesus and Moses were faithful.

- Moses was faithful member of God’s household, Jesus is faithful as God’s Son.
- Jesus pointed to his obedience to the father as proof of his faithfulness.

Joh 8:28 So Jesus said to them, "When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am he, and that I do nothing on my own authority, but speak just as the Father taught me. 29 And he who sent me is with me. He has not left me alone, for I always do the things that are pleasing to him."

- Not one word, not one act performed by the Lord Jesus was ever displeasing to the Father. His thoughts and the attitude of his heart was always perfect

Moses was faithful too: The faithfulness of Moses is brought out by God himself when Aaron and Miriam spoke against him.

Numbers 12: 7 **Not so with my servant Moses. He is faithful in all my house.**

8 **With him I speak mouth to mouth, clearly, and not in riddles, and he beholds the form of the LORD. Why then were you not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?"**

- And while both Moses and Jesus were considered faithful their faithfulness is expressed on two very different levels. Let me illustrate :

The house that I live in was built in 1881. The foundation is 3 -4 foot thick and made out of solid rock. On top of that rock there is a 2 foot thick brick wall. Every beam in the house is a true 4 x 4 beam made out of wood so hard that it is difficult to drive a nail into it. The structure has stood the test of heavy winds and rains for 135 years and it still stands tall and strong.

- Should I stand here this morning and give glory to the stones, the brick and the wood that make up my house OR Should I honor the engineers, the craftsman and laborers who built such a fine house with the crude tools they had in 1881?
- Certainly greater honor should go to the craftsman rather than the house itself. And that is what the writer of Hebrews is saying when he compares Jesus to Moses:

Hebrews 3: 3 **For Jesus has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses — as much more glory as the builder of a house has more honor than the house itself. 4 (For every house is built by someone, but the builder of all things is God.)**

- Moses was found to be faithful in all of the household of Israel nevertheless he was merely a single member of the household.
- Jesus on the other hand was the creator, the one who made the house.

Speaking of the Lord Jesus, John writes: John 1:2 **He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made.**

- With the image of a household fresh in our minds the author sharpens the point.

Hebrews 3: 5 **Now Moses was faithful in all God's house as a servant, to testify to the things that were to be spoken later, 6 but Christ is faithful over God's house as a son. And we are his house if indeed we hold fast our confidence and our boasting in our hope.**

- In the house of Israel, Moses was truly a faithful servant.
- The word that is used for “Servant” is a word that speak of dignity and freedom not slavery. So even in this the author continues to honor Moses.
- BUT there is a marked difference between a servant and a Son.
 - I learned firsthand the difference between a servant and a Son.
 - You see I Worked for a family business for 23 years I learned the hard way that I was only a servant and every child who was born into the owner’s family was a SON.
 - I would always be the employee and they would always be the employer.
- John comments on this in his Gospel:

John 8: 35 **The slave does not remain in the house forever; the son remains forever.**

- Jesus is forever the Son. Because of that He is greater than Moses.
- The author sets this comparison before us because he wants us to **“Consider Jesus.”** Fix our gaze upon him, giving all of our attention to hm.

As Believers in Christ if we are going to press on in the faith, if we are going to endure the hardships, trials and persecutions of this life we will need to turn our eyes away from everything else and look to Jesus alone.

Hebrews 12: 1b **let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, 2 looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God. 3 Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted.**

- When the writer is bringing this book to completion, he addresses those who were enduring hardship and persecution wondering if Christianity is worth suffering for.
- With powerful words the author says: Look to Him, focus on Him, contemplate Him,
- He left behind the glory of Heaven, He came to dwell among us. He was rejected by men a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.
- It was LOVE that bound him to the cross, Love for the Father, Love for His own people.
- Don’t allow the hardships and sufferings of this life to harden you heart. CLING to Him who overcame them all. Consider Jesus!

What are the dangers that you are facing?

- What are the distractions that try to pull your attention and affections away from Jesus?
- DO they drive you toward Jesus or pull you away from Him?