

And This Will We Do, If God Permits

An Expository Journey through the **Epistle to the Hebrews**

Chapter 1: Introduction

1: Introduction: Part 1

WAOY Monday 12/29/08

Welcome again, my beloved in Jesus Christ. My name is Blair Bradley and I am the Pastor of The Covenant of Peace Church in Gulfport, Mississippi. God has opened a door for me to broadcast an exciting new journey through the **Epistle to the Hebrews** on this radio station, and Lord willing, we will go through each verse of this magnificent and inspired Book: verse by verse, line upon line, and precept upon precept, so that we may ask and answer three questions:

1. What did God the Holy Ghost actually say in that verse or passage?
2. What did God mean by what He said?
3. How can we who live in the 21st Century apply these eternal Divine Truths to our lives, so that we may rightly know God, so that we may rightly glorify God, and so that God is worshipped in the manner in which He is entitled to be worshipped and our joy is made full?

My desire in this study is to do with **Hebrews** what Jonathan Edwards said, and that is "to treat the Scriptures fairly". Now those of you who have followed these broadcasts know that my goal in these broadcasts is not to "get finished" but to *learn*. In my opinion, we are all moving way too fast today and we are all in such a hurry, and while that may be somewhat acceptable in some areas, it is *not* acceptable as it pertains to God's Word.

We must remember, dear friends, that God is not someone with whom we can trifle and if we are too busy to spend time in God's Word, then we are simply too busy. We need to reorder our lives according to Biblical priorities so that God comes first and we come last.

So in these broadcasts I am going to slow it down so that we can take the time to examine, taste, savor, and delight in the meaning of

the Inspired Words and what they actually say. And part of that effort will require me to take the Words back to the original Greek or Hebrew so that we can get the precise understanding of what God the Holy Spirit has authored in this Book.

Dear friends, please hear me when I say to you that any effort to study the Bible for simple academics is a waste of time. My goal is not to fill your head with more information about God. Study is to be a tool in the Hand of God as the Spirit of the Living God makes the Truth of this Book come alive to you, by illuminating your mind and heart through the line-by-line, precept-by-precept teaching of the only Book that God gave to Man. The end result is that you may see Jesus the Christ and in seeing the Glory of God in the Face of Jesus the Christ, you may be changed into that same Image.

You see, I love Jesus with all my heart and I seek to understand these Eternal and Divine Truths myself, so that I may know Him, and so I might know the Power of His Resurrection, and so I may be privileged to experience the Fellowship of His Sufferings, and so I might be so blessed to be conformed to His Death.

I want you to savor the Word of God, dear friends... to take the time to inhale its sweet fragrance, to "taste and see that the Lord is good", to relish it in your mouth... and to chew it *slowly*, extracting all the nutrients from each bite so you will digest God's Word properly. The end result is that you are strong and healthy in the Lord and in the Power of His Might.

I also want you to know that I don't have an ax to grind. I'm not out to bash any individual or group. I won't go out of my way to rail out against anyone. I don't know anybody's heart but my own; I can't even judge anyone else's motive. If God is willing, I will never do that on these broadcasts on **Hebrews**.

But what I *will* do, and what I have the responsibility and the duty to do, is to hold all teachings from every man and every group accountable to the Scriptures. When they agree with Scripture, they must be commended, and when they disagree with Scripture, they must be called to repentance. And God willing, I will be faithful to do that as well.

I do not believe that I am right and that anyone who disagrees with me is wrong. God help me that I never come across like that. But I do believe that God is right and I believe that if your beliefs are taught

in Scripture, then I should encourage those beliefs and lift them up. But if your beliefs or *my* beliefs do not add up to what God the Holy Spirit put in this sacred Book, then may I be faithful to do great damage to those false and man-made beliefs so that you and I will both have the grace and strength to reject them. We must accept only what God has said.

You are free to disagree with me and still be in perfect standing with God, dear friends. But you are *not* free to disagree with Scripture and still be in perfect standing with God.

In these broadcasts, I do not seek to be popular or important. I seek no accolades or the praise of men. I'm not after your applause or your approval, and I want to be kind, merciful, loving, generous, and longsuffering to all men, and to speak the Truth in Love... but to *never* hesitate to speak the Truth.

I don't believe that a lie ever helped anybody. I seek after Truth. If that Truth confirms what I already believe, then praise God! But if the Truth of Scripture eats up what I already believe, then may I love Jesus enough to be willing to cast what is contrary to God's Word aside so that I may believe only the Truth.

Much of what is being taught in the modern Church is not supported by me. I just want you to know that up front. I am ashamed that in my lifetime we have witnessed the only generation of preachers in the two thousand year history of the Church who have become millionaires off the Gospel as they feed themselves, but do not feed the sheep. It embarrasses me to see men who have been made fat by riding the backs of God's people and fleecing the sheep and making merchandise of the Word of God. I will not do that in these broadcasts.

And I don't believe, my friends, that the most important agenda of God is to make *us* happy. God is infinitely more interested in making us holy than He is in making us happy. He is infinitely more interested in making us faithful than He is in making us financially well off, and He is concerned that we do not just live well here on this earth, but that we learn by God's Grace to suffer well... to suffer as Christians. We are also to die well, to the Glory of God. And I beg of you to pray for me that these teachings on **Hebrews** will reflect that.

I believe that the modern Church is much too worldly, too carnal, way too liberal... too loose, too tolerant of sin, too lax about Truth, too lazy about the Great Commission... too prideful about our own

importance and much too apathetic about what time we are living in. And these broadcasts on the **Epistle to the Hebrews** are aimed to address those issues as well. Please turn with me and read **2 Timothy 4:1-5**.

1 I solemnly charge *you* in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom:

2 preach the word; be ready in season *and* out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction.

3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but *wanting* to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires,

4 and will turn away their ears from the truth and will turn aside to myths.

5 But you, be sober in all things, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.

My dear friends, keep in mind that Paul was not writing this Epistle to the sinners down at the nightclub. He was writing to the Pastor of the Church at Ephesus, a young man named Timothy, and telling him what the condition of the *Church* would be like if the Word of God was not preached. And here, in verse three, Paul gives one of the most frightening prophecies that is in the entire Bible:

3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but *wanting* to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires,

The Apostle Paul says here that the day is coming when the people of the Church who sit in the pews, and who say they are saved, will not endure Sound Doctrine.

Now what does that mean?

That means that the people of the Church will not even be able to sit through a line-by-line, precept-by-precept teaching on the Bible. It means that the day is coming when the people of the Church will see no value of Biblical Teaching. The very people who are inside the Church will be weary of the Truth.

Now I don't know about you, but this is much more frightening to me than anything that is going on in Iran or Iraq, or that is happening to our economy or any other event. When God's people no longer crave

God's Word, we are all in serious trouble. And this event - God's people not being *able* or *willing* to endure Sound Doctrine - is not something that *I* said was going to happen. This frightening event is something that God the Holy Spirit inspired the Apostle Paul to say was going to happen... so we can count on this happening.

In fact, I am saddened to report to you that this prophecy is happening in our day. Church after church is abandoning the systematic study of God's Word, completely abandoning any serious teaching of historic Christian Doctrine and Theology, and completely abandoning any serious pursuit of Divine Truth.

Now look closely at verse four:

4 and will turn away their ears from the truth and will turn aside to myths.

Now notice the cause and effect of this verse. In the first part of this verse, God's Word says that these people in the Church who cannot endure Sound Doctrine "will"; this is a willful action on their part... "they **will turn away their ears from the truth**". No doubt these people think that they are saved, and they are in the Church masquerading as true believers. Nevertheless, Paul is saying here that these same people do not want to hear Sound Doctrine taught and they will turn away their ears from the Truth. Instead they will premeditatedly - and with eyes wide open - turn away their ears from the Truth.

They don't want to hear it; they don't want to look at it; they don't want anyone to speak about it. They want no part or parcel with Divine Truth found in Scripture. Wow! How do people get to that place? How does the Church of Jesus the Christ get to a place where it no longer desires to hear from her Head? Yet we are in that place today, dear friends. But now notice the second part of verse four:

4b ...and will turn aside to myths.

Now the Greek verb in the first part of this verse is in the *active* tense while the verb in the second part is in the *passive* tense. And what that tells us is that the people themselves will actively and willfully turn away their ears from the Truth... but something will automatically happen as a result of them turning away their ears from the Truth. And the people didn't necessarily want or plan for it:

4b...and will turn aside to myths.

So this turning in the second part is *not* something that the people did voluntarily, but something that automatically happens as a result of what they did do voluntarily in the first part.

In other words, because they willfully turned away their ears from the Truth, their ears were automatically turn unto myths. Now they no longer have Truth. So while the first part was something that the people themselves initiated, the second part is something that came to pass as a result of what they did.

And this frightens me. I don't want that to happen to me, so I want to be careful and walk softly before God and humble myself, and in doing so, to learn how to love the Truth and how to value the Truth, so that I may have the Truth.

So that is why I am doing what I am doing on these broadcasts. I pray that God will be good to us as we journey through **Hebrews** together and I ask that you pray for me that I will be faithful to teach exactly what this Scripture says, so that all of us may get the correct and full meaning of what has graciously come to us out of the very Mind, Heart, and Mouth of Almighty God.

So hold onto your hats, it is going to be a very interesting ride.

Well, I have to stop here, but please join me on the next broadcast as we continue our journey through the Epistle of **Hebrews**. May God help us all.

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The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen. Be watchful and quicken your pace. *Soli Deo Gloria*. For the Glory of God alone.