

¹ *Therefore, holy brothers, you who share in a heavenly calling, consider Jesus, the apostle and high priest of our confession,* Hebrews 3:1 Our text begins with "therefore" pointing to the preceding passage. In that passage we saw that Jesus has been exalted above the angels, that He has dominion over the earth, and has delivered us from the fear of death. But for us who believe, there is something more that personally speaks to us. He was made like us in every way, so that He could become a merciful and faithful high priest who provided propitiation for our sins. Because He suffered in every aspect that we do but without sinning (Hebrews 4:15), we can go to Him for help in time of need.

Because of all this, holy brothers, you who share in the heavenly calling, consider Jesus. He is addressing the Hebrew believers but also all those who have been recipients of the propitiation for sins that Jesus provided. So if you have received the forgiveness of sins from Jesus' sacrifice for you on the cross, this is an instruction to you too. Are you holy brothers and sisters who share in the heavenly calling? You are if you trust Jesus for your salvation. His sacrifice made you holy, which is to be set apart for God. God called you out of darkness into His wonderful light (1 Peter 2:9). You have a different worldview. Those who have received a heavenly calling are laying up their treasures in heaven and not on the earth (Matthew 6:19-20).

It is to us who have been born-again that the author asks to consider Jesus. You might respond, "I have considered Him. That is why I became a Christian." But this word "consider" means *to fix* your thoughts upon Him. Jesus used the same word when He asked us to "Consider the ravens" (Luke 12:24). In other words, **understand what it is God is saying to us and continually apply it to our lives.** There is a lesson to be learned when we consider something. We must apply the lessons to our hearts.

This is not something we do casually or just for a moment and then move on. It reminds me of Paul's exhortation to us in Colossians 3:1-3 (NIV) ¹ *Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God.* ² *Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.* ³ *For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God.* To consider is to set our hearts and minds on something with the effect that it changes our thoughts and thereby our affections as well.

This challenge that is set before us, first of all, requires a desire. You must yearn to do so. Our world is filled with apathy. Apathy was a problem in the early church (Revelation 2:4) and it is probably more so today. Jesus said it is those who hunger and thirst for righteousness who will be satisfied (Matthew 5:6). We need a spiritual hunger and that can only come from God. If you don't have it, plead with God for it. It is a natural result of our salvation, but over time we can quench that passion and have the need for it to be restored.

I find myself at times in my life repenting of letting the temporal compete for the focus of my desires. It's then that I know I need to repent and ask God to restore my hunger

Commented [PW1]: Hebrews 4:15 (ESV)

¹⁵ For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.

Commented [PW2]: 1 Peter 2:9 (ESV)

⁹ But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

Commented [PW3]: Matthew 6:19-21 (ESV)

¹⁹ "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal,
²⁰ but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal.
²¹ For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Commented [PW4]: Luke 12:24 (ESV)

²⁴ Consider the ravens: they neither sow nor reap, they have neither storehouse nor barn, and yet God feeds them. Of how much more value are you than the birds!

Commented [PW5]: Revelation 2:4 (ESV)

⁴ But I have this against you, that you have abandoned the love you had at first.

Commented [PW6]: Matthew 5:6 (ESV)

⁶ "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.

and thirst for righteousness, for Jesus. I think that is a common struggle for believers living in this fallen world.

When we have communion we consider Jesus. But it is quickly over and we go our way. If what we considered does not continue to affect us, we are not considering Him in the way the author here is asking of us (1 Corinthians 11:27-30).

It takes desire, but it also takes discipline and time. We can so easily let our schedules take over our lives and not set aside the time to consider Jesus. Discipline, which is also referred to as self-control, is a fruit of the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23). We can exercise it or we can refuse to. We *can't* say we are born-again but unable to discipline ourselves. It is a choice we are able to make by the power of the Spirit on a daily basis. We need a wholehearted desire for more of God! Do you see that need in your life?

What we are to consider is **Jesus, the apostle** and high priest whom we confess. Apostle means "one who is sent." Jesus was sent by the Father to save the world. In the gospel of John, Jesus often referred to Himself as the one sent by the Father (John 5:23). He is the great apostle. All other apostles are called by Him and point to His apostleship. This is the only reference in Scripture to Jesus being the apostle, but it is certainly fitting. If God did not send Him, there would be no hope for mankind (John 3:16-17).

He is our high priest. The author uses this term to refer to Jesus twelve times in this letter. Later in Hebrews it will call Him our *great* high priest (Hebrews 4:14). Paul told Timothy that there was one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus (1 Timothy 2:5). Being the perfect man, He can represent us to God. Being God who was made like us in every way, He perfectly represents God to us. Through Jesus alone does man come to God and God to man (Acts 4:12).

Jesus is the high priest of our confession. The confession of the early church was "Jesus is Lord." Jesus takes our confession to the Father and says, "This one is Yours, for he (or she) claims me as Lord." It was a risky confession in the world dominated by Rome. Those words could get you thrown into prison or to the lions. If you dared to proclaim it, He probably was truly the Lord of your life. I think we need to pick up this confession again for it is becoming a challenging statement in our culture where money, or fame, or acceptance is lord of so many lives. If you dare to declare Jesus is your Lord publicly, He probably is the Lord over your life. If you are ashamed to proclaim it, you need to ask yourself why. What holds you back? What needs to be surrendered to Jesus?

² who was faithful to him who appointed him, just as Moses also was faithful in all God's house. Hebrews 3:2 Jesus was appointed apostle and high priest by the Father. He was faithful to His appointment and is faithful today. He prayed to the Father, *⁴ I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work that you gave me to do.* John 17:4 He faithfully represented the Father to man and completed His mission by living a sinless life and dying on the cross for our sins. He then rose from death, prepared the disciples for the coming Holy Spirit and evangelization of the world, and ascended into heaven. He now sits at the right hand of God as our high priest interceding for us (Isaiah 53:12). That is the supreme example of being faithful to the Father.

Commented [PW7]: 1 Corinthians 11:27-30 (ESV)

²⁷ Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty concerning the body and blood of the Lord.

²⁸ Let a person examine himself, then, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup.

²⁹ For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment on himself.

³⁰ That is why many of you are weak and ill, and some have died.

Commented [PW8]: Galatians 5:22-23 (ESV)

²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

Commented [PW9]: John 5:23 (ESV)

²³ that all may honor the Son, just as they honor the Father. Whoever does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him.

Commented [PW10]: John 3:16-17 (ESV)

¹⁶ "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.

¹⁷ For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.

Commented [PW11]: Hebrews 4:14 (ESV)

¹⁴ Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession.

Commented [PW12]: 1 Timothy 2:5 (ESV)

⁵ For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus,

Commented [PW13]: Acts 4:12 (ESV)

¹² And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."

Commented [PW14]: Isaiah 53:12 (ESV)

¹² Therefore I will divide him a portion with the many, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong, because he poured out his soul to death and was numbered with the transgressors; yet he bore the sin of many, and makes intercession for the transgressors.

Moses was faithful in all God's house, which is to say, with God's people. The author has contrasted Jesus with the angels. Now he will show how much greater Jesus is than Moses. There is actually an early Jewish tradition that says that Moses was exalted above the angels.¹ The Jews hold high esteem for Moses. For those messianic Jews thinking of slipping back into Judaism to escape persecution, they might have thought if they let go of their confession of Jesus, at least they still had Moses.

Commented [PW15]: R. Kent Hughes, *Hebrews vol 1*, p. 91

It sounds strange to us, but consider the greatness of Moses. Jews considered him the greatest man in history. After all, he was called by God to deliver the nation from captivity with signs and plagues that almost destroyed Egypt. His staff parted the Red Sea and drowned the army of Pharaoh. God used it to bring water from a rock to quench their thirst in the desert. Moses met God face to face on Sinai and gave the people the laws of God, the form of worship, and the societal laws. He spared the new nation of Israel from the wrath of God through his powerful intercession. He prayed and God sent manna from heaven. Moses wrote the history of man and their ancestors in his book, Genesis. And with all the authority given to Moses, he remained the meekest of men (Numbers 12:3). We often talk about power corrupting men. Moses resisted that temptation. And finally, Moses had the honor of being buried by God.

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.* Hebrews 3:3-4 The author is making it clear that Jesus is vastly superior to Moses. Moses was faithful in all God's house, but Moses is a part of the house. Jesus is the builder of the house. It was through Him that man came into being (Colossians 1:16). It is through Him that man is redeemed. The builder has more glory than the building and a creator than his or her creation. As highly esteemed as Moses is to the Jews and to us, Jesus is incomparably greater in glory and honor.

Commented [PW16]: Colossians 1:16 (ESV)
¹⁶ For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him.

⁵ *Now Moses was faithful in all God's house as a servant, to testify to the things that were to be spoken later,* Hebrews 3:5 Moses was faithful over God's people as a servant. The Greek word used here for servant is only used in this passage. This term is used for an overseer of servants. We see a similar Hebrew use of "servant" in the Old Testament when Moses and prophets were given the honorable title of "servant of the LORD" (Exodus 14:31; Joshua 1:2). Exodus chapters 35 to 40 refers to Moses' faithfulness twenty-two times!

Commented [PW17]: Exodus 14:31 (ESV)
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.

Commented [PW18]: Joshua 1:2 (ESV)
² "Moses my servant is dead. Now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, you and all this people, into the land that I am giving to them, to the people of Israel.

Please note just what it is the author writes that Moses was faithful to do. He was faithful to testify to the things that were to be spoken later. Moses was faithful to predict the coming of the Messiah. He told us this One would come from among the Jewish people, and that we must listen to Him (Deuteronomy 18:15). He would be like Moses in that He would be a deliverer, but in a much greater way. We will see later in Hebrews that Moses wrote many things of Jesus in the form of types and shadows (Hebrews 8:5). When Jesus came to the two on the road to Emmaus, He told them of things concerning Himself beginning from the writings of Moses (Luke 24:27). Moses had been faithful to record all those things. More than any single thing Moses did,

Commented [PW19]: Deuteronomy 18:15 (ESV)
¹⁵ "The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your brothers—it is to him you shall listen—"

Commented [PW20]: Hebrews 8:5 (ESV)
⁵ They serve a copy and shadow of the heavenly things. For when Moses was about to erect the tent, he was instructed by God, saying, "See that you make everything according to the pattern that was shown you on the mountain."

Commented [PW21]: Luke 24:27 (ESV)
²⁷ And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.

pointing to the coming Messiah was his great, faithful accomplishment. The Apostles quoted Moses when they preached Christ (Acts 3:22). Moses was a servant who pointed to the One who would have the title of Son of God.

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. Hebrews 3:6 He was faithful, not as a "servant" but as a "son." And we are his house, the house He has been faithful over. He has been faithful to be the way of salvation. He is faithful to hear our prayers and help us in our time of need. He is faithful to intercede for us to the Father. He is faithful to guide us through life and into glory. You'll never find a friend as faithful as Jesus.

"We are His house if..." We will meet the word "if" many times in the letter to the Hebrews. The reason is not to cause the readers to doubt their salvation. It is to encourage them to persevere. As the waves of tribulation began to tug on their anchor rope, there was a danger of them drifting away from that anchor (Hebrews 2:1). Depending on the doctrine you hold, those waves might show the readers were never truly born-again, or that they had lost their salvation, if they did not hold fast their confidence and the hope in which they boasted. Either way, **perseverance is the test of real faith.**

There are those who believe you can say a prayer asking for salvation at some point in your life and go on to live and believe whatever you wish and you will still find yourself in heaven. The author of Hebrews does not agree with that belief. Being born-again means you are a new creation in Christ. The old is gone and the new is come (2 Corinthians 5:17). But if there is no change, or the change doesn't last, we must ask ourselves if we ever were made new (Matthew 13:20-22).

I am not saying that we will not fail at times, or even doubt. But to walk away from the faith and return to some other belief system as the Jewish believers were tempted to do brings into question whether or not they were ever really God's house. Can the redeemed not have confidence in what Christ did for them? Can born-again people give up and lose hope that Jesus' blood is sufficient to cover their sins? Not according to this verse and several others in this letter (Hebrews 3:14).

I've been taught that if a person prays a prayer asking Jesus into their heart, they are saved regardless of how they live. Well, salvation is all by grace and has nothing to do with how Christ-like we are (Ephesians 2:8-9). However, if we rely on words like we would a magic phrase, we've missed the meaning. To believe and receive Jesus as Lord results in a change of heart. We come under His direction and guidance (Ephesians 2:10). It is to submit to Him. When we find forgiveness in Jesus, we want to please Him in response for what He did for us (Romans 6:1-2).

The Scriptures give us a few ways to be certain of our salvation. We certainly don't want to fool ourselves about the most important event of our lives. The author of Hebrews had given us one test of faith, *we are his house if indeed we hold fast our confidence and our boasting in our hope.* Perseverance is one sure sign.

Commented [PW22]: Acts 3:22 (ESV)

²² Moses said, "The Lord God will raise up for you a prophet like me from your brothers. You shall listen to him in whatever he tells you.

Commented [PW23]: Hebrews 2:1 (ESV)

¹ Therefore we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away from it.

Commented [PW24]: 2 Corinthians 5:17 (ESV)

¹⁷ Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.

Commented [PW25]: Matthew 13:20-22 (ESV)

²⁰ As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy,

²¹ yet he has no root in himself, but endures for a while, and when tribulation or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately he falls away.

²² As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and it proves unfruitful.

Commented [PW26]: Hebrews 3:14 (ESV)

¹⁴ For we have come to share in Christ, if indeed we hold our original confidence firm to the end.

Commented [PW27]: Ephesians 2:8-9 (ESV)

⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, ⁹ not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

Commented [PW28]: The key verse about salvation being by grace is followed by one of good works: Ephesians 2:10 (ESV)

¹⁰ For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

Commented [PW29]: Romans 6:1-2 (ESV)

¹ What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound?

² By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it?

There are a number of other ways to have the assurance that you are saved from God's wrath. ¹⁰ *Whoever believes in the Son of God has the testimony in himself.* 1 John 5:10a We have an assurance in our hearts that we have eternal life. We just know in our hearts that what Jesus did was sufficient to cover all our sins. We have a hunger to know the Bible. ² *Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up into salvation*—1 Peter 2:2 We are convicted when we sin, and we desire to live a holy life. ²² *But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the fruit you get leads to sanctification and its end, eternal life.* Romans 6:22 Our desires and actions will change. ¹⁷ *Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.* 2 Corinthians 5:17

The author of Hebrews give us another assurance, one we try to avoid. ⁵ *And have you forgotten the exhortation that addresses you as sons? "My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor be weary when reproved by him. ⁶ For the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and chastises every son whom he receives."* Hebrews 12:5-6 If we are a child of God, He will discipline us like a good father will discipline his child. We also have assurance by the evidence of the seal of the Holy Spirit. ¹³ *In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, ¹⁴ who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.* Ephesians 1:13-14 God's Holy Spirit will reside in you, prompting you to do what is good and making you uncomfortable when you are disobedient.

It is easy for us as Christians today to see that Jesus is so much greater than Moses, but we have the same temptations as this Hebrew church. We can let our love for Jesus grow cold and allow our hearts to be set on the things of this world, passing things that are so much less than Jesus. We forget all we have in Him when we don't take the time to commune with Him, to read the Word, and share with fellow believers. Then the temptations of the world and the desire to fit in begin to gradually edge Jesus out of our minds and hearts, and our love grows cold (Matthew 24:20). Jesus warned against this when predicting events of the end time. Cultivate the desire to spend time focused upon Jesus. Exercise the fruit of self-discipline to be in God's Word and fellowship. Remember that the things that tempt you are temporal and promise more than they can deliver. Jesus, on the other hand, is eternal and more than your heart can wish. ¹ *Therefore, holy brothers, you who share in a heavenly calling, consider Jesus, the apostle and high priest of our confession,* Hebrews 3:1

Commented [PW30]: Matthew 24:12 (ESV)
¹² And because lawlessness will be increased, the love of many will grow cold.

Questions

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| 1 Why does the text begin with "therefore"? | 7 What do Jesus and Moses have in common? |
| 2 What is the exhortation and to whom? | 8 What is the difference between them? |
| 3 What does it take to do that? | 9 Why is there an "if" in verse 6? |
| 4 What is Jesus called in verse 1? Why? | 10 How can you know you are saved? |
| 5 What's so great about Moses? | |
| 6 How was Jesus faithful? | |