

Partakers of Christ – Part Two

Scripture Reading: Hebrews 3:1-15

Last week we focused on our benefits from Christ, who partook of flesh and blood for us (Hebrews 2:14-18; 4:14-16; Romans 8:1-4; Galatians 4:4-7; II Corinthians 5:21). In our Scripture reading this time, we notice that those who belong to Jesus Christ are partakers of the heavenly calling (Hebrews 3:1). They also are partakers of Christ (Hebrews 3:14).

Let's grasp the significance of this idea of becoming a "*Partaker*."

We must **believe in** Jesus Christ. We must **believe** Jesus Christ. We must **receive** Jesus Christ. This will lead us to **take up our cross and follow Jesus Christ** (Matthew 16:24-27). If we do all that, then we are **partakers** of Jesus Christ. This implies an active / interactive relationship with Jesus Christ that makes us participants with Him in a new life that will manifest itself progressively and culminate in wonderful eternal benefits. There are several Greek words, in the New Testament, that are used to describe this partaking of / participation with the living Christ. These Greek words also are used to show us the various ways that we share this on-going experience with other believers. A composite definition of these Greek words give us the idea of...

- Having communion – sharing things in common
- A partnership / fellowship / association
- Co-participation / joint endeavor
- Camaraderie / Companionship

English translations may use a variety of words or expressions. But most common are the words "*Partake / Partaker*." This series of messages is dedicated to learning the results of what Christ did, when He partook of our human condition and thereby provided for us to partake of His relationship with the Father. The God-man, Christ Jesus, stood before the Father, being condemned for our sins, so that we could stand before the Father, being justified – declared righteous. As the God-Man, Christ Jesus continues His ministry before the Father, mediating for us as we sin, repent, confess, obey, worship, and serve (II Corinthians 5:18-19,21; Romans 3:19-26; 8:31-39; Hebrews 4:14-16; 7:24-25; I John 1:5 – 2:2; I Timothy 2:5; Hebrews 13:20-21).

In this series, we will consider these subjects:

Christ partook of flesh and blood (Incarnation) – **Hebrews 2:14**

We partake of Christ (Salvation / Holiness / Fellowship / Service to the Father / Future kingdom and glory) – **Hebrews 3:14**

- His gospel call / promise – Hebrews 3:1; Ephesians 3:6
- His nature / holiness / power – II Peter 1:4; Hebrews 12:8-10
- His people / unity, fellowship, and grace – Philippians 1:7; I Corinthians 9:19-23
- His gospel work / fruitful labors – John 15:1-8, 16; Philippians 1:11; 4:13
- His sufferings – Philippians 3:10; II Timothy 1:7-8; II Corinthians 1:3-7; I Peter 4:12-14
- His kingdom & glory – I Peter 5:1; Colossians 1:12-13, 25-27
- His warnings & corrections – Hebrews 12:5-10

Now let's give closer attention to our Scripture reading (Hebrews 3:1-15).

Hebrews 3:1 – Holy brethren and a Heavenly calling. It is not pride that causes us to claim to be holy. It is **Christ Jesus** who provided our status with God that **makes us holy** (i.e. saved from our sins and sinfulness – separated from the lost of this world; separated unto God's heavenly purposes – John 17:6-23; Ephesians 1:3-4; II Corinthians 4:3-6; 5:21; I Thessalonians 5:27 [“holy brethren”]; I Peter 2:5,9-10). **Christ Jesus**, as **our Apostle** (i.e. “delegate” – one who is sent with authority), **was sent by the Father to call us**, to gather us, and to make us His own special people through the Gospel (John 3:16-17; 3:34; 5:24-25,36-38; 6:37,44-45,63; 8:42; 14:6; I Corinthians 1:2-9 [cp. Romans 1:6-7; II Thessalonians 2:13-14]; Titus 2:14; I John 4:14). **Christ Jesus**, as **our High Priest** (Hebrews 2:16-18; 4:14-16; 5:1 – 10:14), **reconciles us to the Father**, and continually intercedes for us and represents us before the Father (Romans 8:31-39; I John 1:5 – 2:2; I Timothy 2:5-6).

Hebrews 3:2-6 – Two Households. Moses is considered the faithful steward of the household of faith of Old Testament Israel. Christ is considered not a steward, but a Son (higher ranking than a steward) over the household of God's people in the New Testament / New Covenant. Ultimately, Christ is Lord over all.

Hebrews 3:7-15 – The Hard-hearted are not true partakers. Comparing the “*provocation / rebellion*” of Israel when they were in the wilderness (Psalm 95:7-11), we are urged to carefully respond daily to Christ and His Word. Sin can deceive us and harden our hearts. Hebrews 3:15 – 4:2 encourages us to test our hearts and be careful for signs of unbelief and rebellion.

Note the clauses in Hebrews 3:6, 14 – “*if*” does not imply that perseverance is a condition for becoming a child of God. Nor is it a condition for keeping your relationship with God. Perseverance and spiritual fruit are evidence / proof of those who are truly saved (Psalm 15:1-5; 24:1-6; John 3:16-21; 8:30-32; 15:4-6 [cp. Luke 8:15,18]; I Corinthians 15:1-2; Colossians 1:21-23; Hebrews 6:7-12; 10:35-39; I John 2:19 cp. Ephesians 2:8-10; I Thessalonians 5:24; Jude 1:24-25).

Note Hebrews 6:4-12; 10:26-39 contain teachings that are hotly contested and debated. There is not enough space here to give them the attention that they need. These passages warn of superficial participation and outward behavior that is still done in the flesh.