

The Gospel: A Perpetual Need – Warnings from the Book of Hebrews

Scripture Reading: Hebrews 3:1 – 4:2

We have been studying the long-term effect of the Gospel from the book of Romans chapters one through three. The Gospel is not just something that we receive once, so that we can gain assurance of salvation, and then move on to other things. Paul expressed his desire to preach the gospel to believers, not just to unbelievers (Romans 1:11-16 – “[that] *you may be established / strengthened...*” cp. Romans 16:25-27 – “*...to establish / strengthen you...*”). The gospel has a continual long-reaching effect on all aspects of doctrine, spiritual growth, and service to God. This could not be fully grasped before, but In this age of grace, the gospel of Jesus Christ is the only proper way to interpret all of the Bible. It is “*...The truth as it is in Jesus.*” (Ephesians 4:21 cp. I Peter 1:10-12, 23-25).

The gospel has a perpetual application for us. It is important to understand the perpetual need for us to be involved with gospel truth. Why do we continually stress the person and work of Christ? Why is He to be preeminent in all things? See Colossians 1:14-19; 2:6-10; 3:1-4,16-17; Ephesians 3:8; I Corinthians 1:18 – 2:5; Philippians 1:20-21; 2:5; 3:8-10; 4:13,19; John 15:1-8,16.

We will be looking at some important warnings and instructions in the Book of Hebrews that will help us repent and/or stay vitally connected with gospel truth. **Two preliminary considerations:**

1) Some people have professed faith in Christ but did not really possess a saving relationship with Christ. Perhaps they have been mistaught, or they have not been paying attention to the truth that they have been taught. Passages in the Book of Hebrews, and in other places of Scripture, are designed to warn them to seek that true relationship with Christ and His word. See John 8:30-32; I John 2:15-19; 5:13 cp. II Corinthians 13:5; II Peter 1:10.

2) Some people have a true relationship with Christ, but they have not matured, or they have become careless, sleepy, discouraged, and distracted. They may be under the influence of weak or false teachers. Passages in the Book of Hebrews, and in other places of Scripture, are designed to awaken and revitalized them, to make them mature followers of Christ with true zeal and understanding. See I John 2:12-21, 24-29; 5:13 cp. II Peter 1:2-13; 3:17-18; I Peter 2:1-3; I Corinthians 14:20.

A serious study of Hebrews 5:8 – 6:12 and Hebrews 10:19-39 is needed. Commentators vary greatly in interpretation. It is recommended that the commentaries of John MacArthur and Warren Wiersbe be consulted. Also consider a study of the Book of I John. Besides consulting MacArthur and Wiersbe, a series of messages was delivered to Northland Bible Church, of Tomahawk, Wisconsin, on the Book of I John from 01/12/2020 to 05/17/2020. These messages may be found on two websites: sermonaudio.com or northlandbiblechurch.com. Questions or problems? – please contact Alex Lindsay at alexmlindsay@yahoo.com.

Looking at the book of Hebrews, let's examine some dangerous things people do...

Hebrews 2:1,3 – People let things “*slip / drift away*.”

They do not “*give more earnest heed / pay much closer, careful attention to the things that we have heard*.” They “*neglect / ignore*” the Scripture’s teaching on such a great comprehensive subject as our salvation. See Hebrews 2:1-4 cp. Titus 2:11-14; I Timothy 4:13,16.

Romans 10:17, in context, is talking about evangelism. But we should also apply it to the believer’s maintenance and maturity. See Colossians 1:9-13; 2:1-8. Do we share the same “*conflict / struggle*” as Paul in Colossians 2:1-8?

Hebrews 3:6,14 – People do not “*hold fast / firmly to our confidence*” in Christ.

They quit “*rejoicing / glorying / boasting*” of their hope in Christ. If they do not celebrate their faith, they will be unable to live their faith. See Hebrews 4:14; 6:11-12,19; 10:23,35-39. Consider Israel’s exodus from Egypt, wilderness wanderings, and entrance into Canaan. See Hebrews 3:1 – 4:11 (Consult J. MacArthur & W. Wiersbe).

Hebrews 3:8-13 – People harden their hearts.

We are warned to “*beware / take heed / take care*” so that we do not have “*an evil / sinful / hardened / unbelieving heart*.” It can cause a person to “*depart*,” to “*fall away / turn away*” from the opportunity to have a vibrant, inter-active relationship with the living God. This is called apostasy – turning away from the true God and the true gospel. Not the loss of salvation, it is the outcome of a person who has professed a relationship with God but did not really possess such a relationship. This is defecting from the teaching of the faith and going the way of the world. See Galatians 5:4 (fallen from the teaching of grace – turned to legalism); Jude 1:4 (Changing the teaching of grace into a license to sin – “*lasciviousness / lewdness / immorality / sensuality*”).

See also I Timothy 4:1; II Timothy 4:3-4,10; I John 2:15-26; 4:1-6.

- Hebrews 3:10 – People “*err / go astray*” in their heart. Their hearts wander away from the straight path that God presents to them. Quoting Psalm 95:10, the Hebrew word = “*to err, wander, go astray, stagger, be deceived or seduced*.” Compare James 1:12-16 (vs. 16 “*do not err / be deceived*” – Same Greek word as in Hebrews 3:10. Greek root word = “*Planet*” i.e. “*wanderer*”). See Psalm 1:1-3 (The Hebrew root word for “*blessed / happy*” used often in the psalms, means “*to walk straight on*” cp. Psalm 40:4; 84:11-12; 89:15; 94:12; 106:3; 112:1; 119:1-2; 128:1).
- Hebrews 3:13 – Christian hearts can also become hard through weakness and deceptive sinful temptations. Let us seek our “*merciful and faithful high priest... for grace to help*.” Let us “*exhort / encourage one another*” continually. **See Hebrews 2:17-18; 4:15-16; 10:19-25** cp. Jeremiah 17:9-10,13; Psalm 19:12-14; 101:1-7; 139:23-24; Proverbs 4:23-27.
- See also Psalm 119:59; Proverbs 6:12-19; Jeremiah 14:10; Micah 6:8; Matthew 5:8; 15:8; 22:36-40; Romans 2:28-29; 6:17; Ephesians 5:1-2,8,15; James 3:13-18; 4:1-10; 5:7-8; cp. Isaiah 53:6.