

"Our Great High Priest"

Part 14

Hebrews 4:14-8:5

**Introduction:** Tonight we continue in our study of Hebrews and as we do we return to Hebrews 6. Last week in our study we finished looking at Hebrews 6:1-8 and in those verses we saw the warning given to the Hebrew believers. The writer warned them about going back to Judaism. If they were to refuse to trust God in the face of persecution and turn back to the old sacrificial system, then they could possibly find themselves in a situation where they were disqualified for service but that was not all. If they turned back and God closed the door of opportunity then even if they were to repent it would be impossible to have another opportunity at the blessings that awaited them at the present time. They would still be saved but they would fail to enter the rest which God had for them.

**Hebrews 6:4-6**

<sup>4</sup> ***For it is impossible** for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost,*

<sup>5</sup> *And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come,*

<sup>6</sup> ***If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance;***

When we studied this I reminded you that we must see this through Jewish eyes. There are several examples in the Old Testament of the Hebrews who made choices and then repented but God closed the door and therefore it was impossible for them to go back to the opportunity that was once before them. We considered 4 examples:

1. Israel at Kadesh Barnea when they refused to believe Joshua and Caleb. After God pronounced the judgment they wanted to go back but it was too late.
2. Moses when he struck the Rock the second time. He was told he could not enter into the land of Canaan and he later repented but it was too late.
3. Then there was David and his sin with Bathsheba. God told him there was more He would have done for him but because of the sin David would never see God's full blessing.
4. Esau was another example. He sold his birth right for a bowl of soup and later repented but the situation was impossible to reverse.

The writer then went on to give an illustration of raining falling on the earth and how some earth produces fruit and some produces briars and thorns. The problem is in the soil which represents the heart of the believer. If these people were to turn back they would be like the hard soil and their lives would be fruitless. They would be people who would show forth bitterness and criticism because they would be people who missed the rest of God. But those who pressed forward and listened to the Word of God would be people whose lives were fruitful and joyful.

### **Notice Hebrews 6:7-8**

Now the writer is going to give encouragement to the Hebrews which we will see as we continue on in Hebrews 6:8-12.

### **I. Encouragement for the Hebrew Believers**

#### **Notice Hebrews 6:8**

When I look at this verse I see a major encouragement for those Hebrews who were facing the persecution. The encouragement was that the writer loved them and had not given up on them. Let me show you how the love of the writer is expressed to these believers.

1. **He was faithful to warn them of the danger they were facing.**

#### **Leviticus 19:17**

*<sup>17</sup> Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart: thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him.*

We have looked at this verse before but I will remind you that when we love someone we will warn them of the danger of sin in their lives. That is exactly what the writer of Hebrews has done in the previous verses. He was straight forward when he told them of the possibility of being disqualified.

Therefore, we see the writer's love in that he was not willing to let them turn away from Jesus Christ and go back into Judaism. He knew there was a danger and for that reason he could not remain silent.

2. **He focused upon the good that he saw in their lives.**

### Notice Hebrews 6:9

When I read this verse I am reminded that there were many negatives that could have been said about these people but the writer does not focus upon the negatives. He instead focuses upon the positives and the potential he sees in the lives of these people. This reminds me of the characteristics of love that we looked at in 1 Corinthians 13.

### 1 Corinthians 13:7

<sup>7</sup> *Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.*

To "***bear all things***" means "***to cover with silence***". To "***believe all things***" is "***to focus upon the positives***" in another person's life. To "***hope all things***" is "***to never give up***" on the people we love. When love has covered all things and when it has believed all things and when it has hoped all things but there is still nothing but darkness to be faced in the situation then love endures all things.

That is exactly what we see from the writer in these verses. He warns them of the danger but then he encourages them by telling them that he believes that they will press forward because they are saved. He makes a statement here that is very important.

*"we are persuaded better things of you, and **things that accompany salvation**"...*

The statement "***things that accompany salvation***" is the statement that I want to look at for a moment. The things which accompany salvation, I believe refer to the characteristics of the True believer.

#### 1. Perseverance

### Hebrews 3:6

<sup>6</sup> *But Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, **if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.***

### Hebrews 3:14

<sup>14</sup> *For we are made partakers of Christ, **if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end;***

Perseverance is not a requirement for salvation but it is evidence of salvation. It is that which **ACCOMPANYS** salvation.

## 2. Obedience

### 1 John 2:3-5

<sup>3</sup> *And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments.*

<sup>4</sup> *He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.*

<sup>5</sup> *But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him.*

Obedience is also something that gives evidence that a person is truly saved. Therefore, obedience is something that ACCOMPANYS salvation.

So the writer is stating that he believes these Hebrew believers will persevere and that they will be obedient to the Words he has written because his Words are inspired Scripture.

When the writer stated that he believed in them I am sure that would have been an encouragement to these people. I have seen many people who were down in their lives and when someone came along and encouraged them by stating they believed in them, that encouragement gave them the boost they needed to press forward. The Apostle Paul used this same encouragement when he wrote Romans.

### Romans 15:14

<sup>14</sup> *And I myself also am persuaded of you, my brethren, that ye also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another.*

There is one more statement in this verse that I want to consider and then we will move on. It is the statement at the end of verse 9.

*"though we thus speak"...*

This statement is also very important and is connected with the love the writer has for his readers.

Let me tell you what he is saying here. *"The words I have written to you in this warning are very frightening and are not what you desire to hear. But it is much better that I speak the Truth to you and you stay true to your faith, than it would be for you to pull back and then have to live with the consequences of your choice for the rest of your life."*

*You may not have wanted to hear these words but you needed to hear these words. They are for your benefit."*

**Application:**

Because we love the people around us there are times when we must speak words that are not what others desire to hear. The Truth is often hard to speak but let us never forget that if we do not speak the Truth of God's Word into the lives of the people around us they may follow through with choices that will bring consequences which they will live with for the rest of their lives. If it is a situation of salvation and we do not warn them they may die without Christ and burn for all eternity in the Lake of Fire. Too many times believers are too timid to speak the Truth. Maybe it is with a child and the parent is reluctant to warn them because they are afraid if they offend them they may stop coming around. Let me just say that it is better to offend someone with the Truth than to see them live in the consequences of a poor choice the rest of their lives or worse yet to see them die unsaved.

**Ezekiel 33:8-9**

*<sup>8</sup> When I say unto the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt surely die; if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand.*

*<sup>9</sup> Nevertheless, if thou warn the wicked of his way to turn from it; if he do not turn from his way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul.*

Now let us get back to Hebrews 6 again.

**Notice Hebrews 6:10**

There is so much in this verse for us to see but we will not get it all tonight.

The first point of encouragement we see in this verse is that God was fully aware of their work and their labor of love to other believers. I really appreciate this verse because it helps us to see that these people were not consumed with their own suffering to the point that they did not reach out to others. This was a local body of believers and they were exercising their gifts and they were ministering to one another. Now let us get back to the point of encouragement.

The writer wanted them to know that God was fully aware of the sacrifices and the labor which they had invested into the lives of other people. He saw every bit of energy they used to help other believers.

**Application:**

The application for you and me here is great. You may be facing a situation at the present time and the pressure is great. You have been sacrificing and you have been doing "your" part but it seems as though it is not getting any better and then on top of that you feel like you are on an island alone. Let me just remind you that God is fully aware of everything that you are doing as you follow Him.

**Ephesians 6:5-8**

<sup>5</sup> *Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ;*

<sup>6</sup> *Not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart;*

<sup>7</sup> *With good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men:*

<sup>8</sup> **Knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free.**

**1 Corinthians 15:58**

<sup>58</sup> *Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that **your labour is not in vain in the Lord.***

Not only is God aware of our work and labor but there is more in this verse.

**Notice Hebrews 6:10 again.**

When I read this verse I see that God is also aware of our motivation. I say this because the verse tells us that the labor of these Hebrew believers was a "labor of love". They were motivated out of love for one another. They were not serving so as to build themselves up. They were not serving so that they would get special attention. Nor were they serving out of competition. They were serving out of a pure heart. They loved one another and therefore their work and their labor had eternal value.

**1 Corinthians 13:1-3**

*Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.*

<sup>2</sup> *And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.*

<sup>3</sup> *And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.*

**Application:**

Let me just remind you and me that if we are motivated by selfish desires as we serve those around us it is of no eternal value. We can work and labor to serve the body of Christ and even give our lives to meet the needs of others but if it is not done with the motivation of love then it does not have any eternal value. God knows what it is that motivates us. If we work and labor for personal gain or personal recognition or to outdo someone else we will receive no reward in heaven. We must keep a close watch on our heart.

**Jeremiah 17:9-10**

<sup>9</sup> *The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?*

<sup>10</sup> *I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings.*

Let me show you one more point in the verse.

**Hebrews 6:10**

<sup>10</sup> *For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister.*

Every work and labor of love these people did was for the purpose of bringing glory and honor to the name of Jesus Christ.

**Conclusion:**

Let us continue to press forward for the Lord doing all we do to honor and glorify His name, knowing that God misses nothing and He will one day reward us for our work and labor of love.