



Thinking Clearly

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Hebrews 3:1-6

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3 Therefore, holy brothers, you who share in a heavenly calling, consider Jesus, the apostle and high priest of our confession, ² who was faithful to him who appointed him, just as Moses also was faithful in all God's house. 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.) ⁵ Now Moses was faithful in all God's house as a servant, to testify to the things that were to be spoken later, 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.

(Pastor prays)

Just as tears in your eyes blur your vision, trouble in your world makes it hard to see joy or to actually be joyful. From the loss of a pet to a sick child to a wayward friend to a failed job, every one of those things are joy-stealers. When the car breaks down and the kids don't do right, joy-stealers. Or maybe the problem is your own making or at least in your own head. When you are unreasonably anxious or unthoughtfully sinful. Truthfully, so much of our pain is self-inflicted and undiagnosed sin. Sin makes us afraid and defensive and hard and even sad. It makes every mountain seem unclimbable and every problem seem unsolvable. And it muddies our minds so much that we can't think clearly. And this passage is written to panicked Christians who felt like their world was falling apart.

So, after talking about the deity of Christ in Chapter 1 and then the humanity of Christ in Chapter 2, the preacher now pauses their hearts and collects their thoughts so that they think clearly. And I want to do the same for you. Because I know what some of you are dealing with and today we need to start thinking clearly.

When We Think Clearly, We Live Joyfully

How do we do that? Start with the foundation.

We need to think clearly about Jesus

That actually seems to be the driving point of this whole passage. It's what the preacher says in verse 1. Let's read it and see. *3 Therefore, holy brothers, you who share in a heavenly calling, consider Jesus, the apostle and high priest of our confession,* There is a danger that many Christians fall into and a road that many churches travel down, and that is thinking about Jesus in a way that accommodates our proclivities and meshes with the culture; and our task is to always consider Jesus as the scripture portrays Him and not as the world wants Him. The danger for this church in the text, was that many were considering Jesus in light of Moses. They were Jewish Christians and, to the point this preacher is making, is you need to consider Moses (the law) in light of Jesus.

Jesus Christ is the center of Christianity. His person, His work, His cross, His death, His resurrection, His lordship and His intercession for you. That's what a Christian considers when he thinks about Jesus. That's what the preacher will say in the most famous passage in Hebrews: Hebrews 12:1-2. *2 Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,² looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.*

Consider Jesus. John MacArthur says the word “consider” means, to put your mind on Jesus and let it remain there that you may understand who He is and what He wills. This speaks to the sufficiency of Christ. Sufficiency. He is able. The old preachers used to say, “Won’t He do it?” He is able to forgive, sustain, help, heal, strengthen and bring back the joy. And to help us consider Jesus, the preacher gives us a few descriptions of Jesus in verse 1. Let’s read it again.

3 Therefore, holy brothers, you who share in a heavenly calling, consider Jesus, the apostle and high priest of our confession, Jesus - the apostle and high priest of our confession.

Here is the only time we see the word “apostle” in Hebrews and the only time Jesus is called “apostle” in the whole Bible. On the other hand, this entire book Hebrews is written to characterize Jesus as our high priest. As our apostle He is from God sent to us. As our high priest He is for us interceding with God. As our apostle He speaks to us from God and as our high priest He speaks for us to God. The word “apostle” literally means “sent one.” Here is Jesus as the rescuing agent sent from God to save us.

High priest. Here is Jesus giving Himself as our substitute on the cross. When Jesus is called the apostle, it reminds us that God the Father sent forth Jesus the Son on the mission. When Jesus is called the high priest, that reminds us of the sacrificial nature of that mission. To consider Jesus the apostle and high priest of our confession means to thoroughly ponder who He is and what He has done. It is to weigh out His dignity and to dwell on His excellence. It means to submit to His authority, to behold Him, to worship Him and to rest in Him. Apostle and high priest.

Then the preacher expands on how we are to view Christ. I want you to think of Christ as the builder. Remember how Jesus told Peter, “upon this rock I will build my church”? Keep that in mind as we finish the sentence from verse 2-6a. *2 who was faithful to him who appointed him, just as Moses also was faithful in all God’s house. 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.) ⁵ Now Moses was faithful in all God's house as a servant, to testify to the things that were to be spoken later, ⁶ but Christ is faithful over God's house as a son.

The preacher used the word “house” six times in those three verses and he uses that word to demonstrate how Jesus is superior. In verses 2-3, Jesus is the *builder* of the house and Moses is just *part* of the house. The preacher even says in verse 5, Moses is faithful in God's house as a servant but Jesus is the son. The job of Moses was to point to Christ. Remember what Jesus said to the scribes and Pharisees in John 5:39. ³⁹ *You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me,* The entire Old Testament is one large arrow pointing to the coming Messiah, Jesus Christ. Moses' ministry existed to testify about things to come. It was a typological pattern with unique promises and clear prophecies. In Moses we have a promise. In Jesus we have a fulfillment. It's vital for you as a Christian to think clearly about Jesus so you can live joyfully for him. He is worthy of your unwavering attention.

We need to think clearly about ourselves

Go back with me to verse one. We know that this paragraph is addressed specifically to the Christians in the church because of how he addresses them in verse 1. *3 Therefore, holy brothers, you who share in a heavenly calling, consider Jesus, the apostle and high priest of our confession,* “Holy brothers who share in a heavenly calling.” Holy brothers and sisters. Let's break that down even further. “Holy” means to be cleansed of sin by the death of Christ on the cross, His burial and His resurrection.

This is the Gospel. God is holy and created all of us in His image. You have dignity because you are created in the image of God. That image of God in us has been disfigured by our own sin. It's not something that is just harmful to *us*, it is an affront to *God*. And as a holy God, He will not have fellowship with us. That fellowship is broken. We are dead in sin. But God is not only just, He is also loving and kind. And in that love, He sends His son Jesus, who is fully

God and fully man. He comes to live the perfect life where we can't. He goes to the cross, and there at the cross He takes the just punishment for our sins. He takes the punishment and we get His earned righteousness. And the way you become a Christian is to turn from your sin, and believe what Jesus has done for you on the cross. So if that has happened to you, you are now living in the grace of God and you are a saint.

Sometimes we mix this up. We say, "I'm a sinner saved by grace," and that's true, but you aren't *left* there in sin. The overall thing that identifies you is not that you are a *sinner* but that you are now a *saint*. You are transformed. It doesn't mean that you won't sin anymore, it means your *nature* has changed. You are not an *outsider*; you are an *insider*. You are not a *slave* but you are a *son or daughter*.

So we have defined "holy." How about "brothers and sisters"? Do you know what that is? That's *family*. It means you are accepted supported and loved. You have people and we are them. With so many things that might actually separate us, we have been united in Christ so that we are distinguished from one another in an infinite number of ways but we are bound together by the blood of Jesus. Here is the cure for racism. In Christ we are one new man. We are holy brothers. You have been cleaned. You are part of a family and you have security. You have responsibility. We need to think clearly about ourselves.

Look at the other descriptor he uses. We are "holy brothers who share in the heavenly calling." Here is the God-initiated work of what God does when He saves us. It used to be called the "effectual call" it affects and changes us. It reminds us of what Jonathan Edwards said, that the "only thing we bring to salvation is the sin that makes it necessary." So that when we rightly think of Jesus, we have confidence in joy and we have hope and forgiveness. And when we rightly think of ourselves, we can see ourselves as a recipient of God's good grace. I want you to live joyfully. And to do so you need to think clearly. We need to think clearly about Jesus. We need to think clearly about ourselves.

We need to think clearly about being a Christian

Lets finish up by reading verse 6. *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.* We are His house. We need to hold fast. This ends with a comfort and a challenge. The comfort is that we are His house. The challenge is that we have to hold fast. Nowhere else in the Bible do we find these conditional sentences like we do in Hebrews. A believer is a survivor. We are saved by His grace and secure by His mercy and that is seen in present perseverance. This is the very opposite of saying that you got saved and baptized years ago and yet are unconcerned by sin, unaffected by conviction and not interested in being a part of a church.

Eternal security is so much more than “once saved, always saved.” It should be “once saved, *obviously* saved.” The words at the end of verse 6 are joyful. We are hanging on the confidence and hope: confidence in the power of the cross and hope in grace for tomorrow.

When we think clearly, we live joyfully. We need to think clearly about Jesus. We need to think clearly about ourselves. And we need to think clearly about being a Christian.

(Pastor prays)