

Sermon Study - Let Us Fear - Hebrews 3:7-4:13

Remember to use this study in conjunction with the leaders guide if available.

Intro:

Hebrews 1:1-4- He is the supreme relation of God to Man - literally God with us
Hebrews 2:14-18 - He is the sole mediator between God and Man - literally Man with God
Hebrews 3:1 - consider Jesus apostle and high priest -
Hebrews 2:1-3 -How shall we escape if we neglect such a great savior, such a great salvation?

Problem - Rev. 3:14-22 - we are lukewarm - and we are largely unconcerned about it

Main Idea - There is no such thing as casual Christianity. (There may be moments of carnal Christianity -see Corinthians- but there is definitely no casual Christianity)

Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts

Heb. 3:7 ¶ **Therefore**, as the **Holy Spirit** says (*understood the Divine Authorship of Scripture*),

“Today, if (3rd class) you hear his voice,

Heb. 3:8 **do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion,**

on the day of testing in the wilderness,

Heb. 3:9 where your fathers put me to the test

and saw my works for forty years.

Heb. 3:10 Therefore I was provoked with that generation,

and said, ‘They always go astray in their heart;

they have not known my ways.’

Heb. 3:11 **As I swore in my wrath,**

‘They shall not enter my rest.’”

Psalm 95:1-7 -begins with praise -Hebrews begins with the supreme object of our worship

Psalm 95:8-11 -moves on to a warning

the story - Exodus 16:31-17:7

the punishment - Numbers 14:20-38 (their rebellion was a settled habit of the mind)

all those who had claimed to follow Moses were shown to be fake (implication is why emulate them)

->Here the author of Hebrews begins with reference to the Holy Spirit as the author of Psalm 95 - this links with the way this section ends in 4:12-13, reminding us that this sermon about Psalm 95 is for our benefit. The main idea of the authors sermon is seen in the quote to not harden your hearts if you hear His voice. Psalm 95 parallels the argument seen already in Hebrews. The very idea that we could take our eyes off of Christ would demonstrate they were never really on Him in any real sense. this is a warning to preserve in the faith as evidence of God's preservation.

Take care (that you are not an unbeliever)

Heb. 3:12 ¶ **Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God.**

Heb. 3:13 But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called “today,” that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.

Heb. 3:14 For we have come to share in Christ, **if (3rd) indeed we hold our original confidence firm to the end.**

Heb. 3:15 As it is said,

“Today, if you hear his voice,

do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion.”

Heb. 3:16 ¶ **For who** were those who heard and yet rebelled? Was it not all those who left Egypt led by Moses?

Heb. 3:17 And with whom was he provoked for forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose bodies fell in the wilderness?

Heb. 3:18 And to whom did he swear that they would not enter his rest, but to those who were disobedient?

Heb. 3:19 So we see that **they were unable to enter because of unbelief.**

Sin deceives by exaggerating the benefits of disobedience and hiding consequences - Gen 3:1-7

unbelief is the problem -1 John 2:18-19; 2 Pet 2:17-22

->Again Psalm 95 is quoted to demonstrate that the problem is not one of losing salvation but one of not ever having it. Unbelief is the root problem and reason people fall away. Just like gravity is seen in its impact on objects, real belief and trust is seen in perseverance. How can you begin to tell if you have trusted in Christ - for starters if you are still trusting in Him, if you still remain in repentant faith.

Let us fear (so as not to miss the opportunity right in front of us)

Heb. 4:1 ¶ **Therefore, while the promise of entering his rest still stands, let us fear lest any of you should seem to have failed to reach it.**

Heb. 4:2 For good news came to us just as to them, but the message they heard did not benefit them, because they were not united by faith with those who listened.

Heb. 4:3 For **we who have believed enter that rest**, as he has said,

“As I swore in my wrath,

‘They shall not enter my rest,’”

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¶ although his works were finished from the foundation of the world.

Heb. 4:4 For he has somewhere spoken of the seventh day in this way: "And God rested on the seventh day from all his works."

Heb. 4:5 And again in this passage he said,

"They shall not enter my rest."

Heb. 4:6 ¶ Since therefore it remains for some to enter it, and those who formerly received the good news failed to enter because of disobedience,

Heb. 4:7 again he appoints a certain day, "**Today**," saying through David so long afterward, in the words already quoted,

**"Today, if you hear his voice,
do not harden your hearts."**

Heb. 4:8 ¶ For if Joshua had given them rest, God would not have spoken of another day later on.

Heb. 4:9 So then, **there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God.**

Heb. 4:10 for whoever has entered God's rest has also rested from his works as God did from his.

*(4:3 - who) the whole generation proved faithless except for a paltry few
preservation is proved - John 6:36-40
through perseverance - James 2:14-26*

-> For the third time Psalm 95 is quoted to show us how important this warning is. we must understand that our faith cannot be separated from our faithfulness. The idea of entering God's rest is the idea of entering in His finished work of salvation. This is a total trust in the finished work of Christ, a firm and steady confidence in Him. The issue is to look at our lives for evidence that we are indeed still trusting in Him. The good news is that today is still here and this warning is really good news for there remains an invitation to this rest. Accordingly,

Our eternal destinies are hinted at by the path we are on now- literally, our lives leave trails that indicate which road we are on and there are really only two - the broad road that leads to destruction and the narrow road that leads to life. -Thor

Ramsey

Let us strive (to apply this to ourselves)

Heb. 4:11 ¶ **Let us therefore strive to enter that rest**, so that no one may fall by the same sort of disobedience.

Heb. 4:12 For **the word of God** is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart. (3:7 -H.S.)

Heb. 4:13 And no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account.

strive - Phil 3:7-11; Luke 13:22-24 -

that rest - Matt 11:28-30

Yes that means you - Psalm 95:1-11 (6) -Worship Him (rest) -cannot separate faith from faithfulness

action-; 1 Cor 10:1-14 - flee from idolatry

->Here the author gives us the application of the main idea - strive to enter that rest. Striving has at the very least the connotation of being occupied with Christ. The narrow door (Lk 13:22-24) illustrates not so much how many enter in but that we are to enter in no matter how small and narrow the way seems. The reference to Scripture being living and active is an injunction to apply this to yourself - so we can flee from the idolatry (1 Cor 10:1-14) of worshipping anything other than Him alone (Psalm 95:1-7).

We must flee from the casual Christianity that attempts to define for us what normal Christianity looks like and to instead see that there is only one road and it is not walked by the casual. This road may be difficult and it may lead to wounds, even death but there will be joy because He is there. This road is the abundant life of Christianity (Jn 10:10)-the only one. do you want it?

Discuss the following articles in your discussion on how to apply this sobering message to your lives.

Here is an article discussing the narrow gate:

<http://www.gotquestions.org/narrow-gate.html>

Multiple times i mentioned that our perseverance proves our preservation - here is an article to flesh this out a bit:

<http://www.dundalkfirst.org/perseverance%20preservation.PDF>

here is a great closing article about a radical normal view of ordinary Christians:

<http://www.ligonier.org/learn/articles/radically-ordinary/>