

Hebrews: Faithful to the Faithful Son Part 2

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[0 : 00] Thank you.

Thank you.

Okay. So, pictures of faithfulness. He was talking in chapter 3, verses 1 through 6, about Moses and Jesus.

He talks about the fact that we have a heavenly calling. We have a heavenly calling before God that is a gift to us. We don't often view it that way, but God has given us a gift in calling us to come and be faithful to him.

He's imputed the righteousness of Jesus Christ to us through Jesus' death and resurrection. He has given us a chance, he says there, to consider.

[1 : 40] Consider all that Jesus has done. He's the apostle, he says there. He's the high priest. He's the one we go to to learn about God. He represents God to us. And as a high priest, he represents us to God.

We have a great gift in Jesus Christ. He says, look, Christ was faithful to doing what the Father had called him to do.

Moses was faithful in doing what God had called him to do. In Numbers, we looked at Numbers chapter 12, verses 6 through 8. He talks about, you know, if a prophet's going to understand things, I'm going to give him visions.

I'm going to give him dreams. I'm going to give him things like that. Then he says in verse 7 of Numbers 12, He says, I have talked to Moses face to face.

Moses is giving you exactly what I gave to him. And yet you murmur and you complain about things that he's telling you to do. He says, but Jesus has an even higher status.

[3 : 01] Jesus is the son. Moses was the servant, but Jesus is the son. Remember we talked about that some last week or a couple weeks ago. Moses isn't the greatest example of faithfulness.

He is a great example, but not the greatest. When you come to Jesus, and he did everything that the Father called him to do, including giving his life for us. We read in Peter about what he did and the fact that he suffered for us.

He left us an example that we should follow in his steps. This is in 1 Peter chapter 2. Verse 22 says, Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth. Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again.

When he suffered, he threatened not. But committed himself to him that judgeth righteously. He says, God, in the form of Jesus Christ, gave us everything that we need to understand about faithfulness.

Then he talked about the pattern of unbelief that Israel had. Verses 7 through 11. Israel was always going against what God wanted them to do.

[4 : 09] They refused to trust God. And so when he called them out of Egypt, said he's going to take them to the promised land, they failed to experience the blessing that God had for them because of their unbelief.

Because they would not trust God in what he was doing. In the way he was trying to lead them. In Numbers chapter 14, he talked about the fact that they murmured.

They lifted up their voice and they cried and they wept and they murmured and all the different things. They wanted to return to Egypt. They wanted to elect a captain to help them to return to Egypt.

In Moses and Aaron saying, Numbers 14, 9, Only rebel not ye against the Lord, neither fear ye the people of the land, for they are bred for us. Their defense is departed from them, and the Lord is with us.

Fear them not. When we trust God and follow him, he says, look, I will take care of you. I will meet your needs. He told them, look, I was going to have you enter the promised land.

[5 : 13] I was going to have you go into Canaan. I was going to have you claim that land, but you hardened your hearts. Israel's unbelief did not end with that decision of not going into the promised land.

It continued on for the next 40 years. They did not believe that God would take care of them. God gave them everything. They didn't have to worry about food. They didn't have to worry about water.

They didn't have to. And yet they still did not believe. There was a persistent pattern that they had. Look at verse 10 there in Hebrews 3.

Wherefore, I was grieved with that generation and said, they do always err in their heart, and they have not known my ways.

They hadn't trusted God for what he had for them. They could have had all the blessings of God in their life, but because of unbelief, they didn't.

[6 : 24] How often do we do that? Now look with me today at there could have been a prevention of the failure that they faced. They could have prevented it.

Look in chapter 3, verse 12. It says, this is in Hebrews chapter 3. Take heed, brethren, lest there be any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God.

But exhort one another daily while it is called today, lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. For we are made partakers of Christ if we behold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end.

While it is said today, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, as in the rebellion that took place back there in the wilderness.

See, these Jewish Christians, they were looking at spiritual failure because, just like Israel had in the past, they were looking at going back.

[7 : 34] They were looking at going back to Judaism. They were talking about leaving Christ and going back to their Judaism and worshipping there. They failed and refused to believe God's word.

Not necessarily these people, but Israel in the past. They refused to believe God's word. These people are starting to head the same direction. They're thinking about going back.

He's warning them. He says, be careful. Lest an evil heart of unbelief. Enter into you and cause you to depart from God. We don't think of that, do we?

We sometimes question God. We sometimes have a heart of unbelief. We don't think of it as being evil. But he says that. He says, an evil heart of unbelief.

When we don't trust God, he says, you're treading on thin ice. He warns his readers, be careful. He says, look, they could have stayed with God, believed God, followed God, but they didn't.

[8 : 45] Verse 13 again. But exhort one another daily, while it is called today. Lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. Think about it for a minute.

When have you been encouraged by another Christian to do the right thing? When has another fellow believer come up to you and said, don't give up.

Be faithful. Follow God no matter what. We've all experienced that at one time or another, right? The fact that they encourage you to do the right thing, encourage you to trust God, encourage you to stay.

Are we doing that for others? Are we encouraging them to stay on track, to stay with God, not to go against what God has designed and what God wants? See, he's challenging them to make it a daily habit.

Think about that. A daily habit. While it is called today, he says, are we encouraging people day after day after day to keep on, to keep going?

[9 : 48] You look at our world today and, oh, you're so evil out there. There is so much going on out there. And he says, no, continue to help one another.

To be encouraging to one another. To keep on doing what God has called you to do. You know, it's a really important ministry to encourage one another. I was going to say, you know, in some of the events of the Olympics, the crowd really encourages the people who are in competition.

Yeah. And even the competitors encourage one another. I don't know if you've watched any of the Olympics or not, but there's a swimmer from France. He's won four gold medals. And he has one particular stroke.

I think it's breaststroke. Where you go like this, but your head goes down underwater for like two turns and then comes back up. Every time his head comes up out of the water, they shout.

I don't know what it is they're shouting, but they shout something. And so every time his head comes up, so that he can hear, they're encouraging him. They're, keep on going.

[10 : 56] And like I said, he's won four gold medals, so he's doing very well. How can we encourage one another to be faithful? How can we encourage one another to stay true to what God wants us to do?

Quote scripture to people. Just encourage him. Say, I know times are tough, but keep your eyes on Jesus. I know things are happening, but keep following him no matter what.

There are times in our life where, you know, we have personal things going on. We have things that we're facing. Be ready to encourage people. Be ready. We don't know what all is going on and everything.

Do you have something you want to say? Okay. We don't know everything that's going on in people's lives. You know, every one of us has things that are personal, things that are happening in our lives, things that are taking place.

You don't know how much your encouragement to stay faithful can mean to that person. Not only to be faithful to God, because a lot of times, yeah, I heard that, I heard that.

[12 : 02] But to encourage them not to follow the world, stay true to God. Okay. What were you going to say? Because sometimes you get in those situations where you're trying to encourage that other Christian, but there's just sometimes they don't want to hear it either.

So I mean, obviously, correct me if I'm wrong, but I think at that point, you should just pray for them. Yeah. You should try to just... Yeah. You try to encourage them. If they're not listening, they don't want to hear it, just pray for them.

Yeah. And that's an encouragement. They may not know it, but it is. Yeah. Being present. Just be present. Yeah. That is so encouraging to see one another. And even Job, the most encouragement his friends were, three friends, was when they just sat with him.

Not when they opened their mouths. Not when they just sat with him. When they opened their mouths, it was a problem. But when they just sat with him, it was an encouragement. Fred? How many times have we heard of mothers being persistent after their wayward child in that 20 years she's been preaching at him?

Then he gets the message for some reason. So don't give up. Don't give up. Right. Don't give up. But there are some times when it's just be quiet and pray. And then the next time, be ready to give them some more.

[13 : 23] Yeah. Yeah. When I give up, it's not that I'm giving up, but I'm stopping and praying for them. Because it's like they not only close their minds, but they close their ears and their heart.

And they're just kind of walking away and ignoring it totally. And that's when you have to stop and start praying for them. And pray that mustard seed had fallen on them.

And that they would turn. Yeah. Very good. Yeah. Remember Cain and Abel? God came to Cain. Asked him about Abel.

And what was his response? Am I my brother's keeper? Yeah. Yes, you are. Yes, you are. We're to help look out for one another. We're to help lift one another up.

We have to stand together against a common enemy. Look at verse 14. He says there, Take heed, brethren. That's the... Nope.

[14 : 25] 14. For we are made partakers of Christ. Did you notice that? We are partakers of Christ.

It's a past action that we've done. But it has a present result. Because I asked Jesus Christ to come into my life. Because I am saved. I now have certain guarantees in this life right now.

I have certain promises in this life right now. I have a salvation that is never going to go away. I have a salvation that will last me for all eternity.

I will have that forever. Genuine believers are not going to forsake Christ. They're going to follow Christ day after day. John chapter...

1 John chapter 2 verses 18 and 19. You don't have to turn now. I'll read them for you. It says, Little children, it is the last time. Stop right there. We've talked about this a lot lately.

[15 : 25] It is the last time. This is the end of the age is coming quickly. We can see all kinds of signs of things that tell us Jesus is coming soon.

He says, Little children, it is the last time. And as ye have heard that Antichrist shall come, even now there are many Antichrists whereby we know that it is the last time.

They went out from us, but they were not of us. For if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us. But they went out that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.

People will turn their back. People will not stop their association with other Christians. Be so careful. There in verse 13, he said, We can exhort one another daily what is called today.

Thus any of you should be hardened through deceitfulness of sin. In verse 15, While it is said, Today, if you will hear his voice, harden not your hearts as in the provocation.

[16 : 30] Israel hardened. Israel disobeyed. Israel received consequences because of what they did. We need to make sure we keep our eyes focused on God and doing his will.

Principles of success. How do you know you're successful in being a follower of Jesus Christ? Look at verse 16.

For some, when they had heard, did provoke. How be it not all that came out of Egypt by Moses. But with whom was he grieved forty years?

Was it not with them that had sinned, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness? And to whom swear he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not?

He's saying, who did God go against? Who died in the wilderness? Who did not get in to enter into the rest? Those who had unbelief. There were some who still believed.

[17 : 33] Joshua and Caleb. They're going to go into the promised land because they believed God. They trusted God. These verses talk about the fact that he gives kind of negative terms, but he's giving a positive statement.

Follow God and you will make it to the promised land. Follow God and you will find rest for your soul. These people did not. But he says, those who did.

Those who led the nation of Israel in unbelief. When they had reason to believe God, led people astray.

They were among a multitude of Israelites. They left Egypt under Moses' leadership. They watched as there was a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night.

They watched as the Red Sea separated. They watched as they went over on dry land. They watched as God gave them manna. They watched as God gave them water out of the rock.

[18 : 36] They watched all these different things that God had done for them, and yet they still did not believe that he could take them into the promised land.

And we think, how numb can you be? You've seen God do all of these things, and now...

But don't we do the same thing? We've seen God work in the past. We've seen God answer prayer. And yet there are times we don't go to him in prayer with things going on. We don't trust him to know what he is doing.

We're going to help him. We're going to make sure that he gets it right because, you know, God, he may be God, but he doesn't always get things right. That's not what I really mean.

You know that. Okay? Their problem was their sin and their unbelief. They refused to obey God. Whole generation missed out on going to the promised land because they would not believe.

[19 : 39] And he says God does not give rest to those that rebel. We want to see the promised land. We want to see God's blessing on our life. But if we're not going to believe him and we're not going to trust him, you're not going to see that rest.

You need to have trust in him. He doesn't give rest to rebels. When Israel had made the decision not to go in, and then they saw some things and how things were going, then they made the decision, okay, we will go in.

Okay, we're going to follow God after all. We're going to do what he said. But they were doing it on their own timing and under their own strength. And they tried and failed miserably. God did not bless them.

They didn't do it with God. They tried to do it on their own. So often, we try to do things on our own instead of trusting God and letting him do the work. In those verses again, 16 through 19.

Look at those again with me. And while I'm reading them, here's what I want you to think. Come up with three words to describe the unfaithfulness that they had. For some, when they had heard, did provoke, howbeit not all that came out of Egypt by Moses.

[20 : 59] But with whom was he grieved 40 years? Was it not with them that had sinned, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness?

And to whom swear he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not? How would you describe the Israelites based on those verses?

They provoked. Okay. What? Grieved. What? Selfish.

They wanted to do it their own way. Yeah. All of those different things, the fact that they were disloyal. What? Men-pleasers. Okay. All of those different things.

Now, can we describe this generation the same way? Oh, yeah. Yeah. We can do the same thing.

[22 : 00] You know, their sin had long-lasting consequences. 40 years, wandering around in the desert, 40 years for a whole generation to pass away before they could try to go in again.

What is our unbelief? How does our unbelief affect people today? How does our unfaithfulness, not trusting God, affect those around us?

It had been a different story if Israel had believed. It had been a different story if they had gone in to the promised land. They would have had the rest that they desired.

They would have had the blessings of God that they desired. But unbelief led them to regrets. When you read in verse 14, it struck me that before they go into the history of the Hebrews, unbelief, that he's trying to remind them.

Look at what Jesus had done while we sat here, stood here and watched them. Remember that. Why should we follow anybody else? Right. Yep. And he's showing again, Moses was good, but Jesus is better.

[23 : 14] And, yep, we need to keep our focus on him. If we had just learned to believe and trust God, the blessings that we could have. But so often, God doesn't move in our timetable.

He doesn't do it in our way. He doesn't, and we come up with all these different things. We need to trust God and follow him no matter what.

Okay? Bonnie? Anybody? Okay. So, key to blessing, have a genuine faith in God.

Follow the examples of Christ. Follow the example of Moses. You know, don't follow Israel and what they did. But follow God in everything.

Let's have a word prayer. Father, I pray... I pray today.