

Almost is Not Enough

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Date: 04 October 2026

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[0:00] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. All right, if you've got your Bible, go to Hebrews 3.

Hebrews 3. We are continuing in our series called Jesus is Greater. This fall, we've been studying through the book of Hebrews, looking at the greatness of Jesus, which is what the book of Hebrews is all about.

And my guess is many of you have experienced this before in your life. When you go through some kind of trial or some kind of suffering in life, you tend to focus on the greatness of your situation.

[1:48] Anybody with me? Like your situation feels overwhelming, it feels insurmountable. And the ultimate remedy of that is not lessening your situation, but seeing the greatness of your Savior.

And that's exactly what the book of Hebrews is all about. As it's written, two individuals who are suffering, they're going through the hardships of life, and the author wants to remind them of just how great Jesus is.

And in light of Him, we carry a whole different perspective on life. Amen? So that's what we're looking at, and we're going to pick it up in chapter 3 as we finished chapter 2 last weekend.

We're going to look at all of chapter 3 this evening, but for our Scripture reading, we'll just read the first six verses of Hebrews chapter 3. Please stand if you're able to do so as we honor the reading of God's Word.

Hebrews chapter 3, beginning at verse 1, you notice that it starts with a therefore. Therefore, holy brothers, you who share in a heavenly calling, consider Jesus, the apostle and high priest of our confession, who was faithful to Him who appointed Him, just as Moses also was faithful in all God's house.

[3:01] 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.

For every house is built by someone, but the builder of all things is God. Now, Moses was faithful in all God's house as a servant to testify to the things that were to be spoken later.

But Christ is faithful over God's house as a son, and we are His house. If indeed, we hold fast our confidence and are boasting in our hope.

You see how the theme of greatness, how Jesus is greater, is continuing to be repeated. Let's pray together and ask God's blessing on our time. Father, thanks for this time to be in Your Word.

Come and talk to us tonight. I have no doubt there are people in this room that are struggling, that are facing various trials in life, and part of what Your Word is meant to do is to stir in us encouragement and confidence that we don't have in our own strength.

[4:08] So come and talk to us. Speak to us powerfully through Your Word, we pray. And we pray it in Jesus' name. And God's people said, amen. Amen. You can be seated. In the mid-1800s, there was one thing that was kind of an obsession for a lot of people.

And that obsession was the opportunity to strike gold. One of the men who was obsessed with this was a man by the name of R.U. Darby. He and his uncle lived on the East Coast, and they traveled out West in hopes to be able to strike it rich.

They took their equipment, they settled into Colorado, and they began their dig. And actually, a very short amount of time into their dig, they appeared to have some promising results.

By all appearances, it looked like they had found a very rich vein. But they knew they didn't have the proper equipment to dig deep enough. And so they went back, or Darby's uncle traveled back to Maryland, and began to raise the finances to be able to buy better equipment.

Once he'd secured the financing, he went back to Colorado to join Darby, and they continued their pursuit of gold. But when they returned to digging, they actually couldn't find the vein that they had found before, that they had previously discovered.

[5:38] And no matter how hard they dug, they couldn't find it. In fact, the more they would dig, the more discouraged they would become, until eventually they became so discouraged, they just quit.

They sold the new equipment that they had purchased to a local miner for a few hundred dollars, and returned back to the East Coast. Now, the man that they sold that new equipment to didn't accept the conclusion that they had come to that that mine was worthless.

So he brought in a mining engineer to assess the situation, and they discovered that the Darby's had encountered a fault line, and in fact, there actually was gold in that area.

And so they continued to drill, and sure enough, they struck gold. Three feet from where Darby had stopped digging.

Three feet from where Darby had quit. Had he just kept going, he would have been a millionaire. But instead, he returned home to sell life insurance, living the rest of his life knowing that he had quit just three feet from gold.

[7:10] Fate family, isn't that the story of our life? Anybody with me? Right? Anybody like you feel like that's your life story? But I wonder this evening, has that ever actually happened to you?

I don't mean like were you three feet from striking gold. What I mean is, be honest this evening, have you ever let discouragement or difficulty or hardships or the circumstances of your life keep you from finishing what you started?

Anybody? Anybody experience that? I'm sure you have. Maybe it was a relationship that could have been amazing, but you let discouragements or challenges cause you to walk away.

Maybe it was a business opportunity that really could have taken off and been successful, but you didn't have the emotional energy to see it through. Maybe it was a degree that you were just a few classes away from earning your degree, but life got so busy that you just quit.

Maybe your team made an amazing last minute drive only to come up short. Final play of the game. In regulation.

[8:25] It is caught by Dyson. Can he get in? No, he cannot. Mike Jones made the tackle. How many of you are old enough to still remember that, right?

Sad to say, I actually am old enough to remember watching that. My point is, we can all relate to a situation like this. You know what I'm talking about. It's a situation where you came up short.

You didn't finish the job. You didn't stick it out. You gave up too soon. And if you've experienced that, and I'm assuming that many of you have, you know that it actually taught you a lesson in life about certain things.

And that lesson was this, that almost is not enough. Almost is not enough. You almost had enough money.

You almost scored enough points. You almost made it there in time. But there are some situations, are there not, in life, where you either cross the finish line or you don't.

[9:37] Because almost simply is not, say it, enough. It's not enough. That is exactly the point that the author is making here in Hebrews chapter 3 as it relates to our faith.

That faith family, in the race of faith, and I hope that you are listening. One of the concerns of the author is that his listeners, his readers aren't listening.

And so listen to this. What he's saying is, in the race of faith, you either make it or you don't. In the race of faith, in the Christian life, you either make it to the end or you do not.

There is no halfway. There is no almost. You must make it to the end. Now as many of you know, as I've mentioned many times, I am a firm believer in the doctrine that's known as the security of the believer.

What that doctrine is, what the Bible teaches, is that God preserves those that are His. Are you with me? Say yes. God preserves, God protects His children, those that belong to Him.

[10:52] You could say it this way, that those whom God calls, God also keeps. And if you ask like, well, why do you believe that, Pastor?

Well, my answer would be because the Bible teaches it. Right? Look at John chapter 10. Jesus said, my sheep hear my voice and I know them and they follow me. I give them what kind of life? Eternal life. And they will, talk to me, never perish. And no one will be able to snatch them out of my hand.

My Father who has given them to me is greater than all. And no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand.

That's pretty secure. Amen? Paul says it this way in Romans chapter 8. And those whom He, I knew some of you wouldn't say that word. We believe in predestination because the Bible teaches predestination.

[11:50] Those whom He predestined, He called. Those whom He called, He justified. Those whom He justified, He also glorified. It's an unbroken chain that God will do for His people.

Why Paul says this in Philippians 1.6, And I am sure. Is Paul sure of something? He's very sure of something. I'm sure of this.

Well, then what are you sure of, Paul? That He who began the good work in you, say it, will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.

Does anybody wonder why I believe in the eternal security of the believer? It is one of the most comforting truths in all the Bible. And that was a really good place for an amen.

Right? If you're here this evening and you're a child of God, that should give you great comfort.

Right? That I am predestined and called. That no one can snatch me out of the Father's hand.

[12:54] And the work that God began in me, He will see it to completion. Are you with me? Now, as I have also taught you on many occasions, because the Bible teaches this, is that God's sovereignty does not remove our responsibility.

That is, there's another side to what we would call the doctrine of perseverance, or eternal security. And that is our obedience to the end.

And if you ask me, well, pastor, which is it? Is it God's sovereignty that gets us to the end? Or is it our responsibility and obedience? And you know what my answer would be. Yes!

It's both. And if you think I'm making that up, look at the Apostle Paul. He holds both of these in tension. Therefore, my beloved, as you've always obeyed, so now, not only in my presence, but much more in my absence, talk to me, work out your own salvation.

Now, who's doing the work? You are, right? Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.

But who's ultimately doing that work as you do your work?

[14:04] For it is God who works in you both to will and to work His good pleasure. Does everybody see that? You have a responsibility to believe, to press forward, and to obey.

And those whom God calls, He also keeps. It is the doctrine of perseverance. And I believe it as much as I believe anything the Bible teaches.

And that is what the author is addressing here in Hebrews chapter 3. That other side, so to speak, of the doctrine of perseverance. The human side of obedience and pressing forward in faith.

Look at verse 6. But Christ is faithful over God's house as a son, and we are His house if.

Everybody say if. If indeed we hold our confidence and our boasting in our hope. He mentions this again later on in verse 14.

[15:07] Verse 14 says, For we have come to share in Christ if. Everybody say if. If indeed we hold our original confidence firm to the end.

You notice that conditional statement. That's why I made you say the word if. The writer here is not at odds at all with the verses that we just read a few moments ago with Jesus and Paul.

He's striking that necessary theological balance. That yes, it is God who saves. Yes, it is God who keeps. But we cannot pervert the doctrine of eternal security into really, in many ways, the kind of salvation that I was taught growing up in church, which is, hey, as long as you prayed a prayer at six years old, and even though your life never looked anything like a Christian, you can still rest assured you'll go to heaven.

That is biblical baloney. Right? Write that down in your notes. Biblical baloney. That is not the doctrine of eternal security.

That is not the doctrine of perseverance at all. It is that God keeps His children and His children must persevere to the end.

[16:26] Why? Because in the race of faith, almost is not enough. Almost is not enough. And that means there are going to be times when you're discouraged and you want to quit and you want to sell your equipment and go back home, and what you need is for people to come alongside you, for God's Word to come alongside you, and encourage you to keep digging.

Keep going. Don't stop. Don't go back. It's almost as though the writer of Hebrews is channeling his inner Mr. Miyagi.

No, I'm afraid! I'm afraid of him, alright? I'm afraid of him! No! You stay focused. Then you shall you as kind of be still inside.

Now time let out! That's the end of the rest of the day! Faith family, must stay focused, right? Right? That's what the author's doing, right? Stay focused. Stay focused. Consider Jesus. Look to Christ. Look at verse 1 at what he says.

[17:41] Therefore, holy brothers, you who share in a heavenly calling, consider Jesus. Focus on Jesus, the apostle and the high priest of our confession, who is faithful to him, who appointed him, just as Moses also was faithful in all of God's house.

And so this passage is really about remaining focused. Don't go back because almost is not enough. Now remember, as I've told you every week, and I'll keep reminding you of this, these Christians are considering going back to what?

Judaism. That's exactly right. They're considering to go back to Judaism and everything that would have been associated with Judaism, the law, the sacrifices, the priesthood, the temple, everything that made up Judaism is what they were going back to.

And who did all of those things come through? Moses. Moses. Right? Moses was the main instrument that God used to bring about all those different aspects of Judaism.

And so in that sense, or in a real sense, it's like they're wanting to go back to Moses. Now, for many of us, Moses is very important in the Bible. You hear little stories in Sunday school about him.

[19:00] But I'm telling you, you and I don't have the honor and the respect towards Moses that someone from a Jewish background would have. You certainly don't look to Moses as like your identity or your heritage.

Most of us wouldn't do that. But certainly, that would have been the case for these Hebrew Christians. I mean, Moses was everything to the Jewish people. Think about it. Moses is like the, he is the greatest leader of the greatest act of redemption in the entire Old Testament.

He leads Israel out of Egypt across the sea. He's the one through whom God gave Israel the law, which was like the entire basis of Israel's life.

He spoke to the people on behalf of God. He wrote the first five books of the Old Testament that we know as the Torah. I mean, other than those things, Moses didn't do very much.

Right? I mean, he's a big deal in the Old Testament. Amen? In fact, maybe aside from Abraham, there is no one greater in the Old Testament than Moses.

[20:08] And to reject him, like I'm always trying to find ways to get you to feel emotionally what's happening in the text or what's happening in the context. And maybe this isn't the best way, but one way is how many of you feel when you see someone disrespect the flag.

Right? When you see that or maybe, you know, somebody doesn't salute during the national anthem, there are many of you that that deeply bothers. Why? Because you feel like your heritage is being disrespected.

You feel like your nation is somehow being rejected or questioned or something like that. Well, that's how they would have felt in a similar way.

As Merle Haggard used to sing, I mean, what's a sermon without Merle Haggard? Right? Merle Haggard used to sing, when they're running down our country, man, they're walking on the fighting side of me.

Because it's your heritage. It's in some people's sense, it's your very identity. And so, you don't turn your back on Moses. You do not disrespect Moses.

[21:14] And what the author wants to say here is not in any way to disrespect Moses, but what he's saying is Moses was faithful. Right? Moses was incredible in how God used his life, verse 2, but he doesn't even compare to Jesus.

Right? I mean, look at verse 3. For Jesus has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses. Moses, hey, you know, good guy, like we're thankful for Moses, but he doesn't come close to the glory of Jesus.

As much more glory as the builder of the house has more honor than the house itself. For every house is built by someone, but the builder of all things is God. By the way, there's a good reference to the author calling Jesus God.

Did you see that? Are you awake? All right, all right. Now, Moses was faithful in all God's house as a servant to testify to the things that were to be spoken of later. Christ is faithful over God's house as a son, and we are his house.

We're God's house. We're Christ's house. If we continue to hold to our confidence. So, there are three very quick arguments that the author lays out here to say, like, listen, like, why would you go back to Moses?

[22:31] I understand your draw to that. I understand that your respect for Moses, but man, his glory doesn't come close to Jesus. Here's the first. Moses was a part of the house that is God's family.

Are you with me? Moses was a part of that. In fact, Moses was a very, very, very important part of God's house, but Jesus built the house, right?

I mean, like, who's greater, the builder of the house or the house itself? Here's the second argument. Moses was a servant of God, a great servant of God who did many things for God. Jesus is the Son of God. God. And if you have an ancient Near Eastern mindset, you immediately know that in the status of a family, a son has way more status than a servant.

Amen? A servant is very important, but a servant doesn't have nearly the status as the son has. Here's the third argument. Moses, oh, this is big, this is big.

[23:39] Moses was a testifier, a great testifier, foreshadowed Jesus in many ways, but Jesus is the testimony.

Moses existed to point to someone greater. And that one who is greater is Jesus.

And look at the text that would support this. John chapter 1, verse 45. Philip found Nathanael and said to him, we have found him of whom Moses in the law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus of Nazareth.

John chapter 5, verse 45. Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father. There is one who accuses you, Moses, on whom you've set your hope.

For if you believed Moses, you would believe me. Why? He wrote. He testified. To me.

[24:44] And then Luke chapter 24, in Jesus' own words, verse 44, he said to them, these are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me, that is about Jesus, in the law of Moses.

And the prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled. Does everybody see the argument? Is it even an argument? Right? Like, to miss Jesus, to forsake Jesus, is to miss the whole point of Moses.

So, if you actually want to honor Moses, don't turn away from Jesus. Because the whole house that he was a part of, the whole testimony that he gave, all the service that he did to God, was to point you to someone greater, to point you to Jesus.

So, focus, right? I'm going to keep coming back to that maybe, right? Focus. Listen, almost is not enough. You can't just go halfway, or 90% of the way.

You turn back and go to Judaism, it's all or nothing. You either cross the finish line, or you don't. Now, you may ask, how does this apply to us?

[26:12] I mean, I've been in ministry now for like 30 years. I don't know of anybody that's ever come up to me and said, Pastor, I'm really, really struggling. Could you pray for me? Yeah, I'd be happy to pray for you.

What are you struggling with? I really just want to go back to Moses. You know, I just want to go back to Moses. Like, I got a Moses tattoo right here on my arm, and I got this big poster of the commandments, because I just love Moses so much.

No one's done that. Maybe tonight that'll change, but no one's ever done that. And so, you might be sitting there like, this really doesn't apply to me at all, and yes, absolutely it does.

What's the implication of this? Here's the implication. Is that we settle for a good substitute rather than a great Savior.

We settle for a good substitute rather than a great Savior. Moses is good. What he did was good. All the things that God did through him, they're good, but it's not Jesus.

[27:17] It's lesser than. It's a substitute for. Most people, most people don't say, I'm going to leave Jesus and go to like, crack cocaine.

I mean, maybe they eventually get there, I don't know, but it's usually not their first turn. Usually it's something more like, you know, I'm just going to focus more of my love and affection and time on my family or on my job or being a better person or maybe on the church.

And of course, like, devoting your time and energy to the church is great unless through that you miss Jesus. preach preacher, right?

And the church can actually become a substitute for the very one church is supposed to be about. Are you with me? And what happens when we do that, notice it here, is that good things actually turn into great sins because they have more of your focus, more of your time, more of your energy than Jesus.

Does everybody see that? Because let me ask you, let me ask you the same question the author is asking here and I'll move on. Who is the builder of your house, your life?

[28:44] That life that you have that includes family, that includes important people, that includes money, that includes a job, who built that? Who gave that to you? Who gives you the ability to even have those things?

God, Jesus. So why would you let those things become substitutes for the greater thing, which is Jesus Christ?

This was really kind of fleshed out in screw tape letters by C.S. Lewis, which I highly recommend. This is a very familiar quote, many of you probably heard it, but Lewis writes, remember this is like a senior demon writing to a junior demon on how that junior demon can keep the Christian preoccupied from their faith in God.

And he writes, remember the only thing that matters is the extent to which you separate the man from the enemy, and in this case the enemy is God. It doesn't matter how small the sins provided their accumulative effect as they edge the man away from the light.

Murder is no better than cards or fantasy football. Oh no, he didn't, right? Or making money or fill in the blank.

[30:01] Murder is no better than those things if those things will do the trick because the safest road to hell is the gradual one, the subtle compromise, the good substitute that keeps you from a great savior.

Are you taking this in? Don't dismiss that. Don't be like that's for somebody else. Hear the word of the Lord to you tonight. There are all kinds of Moses like substitutes in our life that we can put our focus on rather than Jesus.

Let's continue the argument in verse 7. Therefore as the Holy Spirit says, today if you hear his voice don't harden your hearts as in the rebellion on the day of testing in the wilderness where your fathers put me to the test and saw my work for forty years.

Therefore I was provoked with that generation and said they always go astray in their heart and they have not known my ways. As I swore in my wrath they shall not enter my rest.

Now what the author does here and you'll notice this in your reference if you're paying attention or you have your Bibles or either way the reference will be to Psalm 95. Psalm 95 is the psalm that the author quotes here in verses 7-11 and this psalm is actually one that no doubt the readers of this original letter would have had memorized.

[31:30] It's a very very famous psalm. They would have known it by heart and if you go back and study Psalm 95 which I would encourage you to do it actually reflects on how Moses and Israel had experienced God's blessing right as they came out of Egypt and they'd experienced this miraculous salvation but what happened in the wilderness is that they became hardened.

Stop me if you've heard this before. Life became hard and they began to focus more on their situation. Well there's giants in the land.

We could never overcome them. Do you realize who just got you out of Egypt? Like do you remember all the Egyptian soldiers drowning in the sea? You don't think God can overcome your enemies?

But what happened was in their suffering and in their hardship their situation became so small or so big God became small and their heart grew hardened towards God and they turned back.

And the author here in what I think you've heard me say this before the biblical authors are absolutely brilliant. And yes they're inspired of God and by the Spirit to write these things but they're also writing what they want to write and it's absolutely brilliant because what the author is essentially saying this is if you've zoned out what do you do?

[32:59] Zone back in. Here's what he's saying. You want to go back to Moses do you? They do. You may not want to but they do. You want to go back to Moses like do you remember what happened to Moses?

Do you remember the story of Moses and Israel in the wilderness? Like how many of you this evening like show of hands like to study history? Anybody history buffs or you even dabble in

history?

Maybe you read history books or you loved studying history at school? Like I don't know that I'm like an expert in all things history but I do love history certainly church history.

What is now there's many benefits to studying history but one of the benefits of studying history like you know the quote you've maybe even said the quote before do you remember this quote?

That those who cannot learn from history are what? Doomed to repeat. You've heard that right?

Right? Those that don't learn from history are doomed to repeat it and so this is the argument.

[34:04] Do you remember what happened? Do you remember from history like your Old Testament history Moses and Israel in the wilderness they failed to cross the finish line?

You know this. You know Psalm 95. You've got that memorized. What happened? God promised them the promised land but Israel got distracted by the hardships the size of their opponents the obstacles in the way and they stopped listening to God and as a result Moses in that first generation fell three feet from gold.

They didn't make it into the promised land. Do you see that argument? And the author is saying you're about to make the same mistake. If you give up if you quit digging now and you go back to Moses and Judaism like I'm telling you almost is not enough and you're going to be just like your forefathers who fell short in the wilderness and never made the promised land.

Why? Because they stopped listening. They stopped listening. Have you ever been in a conversation where you knew somebody wasn't listening? It's why in my sermon I'll say if you've zoned out zone back in because like sometimes you zone out.

I don't understand why. But it happens right? And you need to zone back in. Maybe you've been in a conversation with someone like this. And kills you both.

[35:43] Then do you know what the klutz did? No and I don't care. I'm going to tell you he came home one Have you ever been there right? Like I have no interest whatsoever in what you're saying.

And that's the danger the author has for these readers is that they're not listening that they've become dull of hearing their hearts have become hardened their ears have become dull and he's very concerned that that's happened to them.

And so notice the progression that once you lose focus on Jesus what you do is you turn to like a some kind of a substitute it's subtle it's not from Jesus whatever it's usually Jesus to just my family or my work or money or whatever but if you continue in that for very long you become hardened you become calloused you stop listening and if that continues on it leads to very very serious spiritual consequences verse 12 take care brothers lest there be any of you in any of you an evil unbelieving heart leading you to what fall away from the living God verse 14 we read this earlier for we have come to share in Christ if indeed we hold our original confidence firm to the end you see what the author is doing here in fact it happens throughout the book of

Hebrews he's giving a warning it's meant to be a wake up call hey focus focus focus wake up like realize where you're going you're going the entire wrong direction you're looking at compromising subtly now I'm concerned you've become calloused and your heart has become hard and I'm just telling you if you keep going down that road it's very very very dangerous you may fall away from the living God now this is where some of you are even thinking it right now this is where there will be some people that will try to contradict what I said earlier in this message and they'll take verses like this to argue that a Christian can lose their salvation that by the way too is biblical baloney a Christian cannot lose their salvation for all the reasons that I stated earlier but actually look at again we have come to share in

Christ if indeed we hold our original confidence to the end in other words listen I need you to hear this this is not about losing your salvation at all in other words how do you know you have actually come to share in Christ answer you do hold fast to your confidence see what is proof to genuine salvation is perseverance notice this on the screen faith family this is really important falling away is not a sign of losing salvation falling away is a sign of no salvation and there is all kinds of scripture like please come and debate me on this one theologically there are so many scriptures that talk about this genuine faith is a persevering faith which means faith that doesn't persevere isn't genuine faith

[39:29] Jesus taught on this do you remember the parable of the soils do you remember this means yes there are some of the soils that would they would have the appearance of growth for a while but what eventually would choke it out the cares the trials the sufferings and the hardships of

life the only soil in the parable of the soils that is the good soil is the one that perseveres to the end why temporary faith is no faith at all genuine faith is persevering faith so if you do not persevere what you're demonstrating this is verse 14 is you were not a partaker in the house of God because if you were you would hold fast to your confession to the end it's why in first

John John will say they went out from us proving they were never actually of us you can be a part of the Christian crowd and never be a part of Christ how do you know give it time give it time do they make it to the finish line do they hold their confession to the end and this of course does not mean that there are not ups and downs in the Christian life right just like if you're running a marathon do you do you run the exact same pace all the time I don't know I've never run a marathon right right but there's times when it's like okay you may slow down a little bit to have to catch your breath and then you run more and then maybe you slow down a little bit and you catch your!

eventually get back up and make it to the end because the one that began the work in you will see it to completion amen now yeah four of you that's great thank you that's awesome right what you don't want to do and this is really really really important again I'm like going after a lot of the things that I was taught growing up in church is that if I ask you tonight what gives you confidence that you are Christ you might be tempted to say to me well back in 1978 I was at a conference and felt conviction and I threw my stick in the fire you know whatever like and I had a moment!

and I would say that's! Thank you That's great I don't really know why you threw a stick in the fire but I mean that's like evidently they do that at camps and whatever but like praise God for 1978 but what about 2026 where are you now are you I'm not I'm not asking you are you the strongest you've ever been what I'm asking you is Are you!

Are you still trusting? Even if you're limping are you still moving forward? Even if other people around you dragging you to the finish line are you still moving forward?

[43:16] Are you with me? Don't talk to me about 1978 only tell me about now because faith is not a muscle you only flex once faith is a muscle you flex every single day until the end almost is not enough it's not enough and genuine faith makes it to the finish line so keep digging you talk to me about Moses have you lost your mind you want suffering make you focus on your finances like I'm going to kick you focus on Jesus consider Jesus the apostle and high priest of our confession let me give you as I close four very quick ways to stay focused right to like what my encouragement to do for all of us tonight is what

I think Hebrews 3 is meant to do for these Christians is to tell all of you look at me look at me don't quit don't quit don't stop do not let the sufferings of this life discourage you so much that you pack it up and go home there's too much on the line amen there's too much on the line so listen and practice a few things and here they are number one is remember your calling remember your calling these verses won't be on the screen but if you're taking notes you can jot them down in verse one it says therefore holy brothers you share in a heavenly calling in other words I believe this author is actually very confident that these Christians belong to God but he knows they need a little kick in the pants he knows they need a wake up call and he's warning them based on Israel and Moses in in Psalm 95 remember your calling don't let suffering steal your calling away you realize who's giving you this message right a preacher do you know how many times preachers of the gospel want to quit it is way more than you realize am I being too real it's like the looks I'm getting was like I can't believe it there's been many times I've wanted to do something else and just say is this even worth it you know what keeps me coming back up here knowing that God has put a call on my life knowing that I am called and that by the way I wasn't looking for an applause that's encouraging thank you and of course I'm talking about a vocational calling in this context he's talking about a salvation calling but the same thing applies you're in here tonight and you're like I don't know if this is worth it I'm not sure I can keep doing this you share in a heavenly calling remember that and don't let suffering take that from you secondly is you need to reframe your calendar you need to reframe your calendar you can jot down it's verse 7 and verse 15 that I take this from where the emphasis is on today today if you hear his voice today if you hear his voice in both of those verses you've heard me talk about this before but I think it's always helpful to come back and I gotta be quick and wrap this up you know what we always do when we're suffering when we're going through trials is we start packing on everything that's coming next week and the week after and the next month and if this happens what about six months from now and all that comes crashing in are you with me you start living in the now based on all your future trouble and you remember that

Jesus says this let tomorrow worry about itself today today has enough trouble of its own and God's people said amen Jesus was right about everything and certainly that today has enough trouble of its own and his mercies are new every day aren't they in other words God always gives you the grace you need to get through today's trouble he didn't give you today's grace to cover today and tomorrow when you get to tomorrow guess what you're going to have new mercy to get through tomorrow so don't worry about tomorrow get through today and some of you need to reframe your calendar like you're living in six months of worry when all you need to focus on right now is the faith that God has given you the grace that he has given you to get through today and he'll get you through tomorrow and he'll get you through the next day until what eventually you're going to cross the finish line eventually you're going to get there but reframe your calendar in the meantime number three is this needs a whole sermon and of itself remain in the congregation remain in the congregation verse 13 says 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 again whatever you do now you think this is just a preacher trying to build church attendance

[49:16] I assure you it's not we need one another we need one another it's so easy to be discouraged alone but the you can't do it alone when the runner is tired and wants to just quit and give up there's people there saying you got this we'll get through today we'll figure out tomorrow when tomorrow gets here I'm with you you're not alone keep running very famous story in the life of Charles Spurgeon I'm almost done hang with me Charles Spurgeon was visiting a man who stopped attending the he hadn't been attending and the man said I just don't really think it's all that important in my life what's the significance of being at church and being a part of the family of God gathered in a local assembly and Spurgeon didn't say a word he got up and he walked over to the fire it was a cold winter day and he spread out all the coals and in like a matter of no time the fire did what it went out and he turned to the man and he said this is what happens when you isolate yourself from the congregation together we can keep our fire for

Jesus burning bright I hope I hope that when you come and you hear a sermon it actually encourages you maybe even tonight don't quit don't quit keep keep going we need to stay together engaged in the congregation amen lastly lastly is renew your confidence renew your confidence again verse 14 speaks about holding fast to our confidence listen your circumstances may have changed but God has not God has not one thing the author will say later in this book is that Jesus is the same yesterday today and forever what that means is he has not forsaken you his promises still apply to you you're still his and so I know it's easy to struggle with your confidence but consider him consider his unchanging nature and that he will never forsake you

I was struck by this this week I thought I'd share it as I close 1936 1936 there was a woman by the name of Virginia Hislip she enrolled in Stanford University she was 17 years old full of ambition with desire to pursue a career in education her grandmother had actually been a teacher her aunt had been a school principal and she was one final assignment one final assignment away from receiving her degree in education and then her world changed and not just her world the world changed her boyfriend George would be called to military service because World War II would break out Virginia and George got married they moved to army base in Oklahoma and as far as she was concerned her dreams and desires of ever finishing her degree was over Virginia and George eventually settled in Washington and they raised two children

Virginia had this desire within her that she wanted to finish what she started what she felt like she was never able to complete but 1941 would become 51 would become 71 would become 91 until eventually in 2024 Virginia did something she never thought she would ever do get this this is so awesome maybe I'm the only one that thinks this is awesome at the ripe young age of 105 years old Virginia walked across the stage of Stanford University and received her master's degree in education she finished what she started she knew that almost was not enough and she was going to finish her race as inspiring as that story is and I sense it hit some of you like it like it hit me we actually as Christians know of one even greater than Virginia's amen for it was our Savior who in the face of constant resistance constant rejection from the very ones that he loved the very one who experienced the suffering of a cross and remember the thought of that almost made him want to quit but it is our Savior who finished what he started why?

because when it came to your salvation almost was not enough faith family don't let discouragement cause you to quit digging to keep running the race of faith keep moving forward for as the Apostle Peter says in this you rejoice though now for a little while you have been grieved by

various trials so that the tested genuineness of your faith which is more say it precious than gold let's pray Father thank you for your word to us tonight I hope it is an encouragement to us to keep keep running to keep moving forward whether it's a limp or whether it's a sprint that we just keep our eyes on Jesus that we consider him the Apostle and Priest of our confession that we would not let the suffering and hardships of life discourage us to the point where we quit we pack it up and go home

[55 : 35] Lord I pray that this evening as we look to the cross now as we think about the cross through communion that we would remember that as Jesus asked let this cup pass ultimately not your will but not my will but your will be done and Jesus finished the race that is our salvation so let us look to Christ tonight and consider him who has already won and finished our race for us we pray it in Jesus name Amen may may may