

Title: Will you Hear God's Voice?

Text Hebrews 3:7-8

Take your Bibles and open them to Hebrews chapter 3. The great Koshier book of the N. T.....Hebrews chapter 3 verse 7....

As we come to vs 7 to continue our discussion of this wonderful book on the PERSON AND WORK OF JESUS CHRIST, we enter what is called ^(3c) THE SECOND WARNING PASSAGE. THE SECOND WARNING PASSAGE. The first one was in chapter 2:1-4. The second one will begin with Vs 7 and will continue to the end of chapter 4. ~~Now~~ ^{Now} all of the warning passages in the book are the ones that poeple have problems with. Because, you must remember, again, who Paul is writting to. And that makes a great difference in ~~application~~ ^{interpretation}.

Now, remember that Paul is writing to Jewish believers, who because of persecution that has come upon the christian church, were tempted to return to the safe haven of Judisam. Thereby they would not suffer any of this persecution. So, Paul writes this book to them to ~~clarify~~ ^{clarify} that Judism, its culture, its traditions, its teachings all find their fulfillment in Christ. And so, Paul is warning ~~them~~ ^{them} about just merely professing to be a believer; and their desire to go back to Judism and renounce their faith in Christ only proves that they have never really come to trust him. And Vs 7 begins this second Great Warning passage.....Let's look at it...

(Read Hebrews 3:7-11)

JOIN ME FOR A MOMENT OF PRAYER

Father, we thank you again for your Word. And we pray that in our few moments together in looking at these verses, you will challenge our hearts to greater commitment to Jesus Christ. That Jesus Christ is the way the truth and the life and that no man cometh unto the father but by him. Bless now, we pray, your Word. For we ask it in Jesus name....Amen...

We began chapter 3, if you will recall ~~from last week~~, by looking at the authority of Jesus christ over Moses and the house of Israel. And we began by looking at a tremendous compairson between Jesus and Moses. While there are things ~~that~~ are common, that is they were both faithful in all there house, yet, we learned that Jesus not only built the household of faith, but He is also over ~~the~~ the house, and he is a son in contrast to being a servant like Moses was. Christ was the son to whom all the inheritance belongs. He ~~owns~~ owns the house. The household means believers. And Christ is over ~~all of that~~ ^{The Household} ~~So, he is greater than Moses.~~

(1D) Now, beginning with Vs 7, after just saying that, we find this Caution coming from the Holy Spirit. A great caution, a warning is now given to these believers to whom the book was written.

Notice that Vs 7 begins with the word "Therefore".....On the bases of wht he has just said, that Jesus is greater than Moses and all of his house, and all of the Mosaic law. Christ didn't come to distroy the law. He came to fulfill it. But he is greater than the law in that He did fulfill it.

He fullfilled all the righteous demands of the law. Romans 10:4 says that Christ is the end of the law, Meaning the "completion"; for righteousness to everyone who believes. One does not receive salvation or righteousness from God by trying to keep the law. The law is a school master to bring us to Christ. And by the law comes the knowledge of sin. But where sin ~~abounds~~ ^{abounds} Grace did much more abound. Christ satisfied all the ~~rightous~~ ^{rightous} demands of the law. He fulfilled the law and he is greater than the law.

Recall Now, in light of all of that, "THEREFORE" here is a warning from the Holy Spirit.....A warning primarily to ^{Christians} Jews in reminding them of there History. But a warning, also, to us, whether Jew or Gentile living in this age..... *A Great Warning*

(1E) Now, I would like you to notice that the Caution from the Holy Spirit in Vs 7 and 8, deals, first of all, with responding to God's Voice.

There are three things I would like ~~you to see here.~~ ^{Share with you.}

(1F) First of all, the need..... ^{To Respond} Vs 7 "Therefore, just as the Holy Spirit says, 'Today if you hear His voice' "Today, if you hear his voice.".....

Now, many people are not listening to God. And according to this passage the author of the O. T. account is the Holy Spirit. The true author of the Bible is the Spirit of God. The Bible regards itself as inspired. It gives a strong testimony to that fact. Like 2 Timothy 3:16 ^{which} says that all scripture is inspired by God. Or, is given by inspiration. Literally it says that every writing is God breathed.

The word "breathed" is the same root word "Spirit".. "INSPIRATION" Means "in it" That is, "in the writing is the power of God's Holy Spirit."

I don't make this book powerful by preaching it. And I want you to know that. This book has power in and of itself. Paul said in Romans 1:16 that the gospel that he was preaching, he was not ashamed of it because ^{it} was found the power of God.

Independently of what I say or do, this book remains the POWER OF GOD. And it can change your life, if you will ^{respond to it} believe it.

The point of this warning is that when God said all of that in the O.T. about the History of the Jews, here is a warning. You must hear it today just as surely as they were required to hear it then. It is God's truth. It is the voice of the Holy Spirit.

There isn't a page in this book that isn't God's Word. And the warning here deals with our continual attitude towards the Word in not responding and hearing it. Hearing it in the sense of obedience.

Not simply, "well, I heard it today and that is all you got to do. And you walk out and forget it."....NO....This is God's Word. And God expects by his very authority that we respond and are obedient to it.

One of the most amazing things about the Bible in contrast to other ~~any~~ sacred scripture is that it demands....it requires our obedience in hearing it.

You see, if you are in a rebellious state and you read the Bible, you are tempted to say: "WHAT RIGHT HAS THIS BOOK TO TELL ME THIS".....?

ANSWER:...The ultimate source of all authority which is behind this book is God almighty, himself, who has a right by who he is, and a ^{claim on you} ~~claim~~ because he created you, to say what he wants to.....

THIS IS GOD'S WORD. And the warning is: TODAY, YOU HAD BETTER LISTEN TO HIS VOICE...

And the passage ~~that~~ is quoted comes from Psalms 95:7-11...Paul quotes that passage. And it is about the history of Israel. And it says "Today, we must listen to it."

~~And~~ And even though close to two thousand years have passed since Paul wrote this book, the "today" still applies to us. It is still God's Word. And the need is the same today. Are we hearing his voice? Are we really listening to God? ^{in His Word} And the Holy Spirit is the author....

(2F) Now secondly, there is an important negative, here, to avoid....

Notice vs 8....it says, when you hear the voice of the ^{H.S.} Lord, "Do not harden your hearts".....

The negative to avoid in listening to God's Word is DON'T HARDEN YOUR HEART.....Now, in the O.T. the harden of your heart ~~concept~~ concept is a very hard doctrine. Because you are not sure as you read along in the plagues of Egypt, for example, whether Pharaoh is hardening his heart or the Lord is....Sometimes it says that Pharaoh hardened his heart. Other times it says that the Lord hardened his heart.

The hardening of the heart according to the Bible is not only something God does do, but it is also something we can do. The Bible teaches that an individual can harden his heart. The Bible speaks of someone doing this as being cut off. He will lose effectiveness in his life. There are many different examples, which we haven't got the time to go into. But it is amazing that we can harden our hearts to what we hear... ^{and we do it all the time.}

Now, why do we do that?.....Well, we do that because we are prone to do that. You know, ~~some~~ some of us need to wake up on what the Bible really says about the nature of man.....

Like...We come to church and say: OPEN THE WORD OF GOD. And the thing that we say is common with all of us is: LORD SPEAK.....THY SERVANT HEARETH..

Now, if I didn't know what the Bible says, I could be very misled. I could ~~assume~~ assume that all of you came today saying: "Man, I can hardly wait, today, for God to tell me what to do in my life. And I am going to do it. I have already made that commitment.+.....NONSENCE....

The Bible says that you have come ~~here~~ here with the ability to harden your heart and you lean that way. Now, you will ~~accept~~ ^{accept} everything that is pleasant and comfortable. But, when the Word of God says something to you that is contradictory to your pattern of life or ~~is~~ something you want to do, guess ~~how~~ how you will respond or be prone to respond:...HARDEN YOUR HEART.....

§ You will say something like this: "WELL, THE PASTOR REALLY ~~BLU~~ IT TODAY...Or, THERE MUST BE ANOTHER INTERPRETATION OF THAT PASSAGE....OR,... I ALWAYS SAID THAT WE SHOULD HAVE JUST PREACHING AND NOT BIBLE STUDY IN THE MESSAGE.....You know, you will find something to say, whether consciently or unconsciently, whether in your mind or public, you will find something to say. Now, what are you doing?.....YOU ARE HARDEN YOUR HEART.....

And it is a fact that all of us lean that way. We don't want God telling us what to do. We want to do our own thing. *That is why many churches have done away with the preaching as they have but it was done.*

So, here is a warning to these Jewish believers who want to return to their old life. And they don't want to respond to what they have been taught about Christ....And Paul says, "Listen, do not harden your hearts".....

(3F) Third, let's look at the nature of the temptation in which these people namely Israel had harden their hearts. Vs 8 says: "Do not harden your hearts as when they provoked me." As in the day of trial in the Wilderness."

The word ~~is~~ "Provoke" is the root word "bitterness." And I believe there is a ~~play on words here~~ ^{an important lesson here} ~~play on words here~~.... *children of Israel*

Do you remember when the ~~Jews~~ ^{children of Israel} in the wilderness complained to God about their bitter state? And as they moved into the wilderness one of their first great needs was water.....And the bitterness was there. And they wanted to go back to Egypt. They complained and griped against ~~the~~ ^{Moses}.

Mer'ibah

And do you remember what God called those places? ~~Mara(Ma'ra)~~ and Massah(Mas'a).....Do you remember that story? Any of you?....Shake your head and give me some encouragement....O.K.....good....

Well, that is an amazing ^{STRA} thing because God takes the same thing and remains them of that. And says: "HARDEN NOT YOUR HEARTS AS IN THE BITTERNES

The ^{particular} ~~particular~~ bitterness involved was that they were complaining against God's provisions. They didn't like being out in the desert. They were hot and they were hunger. They were ~~th~~ thirsty.

I would like to remind you that the great leader Moses, himself. as wonderful as he was, he also fell to this temptation the second time around. Because the ^{first} ~~second~~ time he ran into the problem of needing water, and God said to strike the rock and water will come out. He did so and it happened.

You know, hardening is a funny thing. Here is Moses. The great leader. A man who walks with God, faithful in all of his house and the meekest man that has ever lived. Surely he will respond to God and what he says. Surely he will believe what the Holy Spirit says and he will respond..... NO.....God provided water the ~~first~~ first time....Yet, when he needed it again, he doubted....He didn't believe God.....He disobeyed God and tried to Get water by his own power. And because of that disobedience Moses did not go into the promised land.

And Moses, friends, is included in the warning passage of Hebrews 3 and 4. ^{And} ~~As though~~ because of unbelief ^{he} did not enter into the promise land. That includes Moses.....ONE ACT.....Bitterness in his heart.....

The root problem is bitterness.....Hebrews will talk about this in more detail a little later in chapter 12 in the life of Esau. #

Bitterness comes into your life. You don't like what God says. He tells you to love your enemy. And ^{To Forgive} ~~you~~ ^{we} don't like that. And ^{we} ~~you~~ become bitter. And ^{we} ~~you~~ start complaining. WELL, HOW COME GOD WANTS ME TO DO THAT. AND WHY ALL THESE RELES. AND WHY CAN'T WE DO THIS MY WAY....AND ON AND ON IT GOES.....

By the way, if you would like to read that story it is found in Exodus chapter 17 and also Numbers chapter ~~14~~ and chapter 20

I would like you to turn to Numbers chapter 14....If you would please. Numbers chapter 14.....Numbers chapter 14 and looking at Vs 11.....

(Read Vs 11 and 22-24)

Two men really....Joshua and Caleb....These are the only two who responded to God. They had no root of bitterness in their life, inspite of the great testing of being in the wilderness and having to depend upon God and his provisions. These two men believed that God was going to be faithful to them.

Now, all that I am doing is presenting a contrast. A way to look at things. In this congregation this morrowing, I don't know how many are here. Maybe 200 to 250 people. But, there were three million out in the wilderness.....And only two out of 3 million were faithful to God through every test.....

Now, it seems to me without being too naive that what Hebrews chapter 3 verses 7 ~~and 8~~ is warning us would effect the majority of us here today. That very few amongst God's people are the kind of people that say: "NO MATTER WHAT, I AM GOING TO TRUST GOD.....HE SAID IT, I WILL DO IT..."

That somewhere along the line ~~many~~ the basic way that God challenges us and tests us deals with obedience with his word. And when Satan tempts us, it is to keep us from obedience to that word. And when we harden our hearts it is hardening our hearts against obeying what we know God says. The warning is to us....DON'T HARDEN YOUR HEARTS AS THEY DID IN THAT POINT OF BITTERNESS IN THE WILDERNESS. *Do you understand*

~~Many~~ God will test us in every area of his promise. Every single believer who is mentioned in Hebrews 11 in that great story of faith, were all tested in the area of God's promise.

Has God promised something to you?...He is going to test you in that area....Will you harden your heart as the children of Israel did? Who never received the promise....WHY?....Because of one thing....UNBELIEF.....

They failed to believe God when the going got rough. And that happens to a lot of us all the time. When it gets tough, when the pressures come,...

You may say: WHAT DOES HE KNOW ABOUT IT....I have experience it...And I am experiencing it. And so are you. When the going gets rough and God test us, that is when it is difficult ^{But we must say it} to say: NO MATTER WHAT GOD SAYS IN HIS WORD, THAT IS WHAT I AM GOING TO DO.....

God will always test you in the area of his promise.....

~~So, come back to Hebrews again.....~~

So, he said, "Listen, today, whose listening to the voice of the Holy Spirit? Are you going to harden your heart like they did in the O.T.?"

~~Let us Pray~~

what a challenge?

The other side of the coin is that if you do hear the voice of the H.S. and do not harden your heart, there will be some tremendous ~~plus~~ blessings. And we will look at those results tonight -

Let us close in Prayer