

The Epistle to the Jews 4:1-13

Hebrews 4:1-13

6-3-18

Now, before we begin the lesson, my vote for who wrote Hebrews. . . I vote for Apollos. Dr. Luke described the itinerant preacher Apollos as an “eloquent man and mighty in the Scriptures” (Acts 18:24).

Although he did have to be set straight by Aquila and Priscilla, he did go on to become quite the preacher and debater. It is a rare combination to find a preacher who is both eloquent and mighty in the Scriptures.

Usually a preacher is one or the other, or neither!

Several examples of ones who are both are Charles Spurgeon, Charles Stanley and Chuck Swindoll. I guess if your name is Charlie you have a leg up on the competition!

So I guess we have a clue as to what Apollos’ first name was,--Charlie Apollos.

Well, anyway, I vote for Apollos, mainly because I’d like to think that we have something written by this early Christian leader. Martin Luther thought so too! He was more scholarly with his reasons than I am, though. Now, on to the lesson!!

The book of Hebrews was written to -----Jewish Christians.

Nowadays we consider Christianity a different religion from Judaism.

These Jewish Christians most likely, did not consider it a different religion.

Jesus was a Jew, right? He practiced the Jewish religion as set out in the Bible, didn’t He?

And after all, Jesus didn’t ask them to toss out anything from their scriptures.

In fact, at the time of Jesus, that was the only scripture that Jesus had. The only thing that Jesus really changed was the view of Jewish leaders and their form of Judaism.

It was the Jewish leaders, the scribes, Pharisees and the Sadducees who were so offended by Jesus’ presentation of God and His message to the world. (Not to mention, Jesus was offended by their presentation of Judaism.)

So this epistle or letter to the Jews, the Hebrews, was a very eloquent and comprehensive explanation of how Jesus fulfilled and completed the Jewish religion.

The book of Hebrews begins explaining in Chapter 1 how God spoke to the fathers (of the Jews) through the prophets, in many portions and in many ways, But now in these last days, God has chosen to speak to us through His Son, Jesus.

He explains how Jesus is better than the angels, and better than Moses. And since there were penalties for not listening to angels and Moses, then for sure there had to be an even greater penalty for disregarding the words of Jesus!

Last week, Keith taught us in chapter how God admonished His people to not harden their hearts. This warning continues into our chapter 4 this week.

4 Therefore,

(Whenever you see the word, "Therefore" you need to look to see why it's there for, everything he just discussed is the reason for what he's about to say)

let us fear if, while a promise remains of entering His rest, any one of you may seem to have come short of it.

(Indeed, serious, scary, Let us fear! It is a BIG DEAL. The Biggest!)

2 For indeed we have had good news preached to us, just as they also; but the word [a]they heard did not profit them, because [b]it was not united by faith in those who heard. 3 For we who have believed

(Does this bring back memories about the last book we studied, John's gospel? What was the main driving, focal point of John's gospel, Yea, what was John's stated purpose for even writing the book? That we may believe! I guess Apollos, er, I mean the writer of Hebrews, was on the same page as John, and the rest of the Bible)

For, we who have believed enter that rest,

(Yay! Yahoo! Stated as a current state, not only as a future destination)

just as He has said,

"As I swore in My wrath, They shall not enter My rest," although His works were finished from the foundation of the world. 4 For He has said somewhere

(a fun little speech, rhetorical trick, we'll see this in a number of places in Hebrews, probably from his speaking routine, It really implies, "as you remember, the Bible says, so and so." It isn't implying that the writer doesn't know where the quote is found in scripture. Rather, It shows how a typical Hebrew person was so familiar with the scripture, that this little mechanism would work, for the obvious response of the listener to be, "oh, sure, we all know where that passage is!")

concerning the seventh *day*: "And God rested on the seventh day from all His works"; 5 and again in this *passage*, "They shall not enter My rest." 6 Therefore, since it remains for some to enter it, and those who formerly had good news preached to them failed to enter because of disobedience

(why does it say they failed to enter God's rest? Who's fault is it?),

7 He again fixes a certain day, "Today,

(Now! Not tomorrow, don't put it off, Don't assume you will have a tomorrow. It is too important! Don't put it off!)

” saying [c]through David after so long a time just as has been said before,
“**Today** if you hear His voice,
Do not harden your hearts.”



Harden This Not!

“Do or Do Not, there is no try”, As Yoda wrote in his profoundly insightful book, “Jedi Rules of Logic and Common Sense”

(so can we assume that since God warns us to Not harden our hearts, that it is possible for us to harden our hearts, to reject Him, Resist Him? This warning is given repeatedly, in various ways throughout the Bible, So I’m assuming it is possible for us to resist God and reject His offer of salvation)

Most of Hebrews is written to Christian Jews, ***but here we have a warning to Jews who have not actually believed*** in Jesus. They’ve heard the message, but are sitting on the fence. The message to these non-believers is Don’t wait, Today is the day to believe that Jesus is who He says He is and will do what He says He will do. Believe today!

The message to Christians in this passage is to urgently urge non-believers to make the decision to follow Jesus. Don’t put it off, Don’t delay. (John MacArthur)

8 For if [d]Joshua had given them rest, He would not have spoken of another day after that. 9 So there remains a Sabbath rest
(talking about heaven!!!)

for the people of God. 10 For the one who has entered His rest has himself also rested from his works,

(What does it mean to rest from our works? Discuss this)

“Rest” from: Striving
 Legalism
 The torture and oppressiveness of guilt
 Our former taskmaster named “Sin”
 Uncertainty
 Fear

“Rest” in: God’s forgiveness
 God’s grace, unearned gift
 Jesus
 (remember the Amplified Bible explanation of “faith”, as “Trust in, Rely on Adhere to.”
 Leaning on
 In a certain place, location
 God’s Promises- He will do what He says He will do

as God did from His.

Remember this comforting appeal from Jesus.

28 “Come to Me, all [a]who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. **29** Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. Matthew 11:28-29 (NASB)

Back to our Hebrews passage:

11 Therefore let us be diligent to enter that rest, so that no one will fall, through *following* the same example of disobedience. **12** For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

(Guess what guys! God will not be fooled, even if we are, He will be able to judge the thoughts and even the intentions of our heart! Whoa!)

13 And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.

“Him with whom we have to do.” Now, just who do you suppose the writer is speaking of? Jesus said,

"Do not fear those who kill the body but are unable to kill the soul; but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." Matthew 10:28

Questions:

1-Are you the type person who finds it easy to find rest in God and His promises or do you struggle with it?

2- In what areas has God given you rest for your soul?

3- What types of things do you personally still need to find rest from?

4- Have you ever toiled over trying to figure out your true motives, intentions for doing certain things. How can God, through His word, help you walk in more pure motives, with pure intentions?