



An ANCHOR for the soul

STUDIES FROM THE BOOK OF **HEBREWS**

STUDY 4

HEBREWS 3

Aim of Study: Heed the warnings against falling away and encourage each other to persevere to the end.

Main Teaching Point: Jesus' greatness should lead us to keep our focus on him.

INTRODUCTION

The writer of the letter has established the superiority of Jesus over the angels. He has warned his readers to "pay much closer attention" to what they have heard "lest they drive away from it". (Hebrews 2:1) "How shall we escape such a great salvation?", is the warning that follows in 2:3. Chapter 3 opens with the call for us to "consider Jesus the apostle and high priest of our confession", (".....fix your eyes on Jesus.....NIV 2011). Typically the writer shows that it is that it is not enough to simply establish Jesus' greatness. We the readers must act in the light of that reality.

STUDY

A. Read Hebrews 3:1-6

1. Sharing.....

How are christian believers described in 3:1? What does this idea convey? How is this both a challenge and an encouragement for us?

Leaders' Notes

Consider the high status we have when we are tempted to forget this or when we are tempted to feel that we are unworthy. We'll only really know this reality when we fix our eyes in the right place, ie. on Jesus and not on ourselves or on our own performance.

2. Considering.....

Up until this point in the letter the writer argues for the superiority of Jesus based on Jesus' being (who he is) and his relationship with the Father. What change do we see in the the basis for the argument for Jesus' greatness in verse 2? Notice how the whole Old Testament points to Jesus.

3. The house of God

Fill out the blanks in the table

Verse	Individual #1	Individual #2		Same or Different
2	Moses	Christ	Both faithful	Same
3	Moses	Christ	Christ worthy of more glory	Different
4	Someone	God	God built everything	
5-6	Moses	Christ		
5-6	Moses	Christ		

According to verse 6 what are the necessary conditions for us as believers for being God's house? What does it mean for us to hold fast to our confidence and our boasting in our hope? How does this square with considering Jesus in verse 1?

B. Read Hebrews 3:7-19

"Today if you hear his voice do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion."

The background to these verses are Numbers 20:1-13 and Psalm 95. Read through both passages.

4. That generation

In 3:16-18 the writer asks three rhetorical questions about those of the generation under Moses and in each case answers his own question. What do we learn about that generation? How does he summarise their action?

5. Take care.....

In 3:12-14 the writer gives a sober warning. In what sense can we say that every day is "Today"? What does taking care actually look like? How are we to take care that this does not happen? What role does each one of us play in ensuring that we don't become hardened by sin's deceitfulness? What does this tell us about the importance of Christian fellowship?

Notice here that the antidote to overcome sin in our lives is not confession, repentance or individual prayer, even though these actions will certainly be important. It is the collective action of others towards us that are the focus here.

6. Original confidence

What idea do the words "original confidence" convey? What seems to be the risk for the readers here?

Wrap up

There are many challenges in these verses. Read through the passage again and remind yourselves of them before turning them into prayer as a group.

In 1807 John Newton, aged 82 and at the end of his life, whispered to a friend, "My memory is nearly gone. But I remember two things, that I am a great sinner and that Jesus is a great saviour."