



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

Hebrews 3:1-6

“Holy Brethren, Consider Jesus”

TRANSCRIPT

[Prayer] Father, we thank Thee for the word of God and we thank Thee for this portion of it, particularly, because it, as in so many other places, exalts in a marvelous way our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. We thank Thee for the priesthood, which he exercises and is exercising at this very moment. And we rejoice, Lord, in the greatness of our Triune God in heaven and we thank Thee for the second person, who acts as our head and representative and mediator and guarantees the promises that have been made and into which we have entered, and guarantees their ultimate realization in the lives of all of those whom Thou hast, through the Holy Spirit, brought to the knowledge of him. We thank Thee for this evening. We thank Thee for the weather that Thou hast given to us. We thank Thee for our country; we pray Thy blessing upon it. And we ask, especially, that Thou will be with us in this study now. May our own spiritual lives be challenged by the word of God and we pray.

In Jesus' name. Amen.

[Message] Well, the subject for tonight, which is taken from the passage that we are looking at, is “Holy Brethren, Consider Jesus.” Now, what a wonderful pastime it is, really, to consider Jesus. The words suggest more than that luxury. They are the central

thought of this passage and, indeed, in one sense, I guess it could be called the central thought of the whole letter. Consider Jesus. In fact, we know they are the secret of spiritual life; to know him, to trust him, is to enjoy spiritual life.

And so, consequently, the better that we know him, the more significantly we know him, the more significantly we enter into the life that is set forth for us in the word of God, so consider him.

Now, our author has told us that he is superior to the prophets. He's told us that in the first three verses because he has said, “In the last days God has now spoken to us by his Son.” And he's described the Son in such a way that it's evident that he regards him as greater than the prophets. But not only is he greater than the prophets, but he has just finished in the latter part of the 1st chapter and the 2nd chapter, is evidence showing that he is greater than the angels, also.

And now, in the passage that we're going to look at, he's going to attempt and, I think, he will succeed in showing us that the Lord Jesus is greater than Moses. Now, Moses was the mediator of the law, and so, consequently, he was held in the highest regard by the children of Israel. In fact, Moses was even regarded as greater than the angels, himself, so it might not surprise us if we knew that to see he's moved from greater than the prophets to greater than the angels to greater than Moses.

In fact, in the second century there was a Jewish teacher called Rabbi Jos Ben Khalafta, and he was commenting on the very passage which declared that, “Moses was faithful in all His house,” and said, “God calls Moses ‘faithful in all His house,’ and thereby, he ranked him higher than the ministering angels, themselves.” So, I think, we can see from this that the author had pretty good reason for saying he's greater than the angels, and now, he will show, he's greater than Moses.

Now, there is one other thing, I think, we might mention here in connection with it. Moses, as you know, is mentioned in the New Testament many times. As a matter of

fact, Moses is mentioned over seventy times in the New Testament. That will give you some idea of how great this man Moses was in the scriptural record.

What is interesting about it to me is something that I've commented upon before and I know others have besides me, is that at this very point is the place where Israel has made their greatest mistake. They have regarded Moses as the great character of the Bible, outside of course, of God himself. So far as the scriptural record is concerned, Abraham is greater than Moses. And in making Moses as great as they have made him and having linked him so definitely to the Law, they have naturally been led into emphasis upon a salvation by the keeping of the Law; a salvation by the works of the Law.

If they had simply noticed what Paul notices in Galatians that the Law, when the Law came in on Mount Sinai, the promise that God had given to Abraham was not affected thereby. As a matter of fact, the promise is the eternal promise of God. The Law came in for a time from the time of Mount Sinai to Calvary in order to prepare Israel spiritually for the turning to the Lord, for them to realize that one cannot be saved by ones good works. The Law is the means by which we come to the knowledge of our sins, so the apostle says. So it's rather interesting that at the very point where Moses was regarded so highly, it was also the reason, perhaps, why Israel failed.

Now, the aim of all, of course, that the author has written is to persuade the Hebrew Christians to continue in their profession and avoiding the possibility of apostasy. He's most interested in that, and in this chapter, of course, he will again refer to it. He will say in verse 12, “Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God.” In verse 12, he will write, did I say verse 12 there? I should have read 6 first. “But Christ as a Son over His own house, whose house we are if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.” So he's interested in showing how great the Son is in comparison with Moses, but he's

also interested in trying to help the Hebrew professing believers to continue in their profession, avoiding apostasy.

Now, that is a brief introduction. Let me read the six verses that we’re going to look at tonight in our study. The author writes verse 1 of chapter 3.

“Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the apostle and High Priest of our confession, Christ Jesus, who was faithful to Him who appointed Him, as Moses also was faithful in all His house. For this one has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as He who built the house has more honor than the house. For every house is built by someone, but He who built all things is God. And Moses indeed was faithful in all His house as a servant, for a testimony of those things which would be spoken afterward, but Christ as a Son over His own house, whose house we are if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.”

“Therefore,” my text has. If you have the Authorized Version, I believe, it has “Wherefore, holy brethren.” Now, the reason that the author wrote, “Wherefore” or “Therefore,” the reason that he wrote the word that either of those ways is because he’s introducing an inference from the preceding, wherefore’s and therefore’s introduced inferences. And this is the inference that he draws from the preceding.

“Therefore partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession.”

He’s just said in verse 17 of chapter 2, “Therefore, in all things He had to be made like His brethren that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God to make propitiation for the sins of the people; for in that He Himself hath suffered, being tempted, He is able to aid those who are tempted.” “Wherefore,” since He

is a High Priest then you who are brethren, and partakers of the heavenly calling, consider Christ Jesus.

Whenever you, we’ve said this so many times, but I think it needs to be said over and over again so it will just be part of your Bible reading, I assure you it will help you tremendously in your reading of the Bible, if you just simply note these particles, these connecting conjunctions or prepositional phrases, like “on account of this,” that connect sentences with sentences because they let us know the line of thought or argument that the author is seeking to set forth; so “therefore.”

Skylar English, who’s now with the Lord, was a Bible teacher and published a Christian magazine for many years, used to say, “These little signs like therefore or wherefore, are like the signs by the side of the road, or other signs that you may see that read, stop, look, and listen. So when you see one of them, you stop and ask yourself the question, what is the inference that the author is trying to draw and upon what is his argument based?” He’s speaking specifically about verse 17, “That He was made a merciful and faithful High Priest.”

Now, I want to stop and talk about some of these words because they are very remarkable words. This author was a master of the Greek language, and his language is very rich, it’s filled with significant word studies, the diction that he used must have marked him out as a man who was cut far above the cloth of the ordinary man.

“Holy brethren,” isn’t that interesting? “Holy brethren.” What does that mean? Well, they are sanctified brethren, they are set apart brethren. Remember the term “holy” is the same as the term, sanctify, in its root, it means to “set apart for a specific purpose.”

So “holy brethren” are brethren who have been set apart. Now, they are set apart for the worship of God. Holy may not, necessarily, be set apart for something moral. In fact, this root in the Old Testament was used, that is, the parallel root was used of prostitutes. They were called, holy. That is, they were called sanctified, set apart. They were attached to the temples, and the temples were the places where the fertility cults

were observed. And so the prostitutes were there for the people to have intercourse with them because that would be a worshipful experience and remind them if they did things like this, God would bless them in their crops, and they would have very prosperous years. And they were called “saints” or “set apart” people. So the term “holy” does not, of itself, connote moral holiness, unless we think of this as “set apart for the Lord.” Then, of course, it’s altogether different.

We are called saints. Now, we are called saints in the sense that we are set apart for the service and worship of the Lord God. And so our author, when he says, “Holy brethren,” that’s very strongly a moral expression because of the one to whom they are set apart. He calls them “brethren.” Well, he’s already spoken about brethren, as well as being holy, in the preceding context. Notice verse 11, “For both He who sanctifies and those who are being sanctified.” That’s a reference to the saints; that’s why he calls these, “holy brethren.” And then in a moment in verse 13 he says, “And again, I will put my trust in Him.” “And again here am I and the children whom God has given me.” So “holy brethren” is a term that rises out of the preceding context. It means essentially that we are set apart for the worship of God, qualified to worship him. No one can worship him who is not set apart for that worship because, remember, in the Epistle to the Hebrews worship is frequently associated with the kind of worship that would take place in the temple.

Those of you who are reading through the Bible, you have, of course, I know you’re waiting to know where I am in the reading of the Bible, and I introduced that so I can tell you. [Laughter] I’m in Isaiah chapter 46, now. But you read through those earlier chapters and you know, of course, that Israel was very much occupied with the service of the Lord in the tabernacle. And so the saints are those who are qualified to carry on the worship of Israel, in the Old Testament they had to do it through their priests. Israel could bring their offerings to the Lord; others could not unless they had entered into an

experience of becoming Israelites. So holy brethren, qualified to worship God, boldness to enter, since we are holy, we belong to Him.

It's one of the greatest experiences of all is to be able to get down upon your knees and know that when you lift your voice to the Lord God, you are a qualified worshiper of him if you belong to the family of God. If you have had an experience of receiving Christ as your Savior, you belong to that company when you get down upon your knees and you lift your voice to the Lord God you know that you are being heard. Now, I mean being heard in the sense of concern on the part of God. Even those who get down upon their knees, who are not members of the family of God and say something to God whom they may not know at all, they are heard, but they are heard in a different sense from the way the saints are heard when they get down upon their knees and lift their voices to the Lord God. So he is saying, in effect then, these individuals to whom he is writing are qualified to worship the Lord God, and they are qualified to do that with boldness.

Now, secondly, he says with reference to them that they are “partakers of the heavenly calling,” called to share in the heavenly kingdom that is to come. Called to share in the salvation that is available to us, but also called to share in all of the blessings that belong to those who are in the covenantal family; that is, the believing saints of God.

Now, “Holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling,” are you such? Could you say, “I'm one of the holy brethren?” Well, don't stumble over the term holy, it means set apart. Everyone who has believed in Christ has been set apart. You may be called saints. That's the same term. You're looking at Saint Lewis. [Laughter] And, whatever your name is, there's Saint Howard up here and Saint Martha, too. So if you have believed in Christ, you are in the family of God among those who have been made holy, positionally. We're a long ways from being holy in a practical sense, that's why we're studying Scripture and trying to listen to the voice of God. So if you are part of the family of God,

you are “holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling,” and the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews has a word for you, and it is the word, “consider.” “Consider Jesus.”

It’s a very interesting word. It’s built on a word that means to observe the stars, ponder the stars. My thoughts are of an astronomer, who is pondering the stars and spends his life pondering them. We have a lot of that today because it’s so significant for the Space Age, and the interest that we all have in what lies beyond this little world of which we are a part. And this word, “consider” is made up from the Latin term “sidus” which means, a star. In fact, made with the “con” means to “observe the stars,” consider.

Well, there couldn’t be a greater star than our Lord Jesus Christ for us to observe and so here, consider. This is the word that is used back in Luke chapter 12 in verse 24. You probably remember it. But in verse 24, Luke writes giving the words of our Lord to his disciples, “Consider the ravens, for they neither sow nor reap, which have neither storehouse nor barn, and God feeds them. Of how much more value are you than the birds.” How often have you wondered about the crows? How do they get along? How would you like to be a crow? You wouldn’t like it very well. Have you ever thought about how they get along, how they live? What do they eat? Well, they eat almost anything, so I’m told. And so the Lord calls upon them to reflect on how, even the crows, the ravens, are taken care of by God’s care for them. So here, consider, observe carefully. That’s the English word. Now, the Greek word is different. The Greek word is a word that’s made up of the word for “mind” so that to consider in the Greek term that lies under this Latin originating expression in English is the word that means “To fasten the mind down upon,” *katanoeo*, to mind, so to put your mind down upon this fact. It’s kind of like get your books out and study them. “Consider,” fasten your mind down upon the “apostle and High Priest of our confession.”

This is the place that the Lord Jesus holds in our confession of the faith, as greater than Moses, who was an apostle pleading God’s cause with us, greater than Aaron, the priest, with our calls to God, bringing us into His presence; “Apostle,” the message of God

to us, “High Priest,” bringing us before the Lord God and guaranteeing our acceptance. He is the apostle and He is the High Priest of our confession, I think, is a little better here, and his name is Christ Jesus.

Apostle is a very interesting word because it's the word that was often used of an ambassador. There is another word that Paul uses in 2 Corinthians, but this is a word that means “one who is sent,” and so, consequently, someone sent out by a government may be called, also, an apostle. And also an apostle in the sense of an ambassador.

There's an old story of Antiochus Epiphanes, who lived a bit before the time of our Lord, and he was a Roman, in fact, he was a king, really, the king of Syria. He determined at one time that it would be desirable for him to attack Egypt. And so he took his army and he went down to the border of Egypt, and he was met there by a Roman representative of the king, an ambassador of the Roman Emperor, a kind of apostle, and they had a little conversation. And the conversation went something like this, “What are you doing?” And Antiochus responded that he was going to attack Egypt. And Popillius, who was the name of the man, at that point drew a little circle around Antiochus Epiphanes in the ground in the dirt. And he said, “I think you better make a decision before you move out of that circle to go back.” And so he turned around and he went back because all of the authority of the Roman Empire stood behind Popillius. Very much like when Warren Christopher if he goes off to speak to Syria or goes off to speak to Israel or whatever country, there usually lies back of him the authority of the President because he's the personal representative of the President. So the Lord Jesus is the apostle, the sent one. And he also is the High Priest of our confession.

“Who was faithful to Him that appointed Him.” Now, this is very important. I'm going to try to use this in our conclusion, so I'd like for you to notice that what our author is saying about Christ Jesus is that He was faithful to Him who appointed Him. There's no question about it, Moses was a very faithful man. “My servant Moses,” God refers to Moses, as you know, reading the Old Testament. “My servant Moses,” and, in

fact, there lies back of this very place here a passage in Numbers chapter 12, and if you can find Numbers turn back there to chapter 12, and let's just notice a little bit of it because, I think, it will give us a better idea of what we are talking about here. In Numbers chapter 12 in verse 1. That's Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers.

Now, those of you that are reading through the Bible, you know that, of course, but those others of you who are not reading through the Bible, who are underprivileged and handicapped, I'm trying to help you.

Numbers chapter 12, Martha has been kidding me constantly about my braggadocio, and I've been admitting it. And I'm thankful for forgiveness, too. But I'm trying to get you to read in your Bible because I do think that's so important. And, I think, there are a lot of people in our Church who don't read their Bibles much. They maybe come on Sunday and read the passage that we are trying to expound, but as far as reading the Bible and making it part of your daily food, I just get the impression from speaking with us that we have neglected that. I speak of myself too, we have neglected that. I'm forced to look at the Bible a lot, but reading through it and reading some of the places that I've already read through, and I must say to you in embarrassment, there are one or two of those books that I have not looked at in the sense of reading through them for a long, long time. Of course, I've looked at individual texts, here and there, because they may be referred to in other places. But reading through the Bible is so important.

Now, Numbers, chapter 12, we read.

“Then Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses because of the Ethiopian woman whom he had married; for he had married an Ethiopian woman. So they said, ‘Has the Lord indeed spoken only through Moses? Has He not spoken through us also?’ And the Lord heard it. Now the man Moses was very humble, more than all men who were on the face of the earth.”

Isn't that an interesting statement? Here is the man, who is the author of this and he's writing that he was 'very humble,' more than all men on the face of the earth. Did Moses really write this? Could a man say, "I'm the humblest man on the face of the earth" in the will of God? Well, evidently, he could, so far as we know, he wrote it. After all, he was writing truth, wasn't he? And I don't know of anyone else who was more humble than Moses, do you? Now, most of you are not able to answer that because you haven't been reading your Bible. But [laughter] we might even think of some that we'll say, "Well, what about so and so?" "What about such and such?" But the text says that Moses was very humble, more than all men who were on the face of the earth. So we'll let it go at that. He was definitely a humble man. Our Lord Jesus said, "I am meek and lowly," didn't he? The Lord of all the earth, with the spirit of Moses, evidently.

"Suddenly the Lord said to Moses, Aaron, and Miriam, 'Come out, you three, to the tabernacle of meeting. So the three came out then the Lord came down in the pillar of cloud and stood in the door of the tabernacle and called Aaron and Miriam. And they both went forward. Then He said, 'Hear now My words: Is there is a prophet among you, I, the Lord, make Myself known to him in a vision; I speak to him in a dream. Not so with My servant Moses; He is faithful in all My house. I speak with him face to face, even plainly, and not in dark sayings; and he sees the form of the Lord.'"

Some form he saw. Evidently, the pre-incarnate, Lord Jesus Christ, in some form, Moses would see him. Not face to face in the sense of the fullness of the eternal, infinite deity, which he possessed, but in some form. We know, of course, of several instances in the Old Testament. And then, of course, there is the angel of the Lord, the pre-incarnate Lord.

“Even plainly, and not in dark sayings; and he sees the form of the Lord. ‘Why then were you not afraid to speak against My servant Moses?’ So the anger of the Lord was aroused against them, and He departed. And when the cloud departed from above the tabernacle, suddenly Miriam became leprous, as white as snow. Then Aaron turned toward Miriam, and there she was, a leper. So Aaron said to Moses, ‘Oh, my lord! Please do not lay this sin on us, in which we have done foolishly and in which we have sinned. Please do not let her be as one dead, whose flesh is half consumed when he comes out of his mother’s womb!’ So Moses cried out to the Lord saying, ‘Please heal her, O God, I pray!’”

And then, of course, she was, after a week, she was healed. Now, that’s the incident. And so in verse 2 of Hebrews chapter 3, “who was faithful to Him that appointed Him, as Moses was faithful in all His house.” So our Lord does not come behind Moses. “As Moses also was faithful in all His house.” Moses the great man, Moses the type of our Lord but a type also of him in his faithfulness.

Now, in verse 3, “For” this, of course, is why we ought to consider the apostle and High Priest of our confession, “For this One has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as He who built the house has more honor than the house.” Now, maybe I better read another verse, too. “For every house is built by someone, but He who built all things is God. And Moses indeed was faithful in all His house as a servant, for a testimony of those things which would be spoken afterward.”

Now, what is the house? He talks about the house. “He was faithful to Him who appointed Him, as Moses was faithful in all His house.” What is the house in which Moses was faithful? Well, the house was the company of the redeemed of the Old and New Covenants or is that in historical progression. In fact, in this very book, Hebrews chapter 10 in verse 21, we read this, “That we have a High Priest over the House of God.”

So the house of God is the redeemed people; the redeemed of the Old Testament, the redeemed also of the New Testament, they form God's house. Those who live in that house are the saints of God. So the company of the redeemed of the Old and New Testaments and, of course, in the historical progression, Israel, in the Old Testament, to whom were added Gentiles from time to time, who also believed, and then in the New Testament, when the nation Israel largely departed from the Lord though there was a remnant, of course, who always held to the faith added to by vast millions, when the Gentiles began to be grafted into that olive tree. The house then is the company of the redeemed of the Old and New Covenants in the historical progression of them.

In 1 Timothy chapter 3 in verse 15, we read these words written by the Apostle Paul. “But if I am delayed, I write so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.” So Israel and the company of the redeemed that belong to that body and the church of Jesus Christ, the redeemed that belong to that body they are the House of God, the people who belong to Him.

Now, the question after having solved that question to my satisfaction, the question now is how is Christ superior? We read He was faithful as Moses was faithful, “For this One has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as He who built the house has more honor than the house.” “Moses indeed was faithful,” in verse 5 we read, “in all His house as a servant, for a testimony of those things which would be spoken afterward, but Christ as a Son over His own house, whose house we are if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.”

How is Christ superior? Well, God is the honor and architect, isn't he? Of the house? The Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ, is the builder. Moses is a servant. In fact, he says in verse 5, “Moses indeed was faithful in all His house.” Moses belongs in the House, doesn't he? He was faithful in all His house, as a servant.

So we look upon the Old Testament company of the redeemed thinking of the nation Israel as having been brought into being by the Lord God. Moses, faithful in serving the Lord, “My servant Moses.” But he is in the house and there in the house for a testimony of the things “which would be spoken afterward.” That is, Moses was in the house and the things that he talked about were things that would ultimately be fulfilled later on. In other words, Moses was a typical figure. And he talked about things that would take place in the future. As a matter of fact, what he did was largely typical. The Old Testament dispensation was largely typical. The sacrifices, the sacrificial system, the priesthood, all of those things, and then Israel’s experiences in the Exodus, all of those things pointed forward to the things that would be spoken about afterwards. So Moses is in the house as a servant but in Christ’s case verse 6 says, “He as a Son over His own house.” In other words, the house belongs to him. That in itself tells us the high view of our Lord that this author has. The house belongs to Him. If we think of a Trinitarian God, and we think of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, the house belongs to God, but our God is a Trinitarian God, a God, one God of three persons. So our Lord is over the House, not in the House, and he’s not a servant like Moses. What is he? Speak up? What is he? What does it say? Son! Son! Divine Son. All the difference in the world from being in a house, as a servant, over the house as a son of the one who is responsible for it all; thus, our Lord. So God, like the owner and the architect; Christ the Son, the builder; Moses the servant and an inhabitant of the house. Christ is the Son, Moses the servant. Christ over the house, Moses in the house. Christ the image of the invisible God and Moses a shadow, a typical figure and a typical figure of the things that “would be spoken afterwards.”

We don’t deny the glory of Moses, the servant of the Lord God. He was a great man, but he was not to be compared with our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Now, having said that, we need to come to the comforting conclusion and the challenge in verse 6b. “But Christ as a Son over His own house, whose house we are if we hold fast the

confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.” What does the author mean when he says something like this? “Whose house we are?” Well, let’s stop at that. “Whose house we are,” now, notice he does not say, “whose house we become if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.” It’s “whose house we are if we hold fast.” If he were to say, “Whose house we become if we hold fast,” then we would have the same kind of doctrine that Israel, that is unbelieving Israel in the Old Testament and unbelievers today have that we are saved by what we do. And in this case, it would be our responsibility is “to hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end,” and we would “become” members of the house if we did that. So we’d fall back into a salvation by what we do. The Bible speaks from beginning to end contrary to that.

In Genesis chapter 3, after the fall of man and God slays the animals and clothes Adam and Eve, we are taught right at the beginning that there is no covering from the judgment of God except by the sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ, in figure, in type. So it’s not whose house we become, but he does say whose house we are “if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.”

I suggest to you that this is what he is saying. He is saying that continuance in the faith is the proof of reality of our faith. Whose house we are and we can pick out those whose house, who belong to that house, if they continue in the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.”

Now, let me say, right at the beginning that anyone who understands the grace of God will know that one cannot of himself continue. Well, then, how can we do this? We, of course, do it by God’s wonderful, marvelous, sovereign grace for saints. Because that’s what he says that he will do. The Bible is full of that. What he will do for us! He keeps the saints. He sets the saints apart. Those who have come to him are kept by him. “I give unto them eternal life and they shall never perish.” Why? Because he keeps them. If it depended upon us, one iota, we would lose our salvation. But praise the Lord God,

hallelujah, it does not ultimately depend upon us, “Whose house we are if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.” Now, it doesn’t say whose house we are if we are emotionally touched by all of this or if we are baptized in water or if we’re united with the church, terms that the church likes to use. No, he’s talking about continuance in the faith.

Jonathan Edwards said once, “The sure proof of election is that one perseveres to the end.” I think that’s true. I think, in the final analysis, that’s the sure proof of divine election, the individual who continues. And he continues, not because of his own strength, he continues because God has determined that he should continue. I don’t know whether I can find this or not, but I was reading this afternoon in Isaiah in some of the chapters just previous to this, and I was thinking about the things that, naturally, the things that I’d be saying to you tonight. And I noticed a number of texts that it seemed to me bore very much on just what I’m talking about. One that I underlined was one that you’re familiar with. “Those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength. They shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary. They shall walk and not faint.” “Those who wait on the Lord.” What does that mean? It means simply to have confidence in him. That’s all. Confidence in him. The things that he says that he will do for the saints.

I was greatly impressed when I was reading through the psalms, this time, how many times the Lord speaks in figure in order to give us encouragement. Listen to Psalm 18. I was impressed by this because, the reason I was impressed by it, I was underlining these things and I found myself underlining phrase after phrase after phrase, marking up my Bible. And I was wondering, even when I was marking it up, now, when you read it the second time, you won’t have any place to make any marks. [Laughter] And I like this Bible. I’m going to have it bound afterwards because it’s beginning to fall apart.

But listen to Psalm 18, verse 1, “I will love You, O Lord, my strength.” My strength. “The Lord is my rock, my fortress, my deliverer; my God, my strength,” he likes

that, twice, my strength. “In whom I trust; my shield, my horn of salvation, my stronghold.” All these things just in two verses.

Now, notice, over and over, the psalmists use those figures. What are they saying? They are saying the things, these are the things that the Lord God is for us, what he does for us. So in the experiences of life when we need a fortress to whom do we go? We go to the Lord God. When we need strength, to whom do we go? We go to the Lord God. When we need a shield, when we need certain facets about the salvation that is ours? We go to Him. When we are in distress, what do we do? The psalmist says, “I called on the Lord. I cried out to my God. He heard my voice from His temple. My cry came before Him, even to His ears.” So “whose house we are if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.” These are the evidences that we belong to him.

Let me close with these words. First, to belong to God’s house is to be the habitation of God in the spirit; our heart, God’s dwelling; God’s heart, our dwelling.

As our Lord makes the point in John chapter 14 in verse 20, “We are in Him, He is in us, and we are both in the Father.” This house of which we are part has over it God’s Son as master, and what he wants us to do is to give him the keys to the room of our lives so that we belong to the house, in the sense, that he dwells there and we are open to him.

Second, remember, that to know Jesus Christ and to trust Jesus Christ is the secret of life. Consider him. The problem with me and the problem, I believe, with some of you is, how does Mr. Clinton put it to make emphasis, does that destroy the effect with some of you? I can see it does. [Laughter] To know that the Lord Jesus is the secret of life and to trust him, to consider him, is marvelous because the problem with so many of us is that we have considered ourselves entirely too much. When we think of spiritual things, we think of ourselves, our author warns us that for true happiness is to consider him. Our weakness is when we look at ourselves because we know we are weak. But our Lord is strong. He’s my strength, he’s my fortress, he’s my shield. All of these other

things are what he is. And so consider Him. That’s my strength. That’s my cure. That’s my solution. Those are the things that give me deliverance to look to Him.

And then consider him in a special way, consider him as faithful. This is precisely where we so often fail. We consider him, we reflect upon him, we even read the Bible. But, I think, often, we fail to consider him in the sense in which he is said here, or set forth here, is to consider him as faithful. Faithful! That is, keeping his word, fulfilling the promises. They will be fulfilled. Consider him as faithful.

Most of you in this audience, I feel I know you well enough to know that you have understood that pardon and acceptance comes by faith alone, you’ve looked off to the cross. You’ve seen that the Lord Jesus Christ has died for sinners. And there was that special time in your life, if it was not when you were a child, it’s been so long ago, that you don’t remember it. But you know it was true, when you did turn from yourself and trust in your works, whatever it specifically was at the time, whether in your church or your good works or your baptism but you turned away from it. You saw Christ as the Savior for sinners and at that very special, I call it, really, a holy moment, because that’s what it is, you came to Christ. By his grace, you know now. You came by his grace. You thought at one time, perhaps, you came. Well, you did come, but you came because he brought you. You know now. But, I think, that many of us have failed to understand that we do stand, we walk, we live, by trust, every minute, every hour of the day. That’s the beginning of our confidence that he’s talking about.

“Whose house we are if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of our hope, firm to the end.” Hold it with confidence. Hold it with rejoicing. And in the experiences of life, remember, that the Lord Jesus Christ will guard the house, he’ll keep you within the house, he will be faithful to all the inhabitants in the house, and no matter what experience you may have as a Christian, you can turn off to him and know, as you give yourself into his hands, in the experiences in which you find yourself, he’s faithful, faithful

because he's over the house. Not a servant in the house, over the house; the sovereign second person of the divine Trinity.

In case you want a text, if you wanted to know how this author felt about it, I think, one of the last things he writes in chapter 13, will tell you what he means by that.

Verse 20 of chapter 13 and 21.

“Now may the God of peace who brought up our Lord Jesus from the dead, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you complete in every good work to do His will, working in you [Notice, “Working in you” it's not “I” who do the work. It's He who does the work in me.] working in you what is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever.”

May God help us as we think about the spiritual life that God has brought us in to experience. May we remember that from beginning to end, what God has done, he has done out of his sovereign, eternal intent, to bring us to himself.

What a magnificent hope we have in Christ. And may God give us the motivation to realize that we're part of the house, we're part of this union that exists between the Father and the Son and the saints. We're all bound up together with him. He's our great High Priest. He's our apostle. But we're in the house of God, and he's over it.

May God really enable us, as we study this epistle together, to come to understand more fully and more thoroughly what it is to live a Christian life.

Let's bow together in a word of prayer.

[Prayer] Father, we are so thankful that we have a great High Priest that we are part of the House of God over which our Lord is; is something Lord that we wish to understand and appreciate and experience more and more, as the days go by. And, Lord, if there should be someone here who does not understand yet that the entrance into the

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comes through the saving death on Calvary’s cross, and the ministry of the Spirit, to bring
us to trust in Him [End of Tape]