



Believe . . . Unto the End

Hebrews 3

God spoke to the Israelites in the wilderness. He spoke through Moses, in the Law, and by forty years of kind and provident care. (verse 9) But when they heard, they tempted God (V.9); they erred (v.10) not in deed only, but, more blameably, in heart (v. 10). "They have not known My ways." The suggestion is that they would not know God's ways.

Hearing involves response. The day came, when through continued refusal to respond to God's will, the Israelites no longer heard His voice, The exhortation comes to us: "If ye will hear (or wish to hear) His voice, harden not your hearts." The heart is the ear of the soul. Guard it. Keep it sensitive to God's voice through ready response to His every word, lest it become hard or dull or insensitive.

God speaks to us. We are "partakers of the heavenly calling (v.1)" "partakers of Christ, whose house we are (v. 6)." How may we insure continued communion with God?

By exhorting one another lest sin overtake us through deceit, through appearing to be alright" (v. 13); by taking heed lest we entertain (make to feel at home) unbelief (v. 12) The exhortation is repeated: If you want to continue to hear God's voice, harden not your hearts. Respond to all the words of God.

The Israelites believed enough to start. They obeyed God's directions and left Egypt, but they did not hold stedfast unto the end. Their beginning belief did not suffice for the entire journey. It was necessary that they daily hear and believe. Consider Christ (v.1). He was faithful (v. 2) — to the end. What if He had failed — in the end! The Israelites failed to enter into their "rest" because they failed — in the end.

Listen to God. Respond to His voice. Harden not your heart through unbelief. "But Christ (was faithful); whose house are we, if we hold fast . . . unto the end (v. 6) "For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold . . . stedfast unto the end (v. 14)

WHAT GOD WANTS TO DO FOR US

by

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In these days when there is an increase of iniquity on every hand, and a decline in spirituality, God is waiting to be gracious to His people.

Many are expressing their need of a personal revival, while churches everywhere confess their need of a spiritual awakening. There are those who recognize the need. Others are, either blind to such a condition or reluctant

to confess it. Still others fear what a spiritual awakening might mean.

II Chron. 7:14 has challenged the faith of many a pastor and layman. "If my people, which are called by My Name, shall humble themselves and pray and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land."

If all professing Christians would meet the conditions given with this promise, revival would be on the way.

God Wants To Awaken Us. Many have lapsed into deep sleep until they are self-satisfied and indifferent to the spiritual needs of others. Paul said, "It is high time to awake out of sleep: The night is far spent."

While the hosts of Hell take no time to rest from their duties, many Christians neglect prayer, Bible study, witnessing, attendance at the prayer meeting and Sunday evening services.

There is a danger of losing our first love for God and our fellowman, of being lukewarm in our devotions toward God, of losing our passion for souls.

People are only concerned about their spiritual condition as we are concerned for them. How much conviction is on the individual is usually determined by how great a burden someone has for him. Thus if we are indifferent about the lost we cannot expect them to be stirred in their hearts. We need more of the compassion of Christ, who was moved with compassion when looking at the multitude, for they were as sheep having no shepherd.

The tragedy is that so many seem to be self satisfied. Like the Laodiceans, they say they have need of nothing. They are rich and increased with goods, yet fail to see that spiritually they are wretched, miserable, blind and naked. It is not enough for a church to be beautiful in structure, large in its attendance or membership, or rich financially. There must be within the people a deep, supreme love for God, a warm heart and a spirit of great concern for the souls of men. Showing friendliness and kindness with concern shows the individual that this Church loves and cares. It is not enough for the pastor to show an interest. His people must also manifest the same spirit of concern.

There is also the danger of a small church being too satisfied with the faithful few. It should recognize the great task God has for it to do. Small though it may be, it is a majority if God is in it.

God wants to keep us out of our halls of doubt and our valleys of discouragement. Is the age of revival past? No! Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever. His promises are the same as when first given. We may rejoice over past revivals, or ones in more recent years, but God is still able to do above all we can ask or think. The enemy would focus our eyes on the hindrances and obstacles to revival, until we become so discouraged we doubt it can even take place. God wants to open our eyes that we, like Elisha's servant, might see the mountains filled with Heaven's allied armies. Some churches no longer have revival campaigns or even give altar appeals, simply because they feel the efforts are useless. God desires to lift us up to plains of concern, faith and courage. Let us confess our lack of burden, our tendency to doubt and our low level of courage. This will demand humility on our part but the humbling of ourselves is the first step toward revival.

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God's gracious desire is to bless us; our gravest calamity is to compel God to leave us alone.

—E. F. Wilde