

HEBREWS 3

Alright . . . Hebrews Chapter 3:1-6.

“Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider Jesus, the Apostle and High Priest of our confession. He was faithful to him who appointed Him, as Moses was also in all of His house. For He has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses, by just so much as the builder of the house has more honor than the house. For every house is built by someone, but the builder of all things is God. Now Moses was faithful in all his house as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken later; but Christ was faithful as a Son over His house whose house we are, if we hold fast our confidence and the boast of our hope firm unto the end.”

Christ was faithful as a Son over His house (that is over the house of God). And then the Hebrew writer identifies the house of God . . . he says “whose house we.”

We say sometimes . . . it's good to be in God's house--it's good to be in church together . . . **but, it's better to be God's house.** We are God's House! Hebrews, Chapter 10, in verse 21, he says “we have a great high priest over the house of God.” Jesus is the great high priest over the house of God.

Now, I think this is an important subject. You may accuse me to going to seed on this before we are done. But . . . let's see if we can't let the seed grow.

We are the Father's house. Jesus talks about the Father's house in John, Chapter 14. So, let's turn to that because I think this is an important passage. This is a great funeral text . . . we hear it read at just about every funeral . . . and it has given great comfort to the hearts of a lot of people who lost loved ones, and we don't want to take away from that. But, we don't want to misinterpret Scripture at the expense of feeling good about our loved ones who have died.

Jesus is giving this passage in the context of His going away . . . and He wants to comfort, as well as enlighten, these that He is leaving behind. And so He says to them, in vs. 1, “Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God believe also in Me. In my Father's house are many dwelling places (I think that's a better translation than “mansions,” I think the King James version did a great disservice translating that as “mansions” and I'll show you why in a little bit).

Jesus said, “In my Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself, that where I am, there you may be also.”

Now, the Father's house, as we said, according to Hebrews 3:6 and Hebrews 10:21, is the Church—it's the people of God—“whose house we are.”

Now, as a general rule, every commentary I have ever read on John 14 says the Father's house is heaven . . . And there is not one passage of scripture that I have been able to find that says the Father's house is heaven. It's based on heaven as being God's dwelling place, but never does it

say that heaven is God's house. And regardless of all of the songs that we have sung about a home on high and a home in heaven, there is not one passage of scripture that says we have a home in heaven, as people perceive it.

This passage says, "In my Father's house are many dwelling places." So the question is, if the Church, the people of God are the Father's house, then what all the dwelling places?

As I said, John 14 has been mistranslated "mansions." It is "dwelling places," and if we read the entire whole chapter instead of the first three or four verses, we'll find out what the dwelling places are. John 14:23 says, "Jesus answered and said to him, if anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him, and make Our abode in him (that is the word 'dwelling places')." "We will make our dwelling place in him."

If the King James version had been consistent in their translation, which they are not very consistent with anything that they translated . . . if they had been consistent, they would have said, "We will come and we will make our 'mansions' in him" because it's the same word. It is the word "dwelling places." "In my father's house there are many dwelling places." The Father dwelt in Jesus Christ . . . He had one dwelling place during the 33 years that Jesus was upon the earth. But now that He has brought many sons into glory, and has built His church, He has many dwelling places . . . there are many rooms.

Back in the early part of a preacher's ministry, he flew from North Carolina to the Fort Wayne, Indiana to a revival meeting and as his friend was driving the preacher from the airport to his home, they passed a very unusual building sitting by itself in a field. It looked like someone had started to build a house, but they had built only one room. There it was . . . a house with one room and it looked like it was waiting for someone to come and to build onto it. The friend told the preacher the story on that. The friend said the father of this young man promised his young son that when he got married if he would work for him on the farm, then for each year he worked for his father on the farm, the father would build him one room for his house. If the son worked five years, the father would build him a 5-room house. If he worked for 10 years before he got married, the father would build him a 10-room house. The son only worked one year and there it was, only one room standing out there.

Now, that is not the way it is in the Father's house as Jesus describes it in John 14 . . . Jesus said there are many rooms . . . there are many dwelling places. We make up the body of Christ--so in my Father's house (which is the church, the people of God) God has many places to dwell.

Now Jesus said, "I'm going to prepare a place for you." And so, we know that Jesus left (He ascended), and our teaching has taught us to say that He has gone to prepare a place for us and that He has been up there building us this mansion for 2000 years. He created the heavens and

the earth in seven days (however long that was), and it takes Him 2,000–3,000 years to build a mansion . . . that doesn't make sense does it? He said, "I go to prepare a place for you." So the first thing we want to look at is He prepared that place . . . to find the answer to that, we have to go to the Ninth Chapter of Hebrews.

In the Ninth Chapter of Hebrews . . . as long as they offered the blood of goats and bulls, a place could never be prepared for us, but in Hebrews 9, beginning in verse 11, "When Christ appeared as a High Priest of good things to come, He entered through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this creation; and not through the blood of goats and calves, but through His own blood, He entered the holy place once and for all, having obtained eternal redemption. For if the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling those who have been defiled, sanctifies the cleansing of flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" That's the place He prepared . . . He took his own blood and **He prepared the way whereby we could come into the very presence of God.**

Paul declared in Ephesians, when He ascended, we ascended with Him, and we sit with Christ in heavenly places . . . that's the place He prepared for us. Then, in John 14:3, Jesus said, "if I prepare that place, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself, and where I am, there you may be also." If Jesus meant for that to take place 2,000 to 3,000 to 4,000 years from that time, that would not be much comfort to these Apostles.

Ok . . . Jesus said, "I will come again" . . . now go down to verse 18 of John 14, Jesus is still talking in the context of His going away and He said "I will not leave you as orphans; **I will come to you.**" If we want to understand what He means in the first three verses when He says, "I will come again," we have to go down to verse 27 of this same chapter . . . you know, never read 3 verses and stop and start speculating . . . read-on, John 14:27, "Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives, do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful." He said the same thing here as He did in the beginning.

Now, vs. 28, "You heard that I said to you" (now get this) "You heard that I said to you, 'I go away, and I will come to you'" -- He said that in the third verse, "I go away and I will come to you" -- you heard Me say that. Read on in vs. 28-29, "If you loved Me, you would have rejoiced because I go to my Father; for the Father is greater than I. And now I have told you before it comes to pass (What did He tell them before it comes to pass? . . . "I told that I go away and I will come again and receive you unto Myself – Notice, He didn't say I am going to come to take you home, He didn't say I am going to come and take you to heaven – He said" I am going to come again and receive you unto Myself" . . . He said, "I told you that before it comes to pass, so that when it comes to pass, you may believe." – "when it comes to pass" (when what comes to

pass?—When what I told you comes to pass . . . what did I tell you? I told you I was going to come again and receive you unto Myself. I told you that so that when it comes to pass, you could believe).

Were they going to have to wait until He comes back to believe? No . . . in the Second Chapter of Acts He came back in the form of the Spirit on the Day of Pentecost . . . and He took them unto Himself and He has been with them and He has been with us ever since. Now that is not we call “The Second Coming” that was not His “Second Appearing,” that is going to happen in the future sometime. He is going to appear in Glory . . . He is going to come back in that same body that He went away in. And He is going to catch us up and we are going to be with Him forever . . . but He is not talking about that here. He is talking about Him coming back in the Spirit to receive them unto Himself because He has said in the 12th Chapter and verse 26, “If anyone serves Me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall My servant also be; if anyone serves Me, the Father will honor him.” He is not talking about being with us later on, He is talking about being with us while we are **serving Him**.

Well that's the Father's house. A house is a dwelling place. That is a place to live. Let's go back to Exodus 25:8. When they are constructing the sanctuary in the Old Testament, the tabernacle, God told Moses exactly how to build it and He said in verse 8, “And let them construct a sanctuary for Me, that I might dwell among them.” The reason God wanted Israel to build this tabernacle was that I might dwell among them. Now turnover to Exodus 29, verses 45 and 46 (the last verses in that Chapter) . . . after He has given them instruction about the tabernacle and consecrating the priesthood, He said in verse 45, “And I will dwell among the sons of Israel and will be their God. And they shall know that I am the Lord their God who brought them out of the land of Egypt, that I might dwell among them; I am the Lord their God.”

God's purpose from the very beginning in calling Israel and making them a nation was that He might dwell among them. God has always wanted to dwell among His people. Now, let's look at some New Testament passages that correspond to that, let's begin in the Eighth Chapter of Hebrews, and verses 1 and 2, “Now the main point of what has been said is this: we have (you see that puts it in the present) we have a high priest, who has taken His seat at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens (Christ has taken His seat at the right hand of the Throne of God), He is a minister in the sanctuary, and in the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, not man.” When Jesus took His seat on the right hand of God, He became, He said, “the minister of the sanctuary, the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man.” This isn't the Old Testament Tabernacle He is talking about, it is the one the Lord pitched and not man.

Now, turn over to II Corinthians, Chapter 6, and verse 16, “Or what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God” (the word temple is the word “sanctuary”). If Christ is the minister of the true sanctuary, He is the minister of the true temple,

and Paul says “we are the temple of the living God; just as God said, I will dwell in them and walk among them; and I will be their God, and they shall be My People.” It is still God’s desire in the New Testament, as well as the Old Testament, “to dwell among them and to walk among them.”

Alright, I Peter 2:5, we are not going to read all of the passages in the New Testament on this, but Peter says, “You also, are living stones (he said in vs. 4 that Christ is a living stone)” He said, “You also, are living stones, you are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.”

God's purpose is to build you up as a spiritual house and each one you, he says, “is a living stone.” Ephesians Chapter 2, last verses that Chapter, beginning in verse 18, “for through Him we both have our access in one Spirit to the Father (both Jew and Gentile). So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God’s household (in other words you are a part of God’s house) having been built upon the foundation of the apostles and the prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner stone.”

He is the cornerstone of the temple and you're being built upon a foundation of the apostles and prophets, vs. 21, “in whom the whole building, being fitted together is growing into a holy temple in the Lord.” God is building a temple in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit. God’s purpose is to dwell in us . . . to dwell in us in the Spirit.

One final passage, Revelation 21, in verse 3, “And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, ‘Behold (in other words, LOOK) the tabernacle of God is among men (or the TEMPLE of God is among men . . . the House of God is among men), and He shall dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be among them.”

We have read 5 passages of scripture in the New Testament that says God dwells in his people in one way or the other . . . that we are a house being built for the dwelling place of God.

Why are we so prone . . . why are religious people so prone to accept and to defend the very opposite of what God says in His Word? If God said I want to dwell in them, we say no, I want to dwell with you. God says I want to come to earth and dwell in My People, and we say no, we want to go to heaven and dwell with God. The very opposite of what God says, we believe, and we teach, and we preach, and we practice, and we defend.

The reason is . . . we have failed to grasp the significance of one of the greatest, most miraculous events that ever happened. It is recorded in Matthew 27:51, Mark 15:38, and Luke 23:45 . . . from Matt 27:51, “And behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom.” I think that the scripture writers realized that verse was important. But the astonishing thing is

that they did not explain it. I think they knew that anyone reading that should understand what it meant. So they simply said, when Christ died on the cross the veil in the temple was torn in two from top to bottom.

In my opinion, after the death of Christ, what those old Jews did was like what prophecy preachers do today . . . prophecy preachers will note something happening in the middle east and they will say the anti-christ is coming or somebody is going to become the anti-christ, and God proves them to be false, and what do they do, they just keep on preaching something else as if they never said anything that was false or proven to be false by God. They get another theory and go right on . . . that's what I think the Jews did in Christ's day. When they saw that veil in the temple torn in two from top to bottom, they got their needles and thread and they sewed that thing back together and they went on like nothing had happened. They continued services in the temple like nothing had happened. They sewed that veil together and it was still together whenever that temple was destroyed. They did not realize the significance of what had happened. And in my opinion, neither has the Church realized the significance of what had happened.

But the Hebrew writer realized its significance. In Hebrews 6:19-20, he talks about our hope, and he said, "This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, a hope both sure and steadfast and one which enters within the veil, where Jesus has entered as a forerunner for us, having become a high priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek."

Now maybe that doesn't say much to us, until we read another passage in a minute, but notice what he said, "He entered within the veil." That veil in the temple only represented another veil. And Christ entered the other veil . . . and He became a forerunner for us. Now if He's a forerunner, it means that we will be running after Him. You see, He was the forerunner for us. We are going to come after Him.

Now, read Hebrews 10, verses 19-21, "Since therefore, brethren, when he have confidence to enter the holy place we enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus (he is not talking about the holy place in the temple . . . the veil was torn in two, but we can enter the real holy place by the blood of Jesus) by a new and living way in which he inaugurated for us through **the veil, that is, His flesh**, and since we have a great high priest over the house of God, let us draw near (when that veil in the temple was torn in two from top to bottom, it meant that anybody, not just the high priest, but anybody could go into the most holy place. Only the high priest could go in there before, but now, anybody could go.

And the veil in the temple represented the real veil, which the writer said is His Flesh (His human nature). It was torn in two by His sacrificial death. And that meant that the veil that separated the earthy from the heavenly . . . the veil that separated the outer from the inner, the

outer was the earth, the inner was heaven, that which separated the earth from heaven was by His death destroyed. And that brought the two together. That brought heaven to earth and earth to heaven . . . it opened the way and now, because of His death in the flesh, **we can go directly into the holy place. We can go directly to the Throne of God . . . and we can feel at home there. We can be so much at home there that we can sit down, at His right hand in the heavenly places.** We can live in the very presence of God and God can live in us. God dwells in man and man dwells in God.

You can't get any more heavenly than that!! The problem is, we are always thinking of going off yonder somewhere to heaven . . . someday Glory to God.

We should say Glory to God heaven has come to us, God is dwelling in us, God is present in us, and He is in us and we are in Him . . . and the flesh kept us from entering that holy place until Jesus tore the flesh with his death on the cross . . . that kept God from dwelling among us. But when Christ rent the veil with his flash and died on the cross, that brought God and man together, and that tore the veil away.

What happened in that temple that day only symbolized what was taking place in the spiritual realm. When Christ died on the cross, He was tearing flesh away and the flesh can no longer keep us from coming into the presence of God. And it no longer keeps God from coming to us.

In His flesh, sin was paid for and the veil was removed. **People who are waiting to go to heaven have lost it. They have missed out the greatest blessing that God has for us because God said COME ON UP NOW!! You don't have to wait until you die . . . you don't have to wait for Jesus to come back. The door is open.** The veil has been torn in two and we are in the very presence of God.

Let's close today with Hebrews, Chapter 4, beginning in verse 14, -- there is something I want you to see here -- "Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin." Now, as a result of that, or because that is true . . . because we have a high priest who can sympathize with us (and we've seen already that that high priest has entered heaven itself, He tore the veil away, brought us into the very presence of God, caused God to come and live in His People, has built the house of God, the living place of God in the Spirit, with all of that being true, vs. 16, "Let us therefore draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, that we might receive mercy and may find grace to help in the time of need."

There is something in that verse that I want you to see. "Let us therefore draw near with confidence (let us draw near right now with confidence . . . he doesn't say let us draw near now

here in the 4th Chapter, but he says let us draw near now in the 10th Chapter . . . so let us draw near when – NOW, RIGHT NOW . . . so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in the time of need.

We are going to stay on this until you get this. You'll find grace to help in time of need . . . we usually wait until the time of need to draw near. And that's alright . . . it's better to draw near in the time of need than not draw near, but we usually wait until the time of need to draw near.

He said let us now draw near with confidence so that we might have grace and mercy to help us when the time of need comes into our lives . . . did you get that?

When the time of need comes you ought not have to start drawing near . . . you ought to already have all the mercy and the grace and the help that you need for that situation because sometime back yonder when you did not have all of this need, you were drawing near.

Do you understand what I'm saying? And you see, that is possible because we are the house of God, and because God is dwelling among us. Let us draw near now so that when the time of need comes, we'll have all of the mercy and the grace and the help that we need. **It's already there because we are living in the present!**

So don't wait until the time of need to then draw near. Have the mercy, and grace, and help that available to you now!! You see, these were people of "The Way" in the early church . . . The way had been opened. They had the way opened into heaven. That's why there were people of The Way. They had a way opened that was closed to them before. And now heaven and earth have come together. God has tabernacle among His people.

You are the house of God. Moses was faithful in his house but as a servant. We are not servants in the house of God. We are the house of God. We are God's house. And as God's house, the Spirit and heaven dwells in us. And we dwell in Him. There are many dwelling places . . . God is present in His people.

And once the Church realizes that, it will make a difference in the world. It's an awesome thing to realize that God dwells in us. Not only as a Church, but also as individuals. You see, there many rooms in God's house . . . there are many dwelling Places. In I Cor, Paul both of those figures and begins by appealing to the whole church when they are divided, he said, do you not know that your body is the temple of the holy spirit and that Spirit of God dwells among you? He said, destroy this temple and God will destroy you. But he was talking about the connotation . . . he was talking about the church. There were divisions in the church and he said anyone that destroys the church out of division, He said I'm going to destroy them because this body is a temple of the living God and God dwells in this body.

But then in the 6th Chapter of I Cor, he talks about immorality. And he says shall I take the body of a Christian . . . shall I take my body and make it a member of a harlot? He said God Forbid. He said do you not know the Spirit of God dwells within you individually? Don't take your body and use it for immorality. He said God dwells within you as an individual. Our body then becomes a tabernacle, a temple for the Holy Spirit.

What we say should reflect what the Spirit is saying. What we are doing should reflect what the Spirit is doing because it is God that dwells in us.

Paul said I died and it is Christ that lives in me. We are the house of God.