

“WE ARE HIS HOUSE”

**I. Introduction**

- A. This Easter evening we are continuing on in the section of Hebrews that we studied in our worship service this morning.
- B. While there is no explicit mention of Christ’s resurrection in this text, it clearly focuses upon the sufficiency and supremacy of Christ as our mediator with God.
- C. As we consider these verses tonight, we will use the idea that is stated in verse 6, the fact that Christians are God’s house, as the unifying theme.
- D. Using that theme, I want us to look at this passage under three headings: the foundation of the house; the builder of the house; and the durability of the house.

**II. The Foundation of the House**

- A. We begin by looking at what the writer has to say about the foundation of this house.
  - 1. In the first part of the passage, the recipients of the letter are referred to as holy brothers who share in a heavenly calling.
  - 2. It is easy for us to gloss over statements like this, but we should not do that.
  - 3. This description tells us some important things about our identity as Christians.
  - 4. It tells us two things about who we are in Christ.
- B. First, Christians are holy brothers in the Lord.
  - 1. This includes both men and women, but the masculine gender is used because it conveys the idea of inheritance.

2. Whether you are male or female, if you trust in Christ you share in the inheritance of the firstborn in the kingdom of God.
  3. This points us back to what the writer said in chapter 2 about how Jesus is not ashamed to call us brothers.
  4. By virtue of his incarnation, Jesus is our elder brother in God's family.
  5. This reminds us that biblical Christianity is not just about a personal relationship with God.
  6. We have brothers and sisters in Christ, and we are called to live in community with them as those who have been set apart to belong to God.
- C. The second thing that the writer says about Christian identity is that we share in a heavenly calling.
1. Everyone has an earthly calling, what we refer to as a 'vocation.'
  2. And while our earthly callings are important, they are only temporary.
  3. They only last for as long as we are in this world.
  4. As Christians, we not only have an earthly calling; we also have a heavenly calling.
  5. It is "heavenly" in two senses: it comes from heaven and is to heaven.
  6. Unlike our earthly callings, this heavenly calling is eternal.
  7. This is why our true home is not in this world.

8. As Paul says in his letter to the Philippians, “our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body.” (Phil. 3:20-21)
  9. It is so easy for us to lose sight of our heavenly citizenship amid all the cares of life.
  10. Remember who you are in Christ.
  11. Remember the glorious future that lies ahead of you.
- D. This is the point that the writer is making when he urges us to “consider Jesus.”
1. The word ‘consider’ means to think carefully about something, to meditate upon it.
  2. As one commentator explains, this word “does not mean to give occasional mental acknowledgement to a fact, not even to the fact that Jesus is ‘apostle and high priest,’ but to concentrate the mind on the reality and rich significance of this truth.” [Hywel Jones, *Let’s Study Hebrews*, 33]
  3. The minds of the original readers of this letter were considering the persecution that was beginning to be leveled against them for their faith in Christ.
  4. The writer is urging them to stop and think about Jesus.
  5. It is so crucial for us to do this on a regular basis.
  6. This is the only way to keep things in proper perspective.
  7. Take time to turn your focus away from the things that concern you, the things that weigh on you, the things that trouble you, the things that grieve you, and use that time to reflect upon all that Jesus Christ is for you.

8. This is the way to guard yourself against reacting to life's various challenges in the wrong way.
  9. As Calvin explains, "the true knowledge of Christ is sufficient to dissipate the darkness of all errors." [Calvin]
- E. Jesus is referred to here as "the apostle and high priest of our confession."
1. This is the only place in New Testament where the title 'apostle' is used in reference to Jesus.
  2. That being said, the related verb "send" is often used of Jesus, and this helps us to understand what the writer means.
  3. An apostle is someone who is officially sent to represent someone else.
  4. Jesus was sent by God the Father to reveal himself to us and to rule over us.
  5. Jesus is God's envoy, or representative, to us.
- F. If you want to know what God would have you do or what God has to say to you, then you need to consider Jesus.
1. As it says in chapter 1 of this letter, Jesus is the radiance of God's glory and the exact imprint of his nature.
  2. God has spoken his final word to us in Jesus.
  3. And by this I mean the Jesus who is revealed in the pages of the Bible.
  4. It is important to clarify this because there are other Jesus' out there.

5. One popular book claims to contain special messages that were given to the author by Jesus, messages that she is glad to be able to pass along to her readers.
  6. A lot of people are reading that book and deriving comfort from how they hear Jesus calling out to them from its pages.
  7. Don't consider that Jesus.
  8. That Jesus is not the Jesus of the Bible.
  9. He is the Jesus of that author's imagination.
  10. The Jesus we need to consider is the Jesus who is revealed in the pages of Scripture.
- G. Not only is Jesus the apostle of our confession, he is also our high priest.
1. As apostle he represents God to us, but as high priest he represents us before God.
  2. As F.F. Bruce explains, Jesus "is not only... the one in whom God has revealed himself finally and completely, but also the perfect embodiment of humanity's obedient response to God." [Bruce, 91]
  3. Jesus has entered into God's presence on our behalf.
  4. He offers his atoning death and his perfect obedience to make intercession for us.
  5. Because of his high-priestly ministry, we can draw near to the throne of grace with confidence, looking for mercy and grace to help in time of need.

### **III. The Builder of the House**

- A. After describing how Jesus is the foundation of God's house, the writer then explains that Jesus is also the builder of this house.

1. The Hebrew Christians to whom this letter was originally addressed were beginning to experience persecution for their faith in Christ.
  2. They were tempted to turn back to Judaism in order to avoid this persecution.
  3. This applies to us because we too are tempted to turn away from Christ to other things, especially when we face adversity or discouragement.
  4. We may not be tempted to convert to Judaism or some other religion, but we are often tempted to look elsewhere for comfort and help and security amid the trials of life.
  5. This passage shows us why we must not do this.
  6. Jesus is the all-sufficient Savior.
  7. If you turn to something else instead of him, you are guaranteed to be disappointed.
- B. The writer compares Jesus to Moses because Moses was an extremely important figure in Judaism.
1. He was the symbol of the law of God, which God delivered through Moses' mediation.
  2. Like Jesus, Moses was God's envoy to his people and their representative before God.
  3. But the writer reminds us that Moses pales in comparison to Jesus.
  4. Moses was a human mediator, but Jesus is fully God and fully man.
  5. Moses was a great leader in the church, but he himself was a member of the church.

6. Moses was a servant in God's house, but Jesus is the builder of the house.
  7. He is the one promised to David in 2 Samuel 7, the offspring who would build a house for God's name.
- C. Notice also that Moses and Jesus were faithful in the same house.
1. This is an important point.
  2. It tells us that there is one people of God across the Old and New Testaments.
  3. The Lord ruled over his house in a different manner under the old covenant than he does under the new covenant, but it is still the same house with the same builder.
- D. While Moses was a faithful servant in God's house, Jesus is faithful over God's house as a son.
1. He is the firstborn son, the heir of God's household.
  2. And he does not keep the inheritance he has won for himself.
  3. Instead, he shares it with the many brothers who were given to him in the covenant of redemption, the "children" who are mentioned back in chapter 2.
  4. He builds God's house by sharing his inheritance with us.

#### **IV. The Durability of the House**

- A. This brings us to the last thing that our text has to say about God's house: the durability of this house.
1. The Jewish Christians to whom this letter was originally addressed were cast out of the synagogue when they professed faith in Christ.

2. The writer is assuring them that they have not been cast out of the true house of God.
  3. As Christians, we are God's house, God's true temple.
  4. God will cause his presence to dwell in our midst for all eternity.
  5. Nothing in this world can compare to the stability of God's house.
  6. Every human institution will one day crumble into ruins, but God's house will endure forever.
- B. Our situation today is obviously different than the situation of those first century Christians.
1. We have not been cast out of any synagogues.
  2. We are not under the threat of serious persecution.
  3. Nevertheless, we are living in a culture that is becoming increasingly intolerant of those who adhere to biblical Christianity.
  4. It doesn't seem like it will be long before a person who refuses to adopt the socially accepted position on homosexuality and other issues will be looked upon as the moral equivalent of a white supremacist.
  5. When Christians live in that kind of social context, there is significant pressure to cave in.
  6. Many who call themselves Christians have already begun to cave in.
  7. They still think of themselves as followers of Christ, but they have exchanged the things that Christ says in his Word for the things that the culture says.



8. We need to be on guard, or else we will end up doing the exact same thing.
- C. This brings us to the last sentence of our passage, where the writer says that “we are his house if indeed we hold fast our confidence and our boasting in our hope.”
1. This does not mean that our holding fast is what makes us God’s house.
  2. That would make man the builder of the house.
  3. And if that were the case, the house would not be durable at all.
  4. Instead, this means that true faith is faith that perseveres in the truth.
  5. Those who cave in to cultural pressure and conform to worldly ways of thinking no longer have a foundation upon which to stand.
  6. The only faith that will endure is the faith that continues to rely upon Christ as he comes to us in the biblical gospel.
  7. May God grant us persevering grace, that we may hold fast our confidence and our boasting in our hope for all our days.