

The Faithful Christ

By Paris Reidhead*

To Hebrews, the 3rd Chapter, we will turn. Our Theme this morning, The Faithful Christ. Great is Thy Faithfulness, Oh God, Our Father. We sang it. And I am sure we sang it from our hearts. Thanksgiving Day has meaning to us just in proportion to our understanding that for which we ought to be thankful. Too many times we are thankful for our material blessings almost exclusively, grateful for home, for food, for shelter.

But yesterday as I stood at the foot of the Bunker Hill Monument in Breed's Hill and tried to visualize what it cost that company of people that entrenched themselves behind the stone breastwork, waiting for the Red Coats to march in formation, the invincible British Army. They were not thinking so much of just home, food. They had that. But there were certain principles of life that they felt indispensable. Principles of freedom, privilege to be a man, to live one's life under the dictates of one's conscience. And they felt that under tyranny such could not be the case. I suppose that had they submitted to all of the taxation of the British, there would have been food and clothing. There usually is. But there was something deeper. They had come for another purpose. They had come in order to have liberty of conscience, and freedom to be the kind of men they felt they ought to be.

And as we approach Thanksgiving this year, I trust that you are going beyond the furniture that surrounds you, and the walls that give you comfort, and the food that sustains you, and that somehow there shall be that insight into that for which you ought to be thankful. I am afraid that materialism is more or less like a miasma that creeps up from the lower regions and smothers us all, until we feel that we are good because we possess, we are noble because we have, we are to be congratulated because we have earned. And when final analysis is made and the last evaluation is given, life does not consist in the abundance of the things a man possesses. And there is many a person that would rather die than live in ease for those principles which he feels are more precious than life. And I trust that somehow the Spirit of God will show you the necessity of believing in something and standing for what you believe, understanding why it is valuable, and why it is worthy of your life. It would be of great service to you if you were to take a paper and pencil, and go alone, and begin to make a list of the non-material blessing that have changed your life, and to give thanks for each of these - For the freedom of Worship, the freedom of thought, the privilege of the freedom of speech, the freedom to engage in business, to earn a profit, and then to use the money as you wish, the freedom to decide where you will live and under what circumstances you will live, how and in what manner you will educate you children, the freedom above all to be the best man that you can under God.

I believe in Democracy. I believe in the Country, in which we live, and the foundations and principles upon which it stands, because I believe that it represents the culmination of human attempt to secure an environment in which human personality can develop to its fullest, and its freest and its best under God. I can imagine no other kind, no other climate, no other political climate where an individual has such an opportunity to be and to do according to the sovereign rule of God in his life, as in the land where we live, and the land of which we are a part.

And I sincerely, trust that as you approach Thursday of this year and your mind goes back to the first Thanksgiving at Plymouth that there will be some memory of those men who believed in principles enough to die for them, and that there shall rise in your hearts sufficient belief that you are willing to thank God for them and defend them, and if need be die that they might be preserved for your children.

We are told that those who plot against us in our land say that America is going to fall into the hands of communism simply because of the apathy of the people who are too indifferent to their blessings to evaluate them, to count them, to treasure them, or to defend them. May this not be true of us, but may there be a sense in which our heritage becomes the more meaningful this year than ever before. I say this because I believe that the message of the morning. The Faithful Christ, not only gives us a revelation of His faithfulness to us, but the revelation of the responsibility or our faithfulness to Him. And if all things are given and granted by Him, then the privilege of your being in this land and enjoying the liberty and freedom that it affords is a blessing from Him, and He expects you to be faithful to these common mercies as well as to spiritual blessings. And therefore I would exhort you, yea I would go beyond that and charge you that as you hear the message this morning on the

faithful Christ that you will recognize that it is not only Christ who was to be faithful to His Father, but you are to be faithful to your heritage and to God.

And so to the Text: Hebrews, Chapter 3, and verse 1: "Wherefore. Wherefore, holy brethren." Let it be established at this point that the Book of Hebrews is written to Christians. All of its warnings are given to professing Christians. This is not a tract for the unsaved. This is revelation of God's purpose for the saved. Therefore, when in the 2nd Chapter you read, "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation," he is writing to holy brethren. He is not writing to the impenitent, but he is charging us with the solemn responsibility of devising some means of preparing ourselves for the day when we stand before Him, and give an account of what we have done with the revelation of His purpose and His truth. So great salvation does not only include forgiveness and pardon, not only include the benefits that immediately come to us in securing us against loss in the future, but so great salvation also includes God's ransomed purpose in us, that which He secured by redeeming us, and it is incumbent upon us, therefore, to recognize that in salvation it is not only what we get out of Christ that is important. It is what Christ gets out of us. How shall we escape if we neglect -- to fulfill all that the Lord Jesus died to make ours, and possess all that He provided. This is the thrust of it.

"Wherefore, holy brethren," (Writing to us as Christians). Should you be here without Christ, the message is clear, and the Gospel is clear. Repent of your sins, throw down the arms of your rebellion against God, cease your constant warfare, abdicate the throne of your heart and receive Jesus Christ as Lord. Your crime is that you played God. You went into the "God Business" for yourself. You reigned and you ruled in your life. Every sin that you have is but another act of defiance, declaring that you are in constant revolt and revolution against God. Sue for peace. As a traitor and a rebel, come, throw yourself at the feet of the risen, glorified King, and see that there is in His Side open the Fountain of Cleansing, that the Blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth from all sin. So I say to you that may be here that do not know Jesus Christ, we have a message for you, a message of hope, a message of life, the Gospel, the Good News that Christ died for our sins according to the Scripture. But his is not the whole of the preacher's responsibility.

The Apostle said, We have not hesitated to declare unto you the whole counsel of God, and the Apostle writes to holy brethren. And he speaks of them as partakers of the heavenly calling. Then he exhorts them to consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession. You are a Christian, then you profess that Jesus Christ is Lord, and Savior. You profess that you have seen yourself a traitor, and you have renounced your treason and have embraced Him as your Sovereign. You have believed on Him. You have committed your life to Him, both for the salvation of your soul from its past penalty and sin, and for the government of your life by this Risen Christ.

Now said he, Holy brethren, consider Jesus. What does this word consider suggest to your mind. Actually the word means, to put the mind down on a thing. It is as though someone dropped a dollar bill, and it was blowing away in the wind, and fluttering along, so you put your foot down on it, and you stopped it. You were considering the thing when you put your mind down on Jesus Christ. It means to fix the mind on. You find your heart going back to Hebrews 12. We are to look off unto Jesus and focus our eyes. In fact, the word consider has that root. Incidentally it comes from the Latin word for star, and it originally suggests to contemplate the stars, and to consider would take you to the astronomer who sits in the field at night and gazes at the stars that he might by this means learn all that there is to learn about them. To consider Jesus is to gaze at the Lord Jesus, the Apostle and the High Priest of your profession. Fix your mind on Him. May it be that you do not consider Christ a convenience, someone upon whom you believed years ago, and in your believing you were secured against loss, and that now you have tucked Him away somewhat the same way that you have tucked your Fire Insurance Policies in the Bank Vault, and handy to know you can have them where you can get them when you need them. This I am afraid might characterize some who claim to be Christians. But it is against this that he speaks strongly, for he says, "Bring Christ into focus and see Him, and gaze upon Him and contemplate Him, until He fills the whole horizon of your heart." Consider Jesus.

I would suggest that this is the keynote of the Epistle. You understand that God has spoken to us by His Son; God who in times past spoke to us by prophets, by angels, by Moses, now has spoken to us by His Son, wherefore consider Jesus. Give your attention to Him. Keep your eye focused on Him. And there is to be no escaping the fact that this is the heart of the Epistle. Since God has spoken to us by His Son, fix your mind upon Jesus.

The first thing we are to see when we fix our mind upon Jesus is that the faithfulness of Christ excelled that of Moses. Moses was faithful; this is the testimony that we have. Moses was faithful in all his house he was faithful to all that God commanded him, he was faithful when it would have been to his advantage to have been unfaithful. For remember faithfulness to God can often be a very lonely thing. For in this case, you understand as I read from Numbers the 13th and 14th Chapters, that the people wanted to destroy Moses, they wanted to choose another leader, someone that would take them back into Egypt, someone that would tickle the ear, and tickle the fancy and lead them in the direction they wanted to go. And Moses, knowing they turned against them, knowing their attitude toward him, fell upon his face and said, Oh God, spare them. He was faithful to the charge that was given by God to him. Think of what it would have meant. God said, I will destroy this people and make of you a nobler nation than I have made of them. But Moses was faithful. He was faithful when they came to him a little later in the next chapter and accused him of taking too much to himself in appointing Aaron the Levite. He was faithful throughout the entire ministry that God gave him. Moses was faithful.

The angels that stood and did not revolt were faithful. But we have the testimony that the Lord Jesus Christ was more faithful than angels. And he was more faithful than Moses. And consequently, if this is true, then you are to give far more attention to Jesus Christ than you would ever give to Moses or the word of Angels. You see, the Lord Jesus is counted worthy of more glory than Moses was; the angels never worshipped Moses, but they worshipped Christ. No one was ever declared that Moses was to be the heir of all things, but the Lord Jesus was. He made all things, including Moses. And the One who makes the house is greater than the house, and is to receive more honor than the house. And so it is that Jesus Christ excelled over Moses in every way. Moses was but the type of Christ. Moses spoke as a testimony of those things which were subsequently to come to pass.

See several particulars in which Moses was a type of Christ. In what he suffered from his brethren, for they would have destroyed him. He was a type of Christ in his rejection by his brethren. They refused to have him to rule over them. He was a type of Christ, was Moses, in his zeal and his sacrifice of all for God. For he chose to suffer the afflictions of Christ rather than the pleasures of sin for a season. Moses was a type and picture of the Lord Jesus in his willingness to die for the people. He was a type and a picture of the Lord Jesus in his fellowship with God, intimately speaking to God face to face. Moses was a type, a picture of the Lord Jesus, in his ministry as prophet, as priest, and as king. For he said, "There shall come after me a Prophet like unto me. Him shall the people hear." Moses was prophet, speaking for God to the people. Moses was priest, speaking to God for the people, speaking for God to the people. And he was king, ruling over the people for God. And thus our Lord Jesus comes as a Prophet.

"My Word is Spirit and it is Life. He that heareth My Words and doeth them, he it is that loveth Me." And again. He is the Priest. For He has shed His Blood, and carried it into the Holy Place, there to make full, complete, perfect atonement for our sins. He is King, for He has been exalted to the Right Hand of the Father, having all authority in Heaven and in earth. The faithfulness of Christ excels that of Moses.

But then we must recognize also that Christ's purpose excelled that of Moses. In the 6th verse we read, "But Christ as a Son over his own house." Moses was sent of God to build a house as a dwelling place for God. It was made of shittim wood, covered with gold. It was made of badger skins and wool dyed red. It was made of fine twine linen. It was made of brass and silver. It was made of the handy work of man. It became a type, picture, a shadow of the Lord Jesus...A sermon in wood and gold. This was the house that Moses built; a house that God did meet. A house where God did come. A tent of meeting. A place where He revealed Himself to the people. But this house was but a picture of the other.

And our Lord Jesus came to build a House that could not be secured by the offerings of the people. The House that He would build would be of a nobler sort indeed. It would be of an entirely different sort. Whereas they could cut down the acacia tree, and hew it out and fit the pieces together to make the boards, and they could take the gifts given by the people to cover the boards with gold. This was natural, and this could be done by skillful men. But God would by His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, have another kind of house. He would take that block of granite, hard, rebellious, solidly arrayed against God, and bring spiritual influences to bear upon the hard granite, until that rock which would represent the human heart and its stubborn rebelliousness against God, that stony heart, to be changed from rock to flesh. He would take away the heart of stone, and give a heart of flesh.

Isn't it interesting that the great missionary's name was David Livingstone. Living Stone. For back in the Puritan Period there were those who saw that they were living stones. They thought of themselves as rocks, found in the field of sin with nothing in them; but breathed upon by God, they became living stones in the heavenly temple. This was the task that was cut out for Jesus Christ...To take that which was dead, and make it alive. And in order to do this, it was necessary for Him to live as a man, be tempted and tested, and in every place that we are, and then to die our death, and be raised from the dead, that by this means He could secure that Temple of Living Stones. Such were you. Such was I.

Has this miracle been performed upon you? Has it? Has this transforming work been performed upon you? Whereas you were dead, now you are alive? Can you say, "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day?" (II Tim. 1:12)

He built this House as a Temple, a habitation of God through the Spirit. And in this new thing that the Lord Jesus was doing, every Temple would be filled with God corporally. They would thus have within their presence the presence of God. The Temple would not be with stone, but it would be with flesh and blood, and thus the Lord Jesus would become the Master of this new Temple, this new House. And He would become the Tenant of the new House, filling each piece and filling the whole. And He would become the Lord of the House, using every room and every department as He wished and He pleased. And you were to be part of this new House. For we read, "But whose House are we? Whose House are we?"

You see, the Church, the organization has no significance in the mind of God. This building in which we meet is for our convenience. God's dwelling is not in this building. Nor is His dwelling in the organization. God's dwelling is in you. And this church, if you are a member of it by either, in any particular, or in any way, by being joined by the spirit of fellowship or a member with your name on the roll - But if this is where the Lord has put you, may I say that the Church is no more spiritual than you are. The Church is no more holy than you are. The chain is no stronger than its weakest link. The house is no warmer than the window that is out. And thus we are to see ourselves as the Temple. This is the House. He did not say which House He would secure. He says, which House we are. We are the Temple of the Living God. The furniture, the real estate, has no significance. The organization was made by us for our convenience. The thing that is important is your relationship to the Living Christ.

Whose House are we? If...Oh notice this "If." We are brought back to the perseverance of the saints. We are brought back to the most solemn portion of the Scripture. Whose house are we if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end. What a conundrum this presents. One is indeed to know that they are born of God. But the Lord keeps anyone from presumptuously sitting down in their sins or content in their spiritual infancy.

For one to say, "I am a child of God and deliberately, knowingly live in sin, is to make language meaningless. You say, "I know I had an experience with God. There are a lot of experiences being passes out that are not of God. I know I am a Christian. The Scripture says, "The Lord knoweth them that are His. Let everyone that nameth the Name of Christ depart from iniquity"(II Tim. 2:19). I absolutely agree that everyone that is born of God knows it. But I also absolutely agree that not everyone that is born of God shows it. And not all who think they know, show. And thus the Spirit of God in His solemn and sovereign supernatural ministry, says, Whose House are we if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end. Everyone that is born of God, I firmly believe, will do this. But I do not believe that everyone that says they are saved is. And the evidence that you are a child of God is that you hold fast. Hold fast your confidence and rejoicing and hope firm to the end.

Notice what it says, Wherefore. Wherefore. As the Holy Ghost saith. And back to the 95th Psalm, we are taken by the Spirit of God to find out what the Holy Ghost saith. Let those critics who would try to stumble us by saying, This is not His book, be appalled as they hear the Spirit of God say Himself, For the Holy Ghost saith. What was it the Holy Ghost saith? "For He is our God; and we are the people of His pasture, and the sheep of His hand. Today if ye will hear His voice, Harden not your heart, as in the provocation, and as in the day of temptation in the wilderness: When your fathers tempted Me, proved Me, and saw My work. Forty years long was I grieved with this generation and said, It is a people that do err in their heart, and they have not known My ways: Unto whom I sware in My wrath that they should not enter into My rest" (Psa. 95:7-11). Wherefore...As the Holy Ghost saith. This picture is breathed of God. It is the Word of God. And it is the Holy Ghost that speaks in the Psalms. And it is the Holy Ghost that speaks in Hebrews. And it is the Holy Ghost who saith. Someone is going to say, that the Pastor said, or

Reidhead said. No! I did not. I am simply saying what the Holy Ghost said. Whose house are we if. If we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.

He is speaking to holy brethren. And so now we find here in the 12th verse, Take heed brethren. This is not to the unsaved. This is to Christians. Take heed, Brethren. It is to the household of faith. Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily while it is called today, lest any of you should be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. You make of this what you will. God said it. The Holy Ghost said it. It is His Word. You say it contradicts your theology. It is only because you inadequately understand your theology. Any theology that contradicts the Word of God is of man's dimension, and not of heavenly revelation. This is what it says. This is what it says. Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily. For we are made (in verse 14) partakers of Christ, if - if - if ... (There it is.) we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end. There it is. You see the Holy Ghost is speaking.

While it is said, "To day if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation. For some, when they had heard, did provoke: howbeit not all that came out of Egypt by Moses. But with whom was He grieved forty years? Was it not with them that had sinned, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness? And to whom swore He that they should not enter into His rest, but to them that believed not? So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief" (Heb. 3:15-19).

"Wherefore, holy brethren." Wherefore, take heed brethren. Do you see? Do you see what the Holy Ghost is saying? At no point in your Christian journey can you treat lightly the things of God. God who spoke by the prophets, has spoken by His Son. And the evidence of the genuineness of your regeneration, the evidence of the genuineness of your repentance is that you have the same concern for the will of God now, twenty years after you first were forgiven, that you had the day you were forgiven. This is what it is saying. This is what He is saying. That anyone that can sit back and smugly say, "Well I am saved and sanctified. Now I am on my way to Heaven." -- And let the will of God go neglected and the Word of God be disobeyed, and the truth of God be spurned, is turning words into meaningless gibberish. The evidence of the genuineness of my relationship to the Lord is my willingness to submit to God's Word today, on every issue, every point. The evidence of the genuineness of your relationship to the Lord is your submission to His Word, not just a certain favorite proof texts, not just certain favorite doctrines, but His Word. His Word. Let the Word of God have free course, and be glorified in us. He that heareth My Words and doeth them, he it is that loveth Me. And the evidence that you are His is that you love His Word. God has spoken to us by His Son, wherefore consider Jesus, wherefore take heed lest there enter in an evil heart of unbelief, for they could not enter in because of unbelief.

How often we hear that word that says, "My sheep hear My voice, and they follow Me, and no man shall pluck them out of My hand" (Joh. 10:27-28). But the way so many of them would like to translate it is, "My sheep hear My voice and no man shall pluck them out at My hand. And they forget that it says, My sheep hear My voice and they follow Me. They follow Me. No man shall pluck them out of My Hand."

Not anyone that claims to be a sheep of the Lord that is not following Him. Do you see what we have? This is I say a solemn chapter. Take heed, holy brethren. Take heed. Wherefore, consider. Why? God's purpose was not just to give you pardon and forgiveness. God's purpose was to bring you to the Cross, to the place where you could be slain, where you would come to the end of yourself, where you would present your body a living sacrifice, where you would be filled with the fullness of God, you will be filled with the Spirit of God. And He could live through you His life. You would be a part of the Church, this House, that would be to the praise of His Grace, a habitation of God through the Spirit.

Look. Three hundred people here this morning. Do you know something? If there were three hundred Spirit-filled, Christ controlled, men and women in this church today, New York would shake with the Power of God. We would turn the world upside down, if we could have here a people wholly following the Lord, utterly abandoned to the Lord, totally turned over to the risen Christ. All Hell could not hold us. And all the earth could not hinder us. Now do you see why He is so concerned? Now do you see why He says, "Wherefore, holy brethren, consider Jesus." Consider what He did, consider why He came, and consider what He wants to do. Has He done it in you? Are you where you ought to be? You are a link in the chain you know. The church is no stronger than you are. Do you see why He said again, Wherefore, Harden not your hearts, lest the continual repetition of truth shall acquaint you with it intellectually and sere your heart to it personally. There is a danger in light. I come

before you every week with increasing burden. I tell you frankly I come before you with ever increasing burden. For four years and two months I have poured my heart out to you, telling you that there is a life of being filled with the fullness of God. It is normal to the believer; and that there is nothing else that has meaning. Nothing else that has significance. - That this is the most dynamic truth in the universe. - That God will fill human personality. And I realize that light refused becomes darkness. And my heart is before you with great heaviness. If there were any way that I could echo it, anything that I can do, any place I am failing, I beseech you, and God show me. Because this is God's answer to our day. A people filled with the fullness of God. This is the answer to the dilemma and the need of the Church — a people filled with the fullness of God. And this is the word of the risen Christ concerning it: "Wherefore, holy brethren,...consider Christ Jesus." Wherefore, harden not your hearts. Take heed brethren lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, because you cannot enter in because of unbelief. May the Spirit of God bring to your heart this - Are you filled with the Spirit? Have you been filled with the Spirit? Are you walking in the fullness of the Spirit? You can be. You ought to be. Great good will come to you and the Church when you are. Great guilt will come to you if you are not. It is not a matter of option. It is a matter of Divine fiat, the Sovereign Christ thus speaking.

The faithful Christ, who is faithful in His House, expects you and me to be faithful to all that He has shown us, to all that He died to make ours. Oh may God the Holy Ghost stir us up until nothing else has meaning or value but to be what we ought to be in relation to the Risen Christ.

Let us pray. As we consider the blessings Thou hast given us, material, and above all spiritual, help us to consider, our Father, the privileges that we have abandoned. We have squandered. We have wasted. And help us to see also the great concern of the Lord Jesus that in these dark days we are gathering clouds of international holocaust threaten every thoughtful heart. Our Lord Jesus wants to get a vehicle. He wants to get a people. He wants to get a Body through which He can manifest His resurrection glory. Whose house are we if we continue. Grant our God that there shall be in every heart here this morning a deep desire to have everything the Lord Jesus died to make ours, to be everything He died to cause us to be. Grant, Father, that we shall not be hardened by the continuous repetition of truth and exhortation. Show us the danger there is, Lord, of coming to a Kadesh-Barnia in our own life and counting the cost, and turning to go back to have our lives wasted and squandered in the wilderness of failure. Heavenly Father, Father of our Lord Jesus, we thank Thee for what Thou hast done. We thank Thee for the hunger Thou hast created in some hearts. Undoubtedly in many that we know not there is hunger. But, Oh God, let there come from Heaven upon this people such an insatiable hunger to be filled with the fullness of Thyself, that there shall be meetings spontaneously springing up in homes and in the church where people come to pray, to read the Word, to study, to pray one for another, knowing that unless we are diligent in all that He has given us and labor to enter into that rest we could fail because of unbelief. And then we have failed Thee, and we have failed ourselves, we fail our generation. The consequences are known only to Thee. But grant, Lord, that it shall be sufficiently serious that we shall take heed, knowing that we serve the Living God whom we are to serve with godly fear. Press it upon our hearts today in a new way. Do not let anything snatch it away, but keep it there For Jesus Sake. Amen.

Let us stand for the Benediction. "And now may the God of Peace, who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the Blood of the everlasting Covenant make us perfect in every good work to do His will, working in us that which is well-pleasing in His sight through Jesus Christ our Lord, to Whom be the Glory, now and forever. Amen" (Heb. 13:20-21).

* Reference such as: Delivered at The Gospel Tabernacle Church, New York City on Sunday Morning, November 20, 1960 by Paris W. Reidhead, Pastor.