

International Bible Lessons Commentary
Hebrews 3:1-6 & Matthew 7:24-29
New Revised Standard Version

International Bible Lessons
Sunday, October 9, 2016

L.G. Parkhurst, Jr.

The **International Bible Lesson** (*Uniform Sunday School Lessons Series*) for **Sunday, October 9, 2016**, is from **Hebrews 3:1-6 & Matthew 7:24-29**. **Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further** follow the verse-by-verse *International Bible Lesson Commentary*. **Study Hints for Discussion and Thinking Further** discusses *Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further* to help with class preparation and in conducting class discussion: these hints are available on the **International Bible Lessons Commentary** website along with the *International Bible Lesson* that you may want to read to your class as part of your Bible study. If you are a Bible student or teacher, you can discuss each week's commentary and lesson at the **International Bible Lesson Forum**.

International Bible Lesson Commentary

Hebrews 3:1-6

(Hebrews 3:1) Therefore, brothers and sisters, holy partners in a heavenly calling, consider that Jesus, the apostle and high priest of our confession,

God has set apart for holy use all who truly accept Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. Our calling to serve Him and others in this world is based on the moral and spiritual laws and principles that can be considered heavenly in the light of this world's ways. Our heavenly calling is to receive the fullness of eternal life that Jesus came to give all who believe in Him. In order to remain faithful to our heavenly High Priest, the One who speaks as and for God as Apostle [one who is sent], we need to fix our eyes and thoughts on Jesus, His words and His ways, as our absolute standard of behavior in the world.

(Hebrews 3:2) was faithful to the one who appointed him, just as Moses also “was faithful in all God's house.”

As the Son of God, Jesus was faithful to His Father in all things and perfectly obeyed His Father even unto death. He did His Father's will on earth as God's will is done in heaven. The Jews acknowledged (as did the writer of the Book of Hebrews) that Moses was faithful to God and God's people during the forty years he led God's people out of Egypt and to the border of the Promised Land. He was not perfectly obedient in all things, but he was faithful in his service of God and God's people.

(Hebrews 3:3) Yet Jesus is worthy of more glory than Moses, just as the builder of a house has more honor than the house itself.

The writer acknowledged Moses' greatness, but wanted to show that Jesus was far greater than Moses; both Moses and Jesus remained faithful in their service of God in God's kingdom or house (among God's people). As the Builder of the universe, including the angelic host and the people of God, Jesus is far greater than all of creation and far greater than Moses; therefore, Jesus deserves and receives greater honor than Moses, the angels, or anyone else. Because Jesus has far greater honor than Moses, the writer wanted to remind his Jewish readers that they were to listen to Jesus and obey Jesus as their Lord and Savior. When Jesus was transfigured, God gave this command: "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Listen to him!" (Matthew 17:5).

(Hebrews 3:4) (For every house is built by someone, but the builder of all things is God.)

God does everything through Jesus the Son of God, and God the Father declared that His Son, Jesus, was God, who sits upon the throne of God (see Hebrews 1:1-9 and John 1). Since the Father and the Son built everything, they also built or created the house or kingdom of God. Both the Father and the Son deserve greater honor than anyone or anything they have created.

(Hebrews 3:5) Now Moses was faithful in all God's house as a servant, to testify to the things that would be spoken later.

Only once in the wilderness, Moses did not trust and honor God as holy; therefore, God disqualified Moses from entering the Promised Land (see Numbers 20:10-12). But Moses was saved by grace and his faith in God and the Messiah that God promised to send. We know God saved Moses, because Moses appeared with Jesus on the mountaintop when Jesus was transfigured (see Matthew 17). Probably during the wilderness wandering, Moses recorded the promises God gave His people and foretold that God's Word would be spoken in the future when the Messiah Savior came. In the Book of Genesis (see Genesis 3:15) and other books of the Bible, God spoke and said that He would send a Savior in the future. Moses bore witness to the promises of God and faithfully reported God's words as he wrote books that would become a part of the Bible.

(Hebrews 3:6) Christ, however, was faithful over God's house as a son, and we are his house if we hold firm the confidence and the pride that belong to hope.

Moses was faithful in God's house; Christ is faithful over God's house. As the Son of God, Jesus faithfully rules over God's house and over all of creation. As illustrations of Jesus' divine nature and power, Jesus could walk on water, quiet a storm, and multiply food for God's people. Jesus

came into the world as One who serves, who serves both God and God's people. Jesus came as the One who would suffer for and make forgiveness of sins possible for God's people. Because He perfectly obeyed God throughout His life, Jesus Christ qualified to die for our sins, in our place, as the perfect sacrifice. He fulfilled what was promised by His Heavenly Father when He died on the cross and rose again. Moses bore witness to Jesus who is the Word of God in human flesh (see John 1). God's house is the people of God, those who confidently hope in Jesus Christ for salvation; therefore, Jesus is the One who receives from us the glory that our love and obedience to Jesus Christ reveals. The Book of Hebrews challenges all who say they believe in Jesus Christ to remain faithful and obedient to Him day-by-day, and the Book of Hebrews gives this warning to motivate all believers to persevere in their faith in Jesus and not fall away from Him: "**if** indeed we hold firmly to our confidence and the hope in which we glory." Stated another way, "God's house or God's people are those who hold firmly to their confidence [in Christ Jesus as their Lord and Savior] and the hope [of eternal life and salvation] in which they glory." Moses was not perfect, but Moses held firmly to his confidence and hope in the Messiah who was to come; therefore, he too was saved through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Matthew 7:24-29

(Matthew 7:24) “Everyone then who hears these words of mine and acts on them will be like a wise man who built his house on rock.

In Matthew 7:24-29, Jesus concluded His Sermon on the Mount. As the Son of God, Jesus is the builder of God’s house, of those who are the people of God; therefore, His Spirit inspired Moses to record God’s law, promises, and history in the Old Testament. When Jesus came to earth as the Son of God in human flesh, He taught with authority that was greater than Moses, who was a servant, not the Son, in God’s House. When Jesus concluded His Sermon on the Mount, He told people why they should practice His words.

(Matthew 7:25) The rain fell, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on rock.

Jesus told Peter, “I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it” (Matthew 16:18). This “rock” was Peter’s confession that Jesus is “the Christ, the Son of the living God” (Matthew 16:16). Jesus preached that wise people will build their lives on this “rock,” on Jesus as their Lord and Savior and on Jesus’ teachings. If they do, when troubles and tribulations come (that Jesus said we would experience), we will get through them and our life will not

fall apart. We will have tribulations in this world, but they will not destroy us. Jesus gave a blessed promise to those who build their lives on Him, “I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world” (John 16:33).

(Matthew 7:26) And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not act on them will be like a foolish man who built his house on sand.

People usually build houses to live in because they have a future hope of living long and peacefully in that home. People usually say they will believe in Jesus Christ because they want to live long and peacefully in a home in heaven. In His Sermon on the Mount, Jesus warned, “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven” (Matthew 7:21). Likewise, He warned that those who will not practice what He taught about how people should live were building their lives and future hopes on shifting sand and not a solid foundation. Troubles will come in this life, and those who have not practiced over a period of time what Jesus taught about obedience, but instead have ignored His words and have simply done whatever they wanted to do, will not have the mental and spiritual resources to know what to do when troubles and temptations beat upon them. Jesus’ warning and the warning in Hebrews 3:6 should motivate believers to obey Jesus.

(Matthew 7:27) The rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell—and great was its fall!”

Anyone who reads these words of Jesus should recognize the importance He puts upon believers in Him building their house, their life, their future hopes on a good, solid foundation. The followers of Christ have no control over many of the storms of life and their timing that will come and beat upon them to destroy their faith, their confidence, and their hope in God. Some of these storms are from the world, the flesh, and the devil. Some storms can be avoided by obeying God and practicing Jesus' words. Those who practice Jesus' words in their daily lives are ready to overcome the violent storms of life by their prayers and their trust in God through them all. From obedient habits and experiences with God over a period of time, believers can have a proven understanding of God's faithfulness to them, which will give them greater assurance of God's love and care for them: that knowledge will help them persevere through the trials of life.

(Matthew 7:28) Now when Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were astounded at his teaching,

Jesus' words in the Sermon on the Mount included the Beatitudes, with promises for peacemakers, the meek, and others. His words also applied the Ten Commandments to peoples' attitudes, behaviors, thoughts, and the state of

their heart, not just to their outward actions. Jesus taught people how to pray to their Father in heaven. He made it clear that His teachings were greater than those of Moses. The crowds were amazed at the truths He taught and the way He taught them.

(Matthew 7:29) for he taught them as one having authority, and not as their scribes.

A person who practiced what Jesus taught would not only not murder someone physically, but he would not hate a person or try to harm them in other unjust ways. He would pray for his enemies and learn to rejoice in God when he was persecuted. The practices of believers in Jesus should identify them as followers of Jesus. Those Matthew called “their teachers” sought to interpret Moses and the prophets and other teachers; as Bible teachers today try to interpret the true meaning of the words of Jesus, Paul, and other writers in the Bible (sometimes with the use of commentaries). Jesus spoke on His own authority, even as He interpreted the Scriptures without referring to other rabbis as authorities. Jesus taught the Scriptures with the authority of God, because Jesus is God. His words and the words of the Apostles He inspired became Scripture, because Jesus is God. Paul wrote, “For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people. It teaches us to say ‘No’ to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, while we wait for **the blessed hope—the appearing of the glory of our great God and**

Savior, Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good. These, then, are the things you should teach. Encourage and rebuke with all authority. Do not let anyone despise you” (Titus 2:11-15). Because Jesus’ disciples knew He was God, they did whatever He commanded them, and He kept His promises to them. Jesus has given all believers the same command and promise: “Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and **teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you**. And surely **I am with you always**, to the very end of the age” (Matthew 28:19-20). These are some of the reasons we study and teach the Bible today, and why Jesus is with us always and to the very end of the age. We are Christians because Christians before us obeyed Jesus.

Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further

1. When are some of the times we especially need to fix our eyes on Jesus?
2. What does it mean to you when you think about Moses having disobeyed and dishonored God in the wilderness, but still being considered faithful in all God’s house?

3. What are some traits that distinguished Moses from Jesus? What trait did the writer of Hebrews say they shared?
4. What is the difference between practicing Jesus' words and not practicing Jesus' words? What difference, if any, does it make?
5. Why can't Christians teach exactly like Jesus taught today?

Begin or close your class by reading the short weekly
International Bible Lesson.

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