

The Lord's House

Transfiguration

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Heb. 3:1-6

Grace, peace, and mercy be to you from God our Father, and from our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Consider your home for a few minutes. How many rooms does it have? Does it have a kitchen? A living room? A bathroom? A bedroom? Maybe your house even has more than one of these kinds of rooms.

Now consider your house a little bit deeper. In your kitchen, is there a built-in stove or a space for one to fit? Do you have cabinets? If so, do you have one row, or a couple? Is there a built-in fridge or a space that was set aside for having one put in?

What about your living room? Is there room for you to gather with a few friends? Do you have an entertainment center, or maybe you even have one that was included? Are there enough electrical outlets for your television and some lights? Is there a fan for when the summer heat comes?

Does your house have one bathroom or a couple? Does each one have a toilet and a shower or tub, or just one of them? Does it or do they have a sink and cabinets both, or just one of them? If you have a cabinet next to a doorway, does the door hit the threshold every time you open it, or does it swing freely? Is there a window?

What about bedrooms? Do you have one, two, or a few? Do any of them have built-in bureaus or dressers? Walk-in closets? One closet or two? Are there shelves in the closet? Is there an overhead light or other kinds? Are there outlets for your alarm clock or other devices?

What am I getting at with all of these questions? To show you that your house is a system of pieces put together to function together. In order for those pieces to work in coordination, there was likely a blue print drawn up, if not a couple. So for as awesome or simple or functional as your house is, it wouldn't be that way if someone had not designed it that way.

Most of you already know that, and some of you have even built houses and other buildings. Any builder, like any creative person, has their own way of doing things, their own style or signature touch, so that anyone looking closely enough could distinguish that builder's work from that of another. In our Epistle text, the author of the letter Hebrews raises the question: who would give the finished product more glory than the builder?

1

Verse

The author begins this chapter writing "Therefore." Before we can continue, then, we would do well to find out to what this term is referring. At the end of the previous paragraph, the author wrote "For because he (that is, Jesus) himself has suffered when tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted." Then he continues "Therefore, holy brothers, you who share in a heavenly calling, consider Jesus, the apostle and high priest of our confession, who was faithful to him who appointed him, just as Moses also was faithful in all God's house."

Here the author is making a distinction between Jesus and Moses as servants of God. But why is he doing this? He is reminding his hearers why they should not return to Judaism. At the time of this letter, there was confusion in the religious circles. Word about Jesus was spreading, but there was also dissension regarding some of the ways things had always been done before.

Some were saying to continue refraining from eating unclean animals, while others were saying it was okay to eat them. In the midst of that confusion, some were thinking it was best to go back to the ways of the old covenant—the one which was under Moses.

At the beginning of his case for why they should not return to Judaism, the author points out that Moses was indeed a faithful servant of God. But “just as Moses...was faithful in all God’s house,” so was Jesus. That is important for us to remember today. Our theme is the Transfiguration, which we heard related to us in the Gospel. And who was there? Some of the disciples, Jesus, Elijah, and yes, Moses.

The Old Testament and the old covenant have their place in our history, even as Christians. The Old Testament servants of God paved the way for one who was coming who would deliver us from sin. Why do we need such a deliverance? Because the Law given through Moses shows us our sin. It shows you your sin. You have not kept the Law. And so we had prophets who wrote of the one who was coming, prophets like Elijah.

2
Verse

Yet “Jesus has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses—as much more glory as the builder of a house has more honor than the house itself.”

If you go on vacations, perhaps you have stumbled upon some open houses. For example, if you were to go to Chicago, IL; Springfield, IL; or Madison, WI, you might find yourself guided through some houses that were designed by the same builder: Frank Lloyd Wright. His houses are works of art. They are very complex, with open rooms and smaller rooms, architecture that was modern in his day, and yet each of them was designed in such a way that one could know that they were his design. In a way, they have his image.

The same is true of people. We are very complex with a variety of gifts and talents as we’ve been hearing from Paul, and yet we were all created in the image of our Maker, God. When we look at one another, we might see some differences in noses or mouths or skin color or hair color, but we’re all the same. Yet there was one man who was different: Jesus.

Unlike the disciples with Him there on the mount, Jesus was transfigured before their very faces. He appeared different than them, or Moses and Elijah. Seeing through the eyes of the disciples, we have another Dr. Watson moment as we are allowed to perceive that Jesus is more than just a man—He is True Man yes, but also True God.

“Jesus has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses...(For every house is built by someone, but the builder of all things is God.)” Jesus, when He was transfigured, showed His divinity, and the author of Hebrews knew it, as did his hearers who were considering turning away from the Word about Jesus.

Do you ever consider turning away from the Word about Jesus? If so, consider what you are turning toward: the word of fellow human beings. To turn away from God’s Word, even to Moses’, is to turn from the Word of your Maker to that of another house, another building. You give the credit of the Maker to His works. That is what you do whenever you stray from God’s

Law. You turn from His Word and turn toward some created thing, whether yourself or something or someone else.

3
Verse

You have sinned against your Maker, but don't despair! As Moses and Elijah, the Law and the Prophets have attested, Jesus has come to take away your sin. "Moses was faithful in all God's house as a servant, (testifying) to the things that were to be spoken later, but Christ is faithful over God's house as a son."

Jesus came to the world for this purpose: to free you from the bondage of your sin, your unfaithfulness to your Maker. He came as your Maker to make you pleasing to your Maker again. As God's Son, shown through the events of the transfiguration, Jesus went from that mount to the mount of Calvary, carrying the cross, the instrument upon which your sins would be forever blotted out. "Christ is faithful over God's house as a son"—He took your sins to the cross, and He died there, taking your punishment in your place.

Moses and Elijah and even the author of Hebrews point us to this event, and we ourselves look back on it in praise and honor, giving God our due. We do this because He is our Maker, our builder. He is the one who built everything, "(a)nd we are his house if indeed we hold fast our confidence and our boasting in our hope." Our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God and our Maker Himself, is that hope. He is your hope. In Jesus' Name. Amen.