

Hebrews

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 21 December 2016

Preacher: Marvin Wiseman

[0 : 00] We are going to take another run here at Hebrews chapter 5, but before we get into it, I want to just make a couple of introductory remarks that I think are so critical.

I tried to deal with this a little bit when we undertook the epistle at the very beginning by simply pointing out to you how that this is a letter written by whomever.

And personally, I think it was the Apostle Paul that I could very well be wrong, and I'm not ready to go to the mat on that. But it had to be somebody who was a Jew.

It had to be somebody who was thoroughly familiar with everything Jewish. And, of course, there were a number of people who could qualify for that. But it is amazing to me.

I guess I shouldn't be so amazed because I can remember when I held a position similar to this. It's amazing to me how many believers insist on Christianizing the epistle to the Hebrews.

[1 : 08] And my contention is it cannot be done. And it should not be done. But that doesn't keep us from trying. I know because I tried to do it myself many, many years ago. And we need to take into consideration that while there are numerous principles and abiding truths that we could call them, that we can adapt from the book of Hebrews to our Christian life.

And the same is true with all of the Old Testament. Nonetheless, we need to make a distinction between what in Scripture is addressed for us and what is addressed to us.

And there's a huge difference. I've often said all of the Bible is for us. We cannot do without one line of Scripture.

But not all of the Bible is to us. That means not all of the Bible is for our go and do thou likewise. But it is amazing how we as Christians sometimes want to Christianize everything in the Bible.

And I'm working on this now in connection with the Christianity Clarified. And I can remember hearing children in the Sunday school class years ago singing, Every promise in the book is mine.

[2 : 35] Every word, every line. And it sounds good. And it's cute to hear those little voices singing it. But it isn't true. Not every promise in the book is yours.

Nor was it intended to be yours. God gave a promise to Abraham and Sarah that at the age of 100, him being 100 and her being 90, he was going to gift them with a child.

That does not mean we can extrapolate and bring that over into our culture today and our world today and expect a man who is 100 to father a child and his wife who is 90 to bear it.

Because that was never given to them. It was given to Abraham and Sarah. So, I call this reading somebody else's mail and then trying to appropriate the truth of it to ourselves.

And it cannot and should not be done. But I do want to emphasize, like Paul said, I think it's in Romans 10.4, that whatsoever things were written aforetime, and I think he's talking there about virtually the whole Old Testament, were written for our learning.

[3 : 48] That we, through patience and comfort of the Scriptures, might have hope or confidence. So, we are to take all of the Bible into consideration in connection with our understanding of it.

But we are not to try to appropriate mail that has been sent to somebody else and try to make it apply to our situation. Simply will not do.

There are three great classes of people that Paul has addressed in 1 Corinthians 10. I think it's 31 and 32.

Where Paul, in an almost passing way, said something that I think is very, very profound and very enlightening. He said, giving none offense.

That is, don't offend anybody. Giving none offense to the Jew, to the Gentile, or to the Church of God.

[4 : 51] And therein, fellas, lies the three great categories of humanity. Everybody on the planet belongs to one of those three.

If you are a Jew, you are not a Gentile. If you are a Jew, you are a direct descendant of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Or, you could possibly be converted to Judaism, but you were not born a Jew. You were born a Gentile. A Gentile is everybody else.

And that's almost everybody else. Because the Jewish people, a statistic I've shared with you a number of times, the Jewish people, worldwide, do not make up even 1% of the world's population. They comprise two-tenths of 1% of the world's population. Yet, the Bible is more about the Jew than it is anybody else.

[6 : 01] And this is because, way back in Genesis 12, God called a man by the name of Abram, gave him a special designation, special promises, special covenants, and he vested in Abraham, and in Abraham's seed, which would be Isaac and Jacob and the twelve sons, one of whom would be Judah, and Judah would be the kingly tribe that would ultimately produce David the king, and a thousand years later, Yeshua HaMashiach, Jesus the Messiah.

And the reason that is so important, and the reason that Judaism and Jews are so important, is because they are the catalyst nation. They are the nation through whom God is going to work to produce the Messiah that will eventually establish the kingdom of heaven on earth and return the earth to the original pristine condition that it was before the fall.

So, you cannot, you cannot divorce the strategic nature of the Jew from all of humanity. That's the first class. The Jew, the Gentile, and the Gentile is everybody else.

I mean, everybody else. And that means there are probably seven billion Gentiles, because if you are not a Jew, you are automatically a Gentile.

Because that's exactly what a Gentile is. It's not a Jew. It's everything else. And then there is the Church of God. And the reason that is inserted is because, while everybody belongs to one of those first two categories, those who belong to those first two categories, Jews and Gentiles, they may also belong to the third, which is the Church of God.

[7 : 52] That means, if a Jew, originally of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, if a Jew comes to faith in Jesus as his Messiah, Savior, and Lord, as did the Apostle Paul, and a whole lot of others, then they are also a Jew and a member of the Church of God.

Likewise, if you, as a Gentile, have come to faith in Jesus Christ, you too belong to two categories. You are a Gentile who is a believer, and that makes you a member of the Church of God.

Everybody on the planet. It makes no difference if somebody is an atheist. It's got nothing to do with it. Everybody on the planet belongs to one of those three categories. And the important thing that you need to keep in mind in connection with that, and I just use this term kind of loosely because it kind of illustrates, I am persuaded that in the Bible, there are, well, I won't even say three.

I'll just say two. There are two kinds of, for lack of a better term, I'll call them mailboxes. God, through his word, is sending mail in the Bible.

And it is addressed to two different categories. One is the Jew. And by the way, the vast majority of the Bible is addressed to the Jew.

[9 : 38] Christians don't understand this, and some of them kind of resent it because they like to think of the Bible as being a Christian book. Well, it isn't. It isn't.

The vast majority, of course, it is for Christians, absolutely. For Christians. But it isn't essentially Christian. The Old Testament, which is approximately three times larger than the New, is all Jewish. With the exception of the first twelve chapters of Genesis. And that portion of the Bible, or actually the first eleven chapters, the first eleven chapters of the Bible are not Jewish.

In fact, you can't even call them Gentile. They're just humanity. Just humanity. They are children of Adam and Eve having multiplied upon the earth and having undergone the flood and then Noah and his family to survive, etc.

etc. So, all of these people in those first eleven chapters are not Jews. They are not Gentiles. They are just people.

[10 : 55] And every one of them was destroyed in the flood of Noah with the exception of eight people. And God started all over again with those eight. And the three strategic beings are Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

Shem became the father of the Shemites. All Jews are descendants of Shem.

And if you knock the H off of Shem, S-H-E-M, you get Shem. And that's the first part of the word from which our word Semitic comes.

And somebody who hates the Semitic people, like there are a lot of people in the world today who do, they are called anti-Semitic because they hate the Jewish people.

And by the way, the Arabs, interestingly enough, the Arabs are Semitic also. But they don't incur the same hatred to the same degree worldwide and traditionally that the Jews have.

[11 : 59] So what we are talking about is making a careful distinction in the word of God. and when the Bible says, and Paul addressing the Timothy and I want to run this by you because like I said it's fresh in my mind and I'm doing it on volume 35 of Christianity Clarified.

So it's kind of fresh in my mind that Paul writing to Timothy in his last letter I think we can assume he's going to limit his writing to Timothy to things that matter most.

Now granted the Apostle Paul was writing under the Spirit of God but incorporated in what the Spirit of God was communicating through Paul as he inspired him to write this letter you may be sure that there were concerns and issues on the mind and heart of the Apostle Paul that the Spirit of God weaved into the content that eventually became the second epistle to Timothy and I think we can say that when a man knows that he is shortly to be executed it tends to focus his mind.

this is no time to deal in trivia it is time if you are going to leave advice behind for your young protege you want to limit your words to things that matter and Paul said Timothy it is important that you study and by the way the word study there doesn't mean what we usually think it means actually it means it means give real diligence and concentration to this study to show yourself approved unto God well Timothy was already approved unto God simply because he was in Christ but Paul is qualifying this and he says study to show yourself approved unto God a workman a laborer that does not need to be ashamed in other words

Timothy you need to produce the kind of work that will not embarrass you that will not make you ashamed rightly dividing the word of truth it's amazing how easy it is to just gloss over that and take it just as words I'm speaking from experience because that's what I did for several years I just read over but it didn't register didn't sink in I never picked up on the significance of it what when you rightly divide something and the word that is used there is the word I don't want to bore you with this Greek but it's the word ortho ortho tumunto and the first part of that word ortho o r t h o means straight straight when you apply that word to dentistry you get an orthodontist an orthodontist is somebody that straightens teeth and when

[15 : 54] Paul said rightly dividing the word of truth he means to cut it straight and the word timno is the word from which our word cut comes it means to rightly cut it what do you do when you cut something and why do you do it I think it is always it is always with the intent of creating a separation a division any time you cut something you divide it if it is a piece of pie and you cut it you separate part of it from another part and all this is saying is and back to giving none offense to the Jew the Gentile or the church of God all of this is to say that the word of

God needs to be rightly divided or cut so that what is intended for each group gets to them and they are able to benefit from it and boiled down what this means is the vast majority of the Bible while it is for everybody the vast majority of it is to the Jew and all you have to do is read the content and it is just sticking out all over the place and all of the prophets and the Psalms and well just all throughout the Old Testament it is Jewish Jewish Jewish it has tremendous importance and significance for us who are not Jews but insofar as the mailbox is concerned the mail was addressed to the Jew now I'll give you a case in point for people who say things like well if it's in the Bible we ought to do it really when's the last time you sacrificed an animal oh well we don't do that anymore why not well because that's that's that's not for us that was for back precisely precisely there was a time when animal sacrifice was in vogue not only in vogue but it was even required by the Lord and this goes all the way back to Adam and Eve and the coat of covering that God provided and sacrificing the animal to cover Adam and Eve's nakedness so do you keep the Sabbath well no that too is not for well fellas this is my whole point these are things Jewish they were never intended in fact some are of the opinion that when you come to faith in Christ you are no longer under the law and that sounds good because after all

Paul did say we are not under law but under grace but here is what you need to understand and this what I'm giving you now guys was breakthrough revelation for me years ago because I just never saw it I just held that book that precious book in my hands and I thought and I believed that everything in this book is addressed to me but it isn't everything in the book is addressed for me but not to me and and when we understand for instance not only is the believer in Christ not under the Mosaic law as a Gentile you never were we never were under the Mosaic law I mean never what

God gave the law through Moses he told Moses chapter 19 of Exodus he said thus shalt thou say to the children of Israel and then he goes on to give the law including the ten commandments and all the rest of it in Exodus 20 and it's repeated again in Deuteronomy 5 and he says you are to give this to the children of Israel now let me ask you a question what about the Egyptians weren't they supposed to have the same law that God gave to Moses no no the Egyptians were steeped in idolatry they had a whole host of gods they worshipped they even had a crocodile god and all the nonsense that went with it and the law of Moses was never given to the Egyptians it was never given to the Babylonians it was never given to the Assyrians it was never given to the

[21 : 09] Greeks to whom was it given Israel exclusively we never were under the law and we still aren't but you would be surprised how confusing that is to most Christians case in point and this is I think a pretty apt illustration regarding the Sabbath there is the accusation I don't think it has any basis in fact but there is the accusation that years and years and years ago with the Jewish Sabbath beginning on Friday sundown lasting until Saturday sundown that was the Jewish Sabbath and in the Bible it always refers to the morning or the evening and the morning were the first day and we just reverse that we go morning and evening but the Bible the day in the

Bible begins in the evening the evening and the morning were the first day and that starts out with the first day of creation so this seventh day was to begin Friday evening continue until Saturday evening that is the Jewish Sabbath that was the Jewish Sabbath and by the way that still is the Jewish Sabbath you can go to the temple Shalom here on Friday night and attend a Shabbat a Sabbath service and it's that way all throughout the country and some are of the opinion that one of the popes I don't remember which one it was but way back when maybe a thousand or fifteen hundred years ago was charged by some and I don't know that this can be historically verified but it's a claim that has been made by a lot of Protestants that the Pope changed the Sabbath for Christians and he changed it from Saturday to

Sunday so all Christians are supposed to do what the Jews did on the Sabbath except we do it on Sunday instead of on Saturday and that is complete nonsense because it really starts to break down but it became the basis for the Sunday blue laws here in the United States and if you go down south today where they refer to it more being the Bible belt or the buckle on the Bible belt you will still find a lot of Sunday observances especially in the south in the north they don't give a hang it seems like but in the south they're more sensitive to that and you'll find almost everything closed and that's become kind of a tradition here too where we close up everything why do we do that well because it's because it's the Christian Sabbath and that is just stuff and nonsense there is no such thing as a Christian

Sabbath and Sunday isn't it and we never were under the Sabbath law for Saturday so it is just an example of something that Christians have tried to bring over from Judaism and Christianize it by changing the day and of course we have a special significance for the first day of the week because that's when Christ rose from the dead the first day of the week but and I don't want to get too far afield here but in all likelihood that was not on Sunday morning without going too far afield I would just say that when they arrived early the first day of the week still dark Christ was already gone and he arose the first day of the week but the first day of the week biblically begins

Saturday night doesn't begin Sunday night so Christ rose from the dead on the first day of the week but I suspect that it was very early on anyway in an effort to in a sincere earnest effort to be obedient to the demands of scripture we kind of imposed a whole lot of things on people beginning with the early pilgrims in fact they they even made church attendance mandatory they didn't even give people the freedom of conscience they required them to be in church on Sunday and if you weren't you would be fined or subjected to the dunking or something else and by the way fellas these pilgrims when they preach their sermons on Sunday morning they preach for two hours on hard benches without cushions and no backs on the seats so we've got air conditioned and cushion pews and all the rest of it anyway that's something that we've adopted and you know

[26 : 26] I can remember growing up that almost everything was closed on Sunday and a lot of things still are today and I can remember I can remember Christians who would not go out to eat on Sunday because that would involve a commercial exchange of money you know and they felt guilty about that doing anything like that but we would make exceptions for emergency personnel doctors and nurses and hospitals we would let them work on Sunday because that's a necessity but you see the moral of this story is there is no such thing as a consistent legalist I remember reading this

article in the sports page about these guys who have the responsibility of scheduling baseball games here these teams play like a hundred and well back then they just played 154 games in a season but they would travel from city to city you know you'd have a home team and away team that come in and play and Pittsburgh would come in to

Philadelphia and that you know that went on for years and years well Philadelphia always gave the schedulers nightmares because you weren't allowed to play Major League Baseball in Philadelphia on Sunday for years and years and years so they had a schedule all around that and this is Philadelphia of course is the founding you know of William Penn and the Quaker and they brought into their Quakerism the concept of the Jewish Sabbath but they changed it and made it on Sunday with certain alterations and the whole point of this is the whole thing has no basis in reality biblically at all but it just goes to show you what tradition is and I dare say that these dear people were doing this out of honest conviction believing that that's what was really needed to be well pleasing to the Lord so they shut down everything on Sunday and closed it and everything and I don't want to go into the practicalities of keeping one day out of the week because I think there is great practicality and I think that is built into the

Sabbath as well but my point is the Christian never was under the law the Gentile never was under the law and still are not under the law so we have no obligation to the law of Moses that is given there in Exodus repeated in Deuteronomy however this does not this does not mean that the Christian is lawless and has no responsibility because somebody has pointed out that every single requirement that is incorporated into the Ten Commandments is repeated by the Apostle Paul in his epistles with one exception you will not find the Sabbath there he addresses that issue in chapter 14 when he's talking about doubtful things he says one man observes one day above another and he's talking about those who were intent on keeping the

Sabbath and I think that in part Paul is talking about his fellow Jews who had come to faith in Christ okay now now that they are believers in Christ do they still have to keep the Sabbath do they still have to eat kosher food do they still have to be circumcised so that became a hot potato issue during that first century and what Paul is saying is when he writes to the Romans and expresses the fact that we are not under the law but under grace he also makes the point that and this is in chapter 2 and this is another one of those verses that I am embarrassed to tell you I overlook for years and years and years but fellas you can't afford to overlook verses in the Bible they're all there for a reason and when Paul says for when the Gentile who have not the law what could be clearer the Gentiles

Paul says who have not the law what law is he talking about talking about the law of Moses the Gentiles are not under the law of Moses but then he goes on to say they have a law unto themselves the law of God written on the heart and do you know where the mailbox is for the Gentile who was not under the law the mailbox is in his heart and in the heart of the individual God has impressed the reality of right and wrong and the possibility of violating a conscience that is in the heart of every human being so that even though he doesn't have the law of Moses he's got the equivalent written on his heart Moses had it written on tables of stone God put the sense of right and wrong and conscience in the heart of the individual so that we are without excuse even though we're not under the law of

[32 : 10] Moses never were under the law of Moses we are under that law that is written in our hearts and that is a powerful powerful thing Dana as far as Sabbath is concerned you said the first eleven chapters of Genesis is to humanity on the seventh day God rested is that not setting an example for man to all man yeah I think it is and I think that it is frankly I think that it is worldwide in the same way that the institution of the rainbow was for humanity that was God's promise to the human race that he did not destroy the world by flood and the idea of the Sabbath I think I think there is an overarching principle here that is not just for Jew but it is for everybody and that is the need the need for man to rejuvenate himself we call it

R&R; on on a weekly basis because we are designed I believe by God the human body to labor six days and to rest a day and we've completely distorted that too because the main reason that God gives us a day of rest is so we can be rested up and recuperated ready to take on another new week of activity and labor so we rest so that we can work but we've succeeded in turning that around too and now we work so we can rest and we're not satisfied with one day a week we got to have two and some we'd rather have three John yeah I refer to this as natural law is law for all of humanity and

I don't care where you go in the world whether people have never had they don't even know a Bible exists but they still have a sense of right and wrong in their culture they develop they develop a code of conduct among themselves and even though they've never heard of marriage and they've never heard of adultery they know that when a man and a woman pair up and make a commitment to each other that that is an indication to everybody else that those two people are off limits they are together and it is wrong to take another man's wife it is wrong to take another man's life it is wrong to steal something that doesn't belong to you from somebody else where did they get these ideas they didn't get them from the Bible they got them from the law of God written on the hearts and this is involving the conscience and the human psyche and I'd be the first to admit that it involves a lot more than what I'm able to understand but anyway all of this is Marty did you have a comment question okay be careful when you scratch your head here I may think you're asking okay guys now I say all that to say when we come to the Hebrews let us remember to whom it says it is addressed and let us extract from it tremendous promises confidence application but it is not a go and do thou likewise and that makes a huge difference way and there have it in which all and it so that we all have to see this there that uh