



HEBREWS 3

Shadows vs Substance

One of the great tragedies of the Christian life is how easily we mistake the shadow for the substance. We can become so enamored with the structure of our religion—the history, the rituals, the traditions, and the morality—that we forget to actually worship the Architect who built the house. The original audience of Hebrews was in desperate danger of doing exactly this. They were Jewish Christians who were being intensely pressured to return to their religious roots, specifically looking to Moses as their ultimate hero and guide.

In Hebrews 3, the author systematically, yet gracefully, compares Jesus to Moses. He doesn't insult Moses; in fact, he honors him as a remarkably faithful servant in God's house. But then he pivots to a breathtaking reality: Moses was merely a servant in the house, but Jesus is the Builder of the house. Moses was the shadow; Christ is the substance. As Pastor Spencer unpacks this chapter, he challenges us to evaluate our own faith. Are we resting on our parents' traditions? Are we treating Jesus like a therapeutic genie? Or are we fixing our eyes entirely on the Builder, responding to His voice today before our hearts grow hard?

Study Questions:

1. The Greek word for "consider" (*katanoeō*) means to perceive clearly and give careful attention to. When the storms of life hit, what practical steps do you take to shift your mind from a "simple glance" at Jesus to an intense, focused consideration of Him? (OT: Isaiah 26:3 | NT: Hebrews 12:2-3)
2. Jesus is called the "Apostle" (the Sent One) of our confession. How does recognizing Jesus as the ultimate, final messenger sent from God prevent us from being easily swayed by modern false teachers or "new" revelations? (OT: Deuteronomy 18:18-19 | NT: Hebrews 1:1-2)
3. Losing Salvation vs. Rejecting Salvation: Pastor Spencer noted that the warning against an "evil heart of unbelief" is not about losing your salvation, but about revealing you never truly believed. How does 1 John 2:19 clarify the difference between a struggling believer and an apostate? (OT: Jeremiah 32:40 | NT: 1 John 2:19)
4. The Old Testament sacrifices and laws were shadows pointing to Christ. In our modern church experience, what are some good "structures" or rituals (like communion or baptism) that can accidentally become idols if we disconnect them from Christ? (OT: 1 Samuel 15:22 | NT: Colossians 2:16-17)
5. The author quotes Psalm 95, emphasizing the word "Today" (*sēmeron*). Why is spiritual procrastination—delaying obedience to what God is commanding you to do right now—actually just a polite form of disobedience? (OT: Proverbs 27:1 | NT: James 4:13-17)