

REAL MAN JESUS: “CONCENTRATION & CHEER”

THESIS: Prioritize Pleasing God

TEXT: Hebrews 3:7—4:2

OPEN: Someone has said, “As important as your past is, it’s not as important as the way you see your future.” Physicist Albert Einstein is quoted as saying, “Gentlemen, try not to become men of success. Rather, become men of value.”

In **Hebrews 3:7—4:2** let’s discover how to have concentration and cheer (encouragement) of a real man like Jesus.

1. CONCENTRATE ON THE WAYS OF THE LORD—MAKING IT THE PRIORITY TO PLEASE HIM.

A. **Heb 3:7-11** “The Holy Spirit says, ‘Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts as you did in the rebellion, during the time of testing in the desert, where your fathers tested and tried Me and for forty years saw what I did. That is why I was angry with that generation, and I said, ‘Their hearts are always going astray, and they have not known My ways.’ So I declared on oath in My anger, ‘They shall never enter My rest.’”

1. *Prioritize pleasing God by hearing His voice (Scripture) which you should obey.*

a. **Hear** (Greek: *akouo*) means to give ear to or to obey.

1. The Lord permits “desert times” as a test—concentrate on obeying Him.

a. **Deuteronomy 8:2** “Remember how the Lord your God led you all the way in the desert these forty years, to humble you and to test you in order to know what was in your hearts, whether or not you would keep His commands.”

1. **Illustration:** (Applicant 20-years total in 10 jobs—2 years of experience 10 times. Plus, first full-time preaching ministry vs. remaining ones—persevere not to get in “quit habit”)

b. **James 1:2-4, 12** “Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything... Blessed is the man who perseveres under trial, because when he has stood the test, he will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love Him.”

1. **Complete** (Greek: *holokleros*) means entire or whole—one who has “got it together.”

a. Persevere trials and troubles to be mature and complete—a finisher—the total person.

c. **1 Peter 1:6-7** “You may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. These have come so that your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may be proved genuine and may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed.”

2. *Prioritize pleasing God by not hardening your heart which leads you so astray.*

a. **Harden** (Greek: *skleryno*) means to make obstinate or stubborn.

1. The Lord provides during “desert times”—do not ignore or try Him.

a. **Hebrews 4:1-2** “Therefore, since the promise of entering His rest (Heaven) still stands, let us be careful that none of you be found to have fallen short of it. For we also have had the gospel preached to us, just as they did; but the message they heard was of no value to them, because those who heard did not combine it with faith.”

1. **Faith** (Greek: *pistis*) means belief or conviction based upon hearing.

- a. **James 2:17-18** “Faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead...I will show you my faith by what I do.”
- b. **1 Corinthians 9:25-27** “Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last; but we do it to get a crown that will last forever. Therefore I do not run like a man running aimlessly; I do not fight like a man beating the air...so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize.”
 - 1. Think intentionally about how to apply Scripture in your relationships and responsibilities. A key to practicing the Lord’s Word is to think about it often.
 - a. **Proverbs 23:7 (KJV)** “As a man thinketh in his heart, so he is...”
 - b. **Quote** from the late football coach Bear Bryant (University of Alabama) who won 6 national titles: “It’s not the will to win that matters—many people have that. It’s the will to prepare to win that matters.”

2. CHEER OTHERS IN THE WAYS OF THE LORD—MOTIVATING IN THE PRIORITY TO PLEASE HIM.

- A. **Hebrews 3:12-14** “See to it, brothers, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God. But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called Today, so that none of you may be hardened by sin’s deceitfulness. We have come to share in Christ if we hold firmly till the end the confidence we had at first.”
 - 1. *Prioritize pleasing God by encouraging others to hold firmly to faith in Christ.*
 - a. **Encourage** (Greek: *parakaleo*) means to call alongside for help or to urge.
 - 1. Cheer others up in the Lord regularly.
 - a. **Ephesians 4:29** “Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.”
 - b. **Insight from John Maxwell:** “You move toward people who increase you and away from anyone who makes you feel less. We add value to others when we do things that God values.”
 - c. **Hebrews 10:24-25** “Let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.”
 - 2. People need building up—someone believing in Jesus believing in them & their potential in Christ.
 - a. **Acts 11:22b-23** “They sent Barnabas to Antioch. When he arrived and saw the evidence of the grace of God, he was glad and encouraged them all to remain true to the Lord with all their hearts.”
 - b. **Illustration:** (“Teacher’s Words Change A Life” from *Encouragement Changes Everything*, p. 79-81)
 - c. **Matthew 7:12** “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.”

CLOSE: Let’s prioritize pleasing God like the real man Jesus—concentrate on the Lord’s ways and cheer others up.