

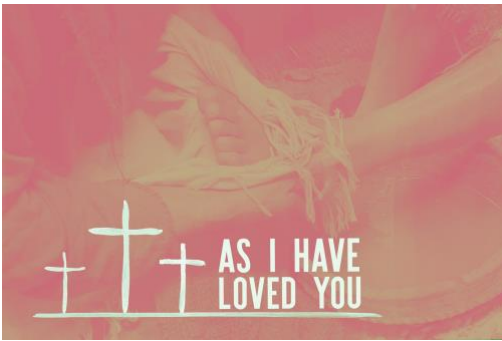
## Sermon #4: Your Brother's Keeper

May 14, 2023

Text: **Hebrews 3**

View on our [Church App](#)

View on our [Website](#)



### Sermon Open

We have spent 3 weeks in this series on the Family of God, seeking to increase our knowledge & understanding of how God has brought his church into order. From this point on we will be looking at various instructions that God has given to us in the New Testament regarding how we are to live together in this church based on His purposes for it.

### Scripture Exposition

Our text is **Hebrews 3**. Hebrews was originally a sermon or sermon-letter written to professing Christians. Many of whom had become dull of hearing, stopped gathering with other Christians, & were even tempted to leave the faith in the midst of their trials & affliction. In chapter 3, the writer is urging believers to remain close to Jesus in fellowship (**v1**), hold on to their confession of faith (**v6**), and to listen to God's voice when He speaks in various ways (**v15**). They are warned that if they return to their old way of life, it would be comparable to the people of Israel grumbling in the wilderness against God and asking to go back to slavery in Egypt. This would mean they would fail to enter into the rest God promises (**v7-11**).

### Pay Careful Attention

The primary instruction to the church is in **v12-13**. The danger every confessing Christian faces is that unbelief might creep into their heart causing them to shrink back & eventually fall away from their fellowship with God. This would certainly be the case for those in the church who are only loosely connected to Christ, and do not realize they are not truly saved. But it can also happen to those who are in Christ, attached firmly to the vine. Those believers may not recognize their issue as unbelief. They may blame their season of life, busy schedule, or their stresses. But the actual issue is unbelief. They do not believe it is critical to stay close to God and look to Christ for all their needs. For some, sin has crept into their lives, slowly at first, through deception, but eventually consuming them. God has called out to them to return but they have refused his voice. Their hearts have become hardened. Their religious routine may not have changed, but their good deeds are only masking the true state of their heart. So the instruction comes to the church: **Pay careful attention to the condition of your heart toward God as well as for those God has joined to you in the fellowship**. You must look out for any signs of unbelief creeping into your heart, but you are also to be concerned about the same danger facing your brothers and sisters in the body of Christ. It is God's design that we are to be dependent upon Him and also dependent on each other.

### Application

Unbelief is a danger to even professing Christians. We will all be tempted, especially in affliction, to not trust God. Left unchecked this unbelief will eventually cause us to fall away from Fellowship with Christ. Our spiritual health, and the spiritual health of the entire church, is contingent upon ALL of the people in the body exhorting one another away from unbelief and toward more reliance on Christ. This needs to be a continual occurrence. **Exhort** is a rich word that can mean to **encourage, comfort, persuade, and even admonish**. The culture of our church must be such that each person in it knows their responsibility to reach out to others every day to exhort them. Simultaneously, each person must be willing – even eager - to receive this exhortation in their own lives. This requires us to make time to engage with other believers every day; to ask one another questions about spiritual health, to be open and confidential, to speak up when you are worried about someone, & to not be easily offended by hard conversations. We are our brother's keeper & they are ours.