

DAY 8 THURSDAY

HEBREWS 3:1 A MATTER OF FOCUS

¹ *Therefore, holy brothers, who share in the heavenly calling, fix your thoughts on Jesus, the apostle and high priest whom we confess.*

In liturgical churches, Lent is the season of self-examination and reorientation of our attitudes and lives. Although this tends to be manifested in outward disciplines such as giving up some habit or “vice,” the real call is to focus our thoughts and actions on *the message of pardon and absolution set forth in the Gospel of our Savior, and of the need which all Christians continually have to renew their repentance and faith* (BCP, p.265). The center of our call is *the Gospel of our Savior*, and therefore, Jesus is the proper center of the life of the Christian.

Jesus calls us brothers (Hebrews 2:11) and he is the author of our salvation and the one who sets us apart as holy (Hebrews 2:10-11). For our part we are to fix our thoughts on him. As apostle, he is the authorized and fully empowered purveyor of God’s truth. As high priest, he is God’s chosen intercessor for believers, as well as the perfect substitute for us in the face of God’s absolutely holy wrath (against our sin).

To live up to the potential that has been provided us through Jesus, we need to look to Jesus so that we might know the truth about God and our selves, and we need to follow Jesus so that we might grow closer to realizing God’s purpose for us. The only way to be able to live out such an attitude is to turn away from our need to do things our way and according to our desires, and to turn Jesus to let him lead us. Without emptying our lives of those things that distract us from obedience to God we will never be able to keep our eyes on Jesus and follow him. The key to fulfilling our holy calling is to grow in both repentance and faith.

Almighty and everlasting God, you hate nothing you have made and forgive the sins of all who are penitent: Create and make in [me] a new and contrite heart, that [I], worthily lamenting [my] sins and acknowledging [my] wretchedness, may obtain of you, the God of all mercy, perfect remission and forgiveness; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.
(modified from BCP, p.264)