

THE SERMONS, LECTURES, AND SONGS OF SIDNEY EDWARD COX

Tracks 1-9: Hebrews 3 & 4

Tracks 10-17: Revelation – Lesson 4. Identical to CD 96-1 and not transcribed

Editorial Note: This is a lecture by Sidney Cox that was part of a series of lectures on the Epistle to the Hebrews that he taught while on the theological teaching faculty at the Toccoa Falls Bible Institute during the early part of 1962. He was 75 years of age at the time.

During the latter part of his life, Sidney Cox had developed a close relationship with the Christian and Missionary Alliance (“CMA”). CMA operates as a vast network of churches, similar to a “denomination.” Toccoa Falls Bible Institute was closely affiliated with the CMA, provided support to the Institute and the Institute sent many of its graduates into ministry within CMA churches. CMA and The Salvation Army, in which Sidney Cox served as an officer for 30 years previously in his life, share a similar theology and emphasis in Christian outreach.

From 1956 – 1960, Sidney and Violet Cox lived in Miami, Florida where Sidney was on the theological teaching faculty of the Miami Bible Institute, another CMA supported institution. They moved to Toccoa Falls, Georgia in 1960, where he served on the staff at the Toccoa Falls Bible Institute from 1960 – 1962.

As a lecture, he was obviously assuming that his students had prepared for class by reading and studying the pertinent scripture and other class material. Thus, his comments were not like a sermon, but lectures to enhance the students’ theological understanding. He emphasized a detailed study of the scripture and incorporated analysis that he gained from his study of Bible commentaries and books on the related subject matter. These lectures are remarkably free of any personal opinions, personal illustrations or “sermonizing” of any kind. While at other times in his career he was very much the preacher and evangelist, in these late-in-life roles of Bible Professor, he was very much the educator.

John Douglas Cox, grandson of Sidney Cox. December 29, 2008.

Now, if you'll turn please to Chapters 3 and 4 - Chapters 3 & 4 of the Epistle to the Hebrews. We have reached a very important and interesting point. We only need to remind ourselves of a certain fact or two to be quite sure of that.

One is this, that this matter of, “The rest of God” is mentioned eleven times in one chapter. Now, when you find a subject eleven times in one chapter, that marks it as being important. One of the things we need to constantly keep before us is the simple practice of observing the repeated words of scripture. Whenever you find a word repeated, you can be quite sure it is something of considerable importance. Repeated words. Now, that's the first thing.

And in the second place, this rest that we're talking about is referred to no less than five times as, 'The rest of God.' God says, “It's my rest, my rest.” Now, whenever you find the personal pronoun

connected with the name of God, you can be quite sure that it is something of tremendous importance. When God indicates 'my bread in the wilderness, my manna in the wilderness, my water out of the rock, my guidance through the wilderness;' whenever the personal pronoun appears in connection with the name of God, stop long enough to look at it, because it's always important there. When you find our Lord Jesus talking particularly as He did when He was down here on earth, instead of 'my' it's 'I am'. And you can hear him saying, 'I am the bread and I am the water and I am the light.' And what he's saying is, 'It's my bread, my water, my light,' and so on all the way through. Now, that makes it very important indeed.

Now, I want to review it with you, this section that begins in Chapter 3 and continues, is expounded in Chapter 4. Now, what does that remind us of? Of what does that remind us? Let's put it correctly there. (audience responds) That's right, a subject is introduced in one chapter, it is continued and explained in the following one. Now, you find that over and over again. Now, here is one of the instances where you find that very thing. A subject is introduced in one chapter and it is continued and expounded, explained, illustrated in the following chapter. Now, you've got that here before us this morning. Now, I want you to look at this matter of 'The rest of God' and I'm going to just review it with you for the last part of the 3rd chapter and also what is said about it in Chapter 4.

Now, remember, that up to this point we have been seeing the introduction of the great contrasts of the book of Hebrews. In the beginning of Chapter 3, you find the superiority of Christ over Moses as the first priest of Israel. Now, tell me, please, you don't need to say it out loud, but tell me in your own hearts and minds, what is the subject that is mentioned at the end of Chapter 2? Now, stop a minute and think and don't talk. Now, what is the subject that's mentioned at the end of Chapter 2? Now, when you get into Chapter 3 you find the contrast between our Lord as our great high priest of whom three things are said at the end of Chapter 2 and then the contrast with Moses. Now, it's mentioned at the end of Chapter 2, it is developed in Chapter 3.

And then you find this rather interesting, I was going to say strange, thing. I don't think that's the word, but interesting thing that the writer to the Hebrews stops every once in a while and intersperses a section of explanation - a parenthesis, and you find that the parenthesis is usually connected with a warning. Now, we have seen up to now a number of warnings. We'll bring them together in just a moment. But the subject that he's now to talk about is, 'The rest of God.'

Because the other subjects that we have mentioned before, for instance, so great salvation in Chapter 2; the high priestly ministry of our Lord in Chapter 3. They all lead to this, 'The rest of God.' What is the ultimate purpose of salvation? Just to change a sinner into a respectable person? Just to deal with his sin? Just to blot out his transgressions? I hope I'm not saying the wrong words when I say 'just to,' because you can't measure the importance of the things I've just said. But that isn't the end of the line, is it? Not at all. What is the purpose of it all? What is the purpose of the ministry of our great high priest? It is to bring that sinner, now redeemed, now transformed, now born again into the right fellowship with God.

Now, the heart of sin, my dear, is, we are out of fellowship with God and the cross is God's means of bringing us back into fellowship with Himself. Now, when you talk about fellowship with God, that's only another way of saying, 'The rest of God.' Because the most restless place for either a saint or a

sinner to be is out of fellowship with God. Now, there are some of us in this room who know how very restless that place is, when you are out of fellowship with God. Now, if you don't know, I do. I sure do. I know the unrest there and so do you. Now, this then is the thought that is before us.

We're going to talk about this ultimate thing, 'the rest of God.' As if God is saying all the way through here, 'I want you to tell these folks about my son in whom all my glory is seen, the one through whom all the streams of blessing are now to flow. I want you to tell them about the so great salvation that has so great a Savior, and so great a sinner, and so great a result, and so great a victory. I want you to tell them about that. I want you to tell these Jews, particularly of his superiority over Moses, but I want you to tell them more than ever, that I want them back in the inner circle of rest near the heart of God.' Now, that's what he's after.

And it applies to this crowd and this crowd. If these people go back into Judaism there is no more possibility of them finding rest with God. If these people who possess, continue to walk with the clutchings and cumbrances of Judaism all the way around them, trying to mix law with grace and all the rest of it, there will be no rest there at all. And so whether it's this side or this side, the rest of God is the ultimate thing that God has in mind for us.

Now, I want you to notice it, and we'll summarize it under four headings. Now, you notice this, probably you will want to take it down. One, the wonder of it. Now, remember our subject is the rest of God. This may suggest an outline for you. I didn't have this in mind at all until late last night when I was going over as I usually do the thoughts and praying about our classes for the next day, and I was thinking about this class and it came to me that perhaps we could summarize this subject under four headings. And then it dawned on me, that would make a good sermon. And it may dawn on you that it would make a good sermon, and if so that would be fine.

Now, first of all, then the wonder of it. Look at this rest of God and consider the wonder of it. Now, remember some of the things we have already said. It is mentioned eleven times in one chapter and you have the references on that. It is spoken of as, 'My rest.' Three, it is a rest that God Himself enjoys. Four, He wants to share it with us. Whatever God has, and don't ask me to explain this, God wants to share it with us. Now, I can't tell you why at all. You can't put that into words, but that's true just the same. No matter what God is, no matter what God has, He wants to share it with us. Now, you can spend all the rest of your life and three parts of eternity trying to explain that, and when you get through, you'll need the rest of eternity too. Now, He wants to share it with us. And five, or E, if such a rest is harmony with God then discordant things must be set aside. If there is something, let me put it in another way, if there is something that spoils the rest of God and our relationship with Him, then that thing must be set aside. Now, there's the first point of it there - the wonder of it.

Now, let's take the second one, number two - the road leading to it is beset by danger. The road leading to the rest of God is beset by danger. If there is one thing - you don't need to write this down - but if there is one thing Satan would seek to prevent us from enjoying, it is the rest of God. Because, don't forget my dear, rest is power. The explanation in most cases of powerlessness is that there is something that causes unrest - sand in the gears, something there.

That last phrase was a quotation. I didn't think that one up. I read that in a little church bulletin that

came to us a day or two ago - sand in the gears. That was said by Malcolm Crunk, the great and wonderful pastor of the Bible Church in Wheaton, Illinois. And that was one of the quotations that they were bringing out of there. And when I say great and wonderful pastor, I mean just exactly that. He sure is.

Now, let's have a look at these dangers. Let's number them. We say it's beset with dangers. Let's look at them. We don't have to figure them out, they're all told to us. One, the danger of drifting. - Chapter 2:1. Two, the danger of neglect. - Chapter 2:3. 2 & 3 I think it is. But, it's right there. Neglect - some other day, some other time, some other way, when I get good and ready. Ah, you say, that's what the sinner says. Wait a minute. That's what the saint says too. Don't forget it. Now, again, if you haven't said that to God, I have. I sure have. And you'd better wait a minute. I'm not quite ready for that yet. Neglect, neglect - for the saint and for the sinner. Don't forget, you do not neglect a thing you do not possess.

Alright, now the third one is this, failure to hear. "If you will hear his voice," and you find that phrase two or three times, "If you will hear his voice." Dull of hearing. Saint and sinner. Now, remember, there's the third one. Now, if ye will hear his voice, or if you fail to hear his voice and heed it, what does that lead to? You've got your ears affected by the first. But it doesn't stay here, does it? It goes way on down and it affects what we call our heart. "If ye hear his voice, harden not your hearts."¹ Now, that's the next thing, hardness of heart - an inner rebellion that will come. Now, that's the fourth of these dangers.

And finally, in Chapter 4:1 the phrase 'coming short of it'. You miss it. You miss it. Now, 'coming short of it' is a danger word. Let me give you a picture of what I mean. Here is a man drowning out in the water. Somebody throws him a rope and he's just got strength to get almost to that rope, but he just misses it. He comes short of it. You see? Now, that's the picture that's there. Coming short of it.

Now, let me repeat that in case you want to put that down. First of all there's the point number one: the wonder of it. And fact number two: the road leading to it is beset with dangers. And we've got the five dangers that have already been mentioned: drifting, neglect, failure to hear, hardening of heart, coming short of it.

Now, let's go on and look at the next one. Fact three: illustrations of it. Not only do we get the teaching regarding it, but we get the illustrations of it. Now remember, we have got three great illustrations here. One is creation rest. Now, these are the things that are mentioned in the teaching section of this book that we are now considering. God rested in creation. Now, remember that God is not inviting us to enter into His creation rest, because His creation rest was disturbed, wasn't it? It was good and God rested in it, and then something happened. And sin came and God's creation rest was disturbed.

Do you think God rests in your garden that will bring forth weeds and nastinesses of all kinds unless you are continually working at it? Do you think that's the kind of rest that God enjoys? Not at all. It wasn't like that in Eden. Not at all. It wasn't like that in Eden. Oh no, not at all. Do you think God enjoys roses that grow on a bush that has thorns on it? Oh no, not at all. It wasn't like that in Eden, not

1 Hebrews 3:15

at all. And when sin came, God's rest was disturbed. And the thing, the continuing peace in the heart of God, and I say this thoughtfully, is that He can see down through the years where this that has been disturbed will now be restored. Now, that's what God can see. Now, let's look at it here. Creation rest, a rest that's broken.

Look at it again. The Canaan rest. And that wasn't a big success either, was it? - because remember, that the Canaan rest, as far as God's people are concerned, is still in the distance. It was disturbed then. The people that were to go into the Canaan rest, into the land of promise, failed there and they went in afterwards, but it wasn't a place of rest. And it isn't a place of rest now.

Do you mind if I ask you something? Where are God's chosen people now? Where? Well, there's a fragment of them that have gone back to this land of promise in unbelief. But they are only occupying a little corner of God's promise of it and they never will until one day somebody's coming back. And when they do, then the Canaan rest will be restored again. So that you've got a creation rest broken. You have a Canaan rest that is broken.

But listen, there's another rest of God and there, it will never be disturbed, never. And that's the rest of God in the thing His son did on Calvary. Now, with all the turmoils around, God rests in the finished work of Calvary. Now, that will never change. Nothing will ever need to be added to it. When deity says finished, there is nothing that can be added to that. And the loud voice of Calvary says, "It is finished." Paid in full. And all the involvements of sin, its guilt, its suffering, its separation, and those are the three involvements of guilt by the way. I don't whether you caught that, but that's it. The three involvements of sin: its guilt, its sorrow, and its separation, were all borne on Calvary, will never need to be borne again. Never. He took my place. Now, God rests in that. It'll never need to be changed. You can never add to it. It is finished so that never can it more than finished be. "Finished once and finished ever. Nothing can undo the plea. Finished, fainting heart be glad. Finished, I can nothing add." Now, that verse was written by Dr. W. Stillman Martin of Atlanta. One of our very dear friends, gone to Heaven now. The man who wrote for us, "God Will Take Care of You" and lots of others like it. That's what he said. Now, there's God resting in that.

Alright now, on the way, God gives us protection. Don't forget, my dear, that with every problem, there comes from God the protection. Every danger, God automatically throws the protection around us, automatically. It's always together. There's never a danger without the protection. Now, what has God given us as protection along the road beset by dangers? What? Well, now look at it. And these are all in here. Here they are. One, the Word, W-O-R-D - Chapter 4:12. You will find it. The Word. Now, that's the first thing. He throws around us the protection of his Word. Always. There it is, all the way around us, the protection of his Word.

Now, let's look again. The next protection is: the work of our high priest at the right hand of the Father. These are God's provisions for our safekeeping along the road. The Word. Two: the unfailing ministry of the high priest at the right hand of God. Don't forget, at the end of Chapter 2, He is spoken of as we mentioned a moment ago in three ways. He is merciful, faithful, and understanding; this high priest.

Now, because of Him, we hold fast. Now, that spoils it, doesn't it? Because up to now, He was doing everything. "Now, it all depends on us," or does it? Now, we hold fast. "Unless we hold fast!"

I hope it doesn't mean that, because if it does I might as well stop now, because I can't hold fast any more than you can. I can't.

Now, let me remind you of something, that hold fast involves two hands. Watch it. I don't hold fast this way. I hold fast to something. And in this case, I hold fast to someone. Alright, we're going to hold fast. Now, you just watch the way this is done because you had better get this, my dear. You'd better get this and learn this right now. You put out your hand and you find another hand is taking hold of you, because hold fast involves two hands. My hand holds fast and his hand holds fast. Now, let me ask you something. Which is the most important of those two?

Here's a boy, a little boy, and don't forget that in these chapters we have three or four words indicating that we are little children in the family of God - sons, children, and so on. We are children in the family of God.

Now, let me tell you a story, because if this hasn't happened in your life, it will one of these days, probably. If the Lord ever sends you a husband you can be quite sure that this thing's going to happen one of these days. And if he ever sends you a wife you can be quite sure that it's going to happen one of these days. It sure will.

A little boy is walking along with his father and they come to a place of danger - slippery rocks, icy roads, and a great big hand is thrust down beside that little boy. And a big voice says to that little boy, 'Now son, you hold on. You hold on. You hold on. Hold tight. Hold tight. Hold fast. Hold on. Hold on.' And the little boy puts out his hand and takes a firm grip on his father's hand. And when they get beyond this place of slipperiness, icy roads, slippery rocks, the little boy says with exultation in his heart, 'I sure held on, didn't I Daddy? I sure held on, didn't I? I sure held fast.' And father says, 'Sure son. You certainly did hold fast. You sure did hold fast.' But what was it depending on? - the little boy holding fast? Whose hand was it that mattered in a moment like that?

Now, don't forget that your heavenly father says exactly the same thing to you, "My child, you're coming to a slippery place. You're coming to a place where the roads are icy. You're coming to a slippery place. I want you to hold on. Hold fast. I want you to hold fast, continually hold fast. Don't let your grip go for a minute." Hold fast to what? Hold fast to whom? And if my little feeble grip is holding fast to His great big hand, what do you think His hand is doing with mine and to me and for me? What? What matters, my little feeble grip, this arm of flesh that will fail you, "Ye dare not trust your own?" What matters, this hand or His hand? My weakness or His strength? My sure-footedness or His? What do you think matters?

Now, I want to give you a question. Write this down, will you? I promised this to you. I don't know if it was much of a promise, but it may help you. Wednesday review. Friday test. And I wanted to give you the question on 'the rest of God' now and you can spend time writing it out, completing it before Friday comes at all. And all you'll have to do will be to attach it to the paper that you write in which you answer the other questions, that's all. The biggest question will be answered ahead of time, which will give you a little more time and it will take at least a little tension off this point.

Now, here is the question. Write it down, if you please. "Discuss briefly but carefully the subject, 'God's rest'. One, the marvel of it. Two, dangers along the road. Three, illustrations of it. Four, God's provision and protection. And five, what is meant by 'hold fast.' Now, I'll go back and repeat that. And I'll say it slowly and if there's any spot right there where you haven't got it quite clearly there, don't hesitate to stop me. Now, I'll go right back to the beginning of it. You follow it there if you will. "Discuss briefly but carefully the subject of 'God's rest.' One, the marvel of it. Eleven times in one chapter. Two, dangers along the road. Three, illustrations of it. Four, God's provision and protection. And five, what is meant by 'hold fast.' Now, that's question number ten. And I would suggest that you write it out carefully; that you simply number your question there, number ten, and then write it out as carefully and fully as you care to. Now, you've got time to do this. And if you haven't got time, you must make time between now and Friday to write it out carefully.

And don't forget, my dear, it's coming back to you. I'm not going to keep this at all. I want you to be proud of it when it comes back to you. I want you to be proud of the way it looks, the paper. Proud of the way you wrote it. Proud of the thought you put into it. Proud enough to put it away in your records so that you can keep it and give it to your grandchildren, and tell your grandchildren years from now, "That's the kind of a student I was when I was at Toccoa Falls." They'll probably look at you and say, 'Oh yeah?' But try it anyhow. Try it anyhow.

Now, I thought maybe it would be well for us just to take a moment here, seeing that we are talking about test papers, to give just a bit of instruction for anyone who has not been in my classes before as to the way in which I want you to write a test paper. First of all, I want you to write it in ink. Don't turn a paper back to me written in pencil, because I won't accept it. So that means, you bring a fountain pen that is properly inked. Don't be in the embarrassing position of having to borrow something from somebody else, because they may not have another one. Be sure that you've got that. Write it in ink.

And carefully number the pages of your test paper. Now, I don't mind if you write on both sides of the paper. Paper doesn't cost very much and it is better to write on one side, but it's better for us I can tell you that. But if you prefer, and I'm going to leave that with you and I shan't even comment on it, if you want to just turn over the page and write on the back of it, it's quite alright with me. I don't mind at all. I don't mind. Just which ever way you would like it to come back to you. But carefully number the pages. Now, here's the next thing.

I want you to leave a margin on the left hand side of the page of at least an inch and a half. Again, I don't mind whether you write on ruled paper or plain paper, just which ever you like. I don't care, as long as I can read it. I want you to leave a space or a margin of an inch and a half on this side so that I can put in comments and put in markings, and I'm not crowded. If you start right over here, then I haven't got anywhere where I can put in my markings without writing it right on the top of what you have said.

Now, you do not need to copy the question, just number it. Whatever the question is, just number it. It will be there on your test paper and you be quite sure that you just number it. One, and then go on. If there happens to be A,B and C, I would suggest that you do this. And this, again, will make it better for you and for us. A, and then answer. B, and then answer. C, and then answer. Don't put it A, B all on the one line, C. You'd be surprised how difficult it is sometimes to sort things out, unless they're

arranged in order. And one of the good things that we do about a test like this is to learn, if we haven't already learned, the art of arranging things in order - putting them in the proper order. Put A and then answer. B and then answer. And you will find A,B and C on several of these things. No need to copy the question.

Now, the other thing that I want you to do is to leave a space of at least one inch between one question and another. Here is number one, it's all answered. Now, you leave a space of one inch, and then you answer number two. Leave your space right in there, because I may have something to say about that answer of yours. And I'd like to be able to put it somewhere or other. I like to put the marks here, but I like to put comments in here, if it's necessary. If we have to take marks off I like to explain why, if we possibly can, so that you know where the error comes. And when that happens, then it becomes a good thing. And the error is not merely a matter that needs to get you down. Sometimes we learn more from our mistakes than we do any other way. And after all, that's what we're here for. We're here to learn things.

Now, let me go over just once more here this question of 'the rest of God,' and just review it again for just a moment or two. First of all, it is mentioned in Chapter 3. It is developed in Chapter 4. There are four points to it. One, the wonder of it. It is mentioned eleven times in Chapter 4. It is spoken of as, 'my rest.' It is a rest that God himself enjoys. He wants to share it with us. And if such a rest is harmony with God, then discordant things must be set aside. Now, He mentions a lot of discordant things, and the strange thing about it is, He doesn't talk about the usual things as being disturbing, discordant at all. What He talks about is neglect and drifting and failure to hear, that results in hardness of heart. You see?

Now, the second point is that the road leading to it is beset by danger. Satan seeks to prevent us from entering into this rest place of peace and power. The dangers are: drifting, neglect, failure to hear, hardness of heart, and coming short of it.

The illustrations, fact three. The creation rest, broken. Canaan rest, denied. Calvary rest, unchanged, always complete. God rests in Calvary and we rest there or we do not rest at all. We either find rest in the cross or we do not find rest at all.

Fact four, God's provision and protection. The Word, it is written. Two, the high priest: merciful, faithful, understanding. C, because of Him we hold fast. Hold fast to what? His hand and my hand locked together. That's what 'hold fast' means - His hand and my hand locked together. It isn't my hand holding on to some mythical something or other out there, however important that may be. I don't put my hand out and hold onto faith. And I say that very reverently. I put my hand out and I hold onto the hand of God. That's what hold fast means - two hands locked together and the grip will never slip, my dear, unless He lets go. And the question that I gave you was this.

Now, if a couple of you fellows would give out these little chorus leaflets here.... (track ends)

(Tracks 10 – 17)

Revelation – Lesson 4. This audio is identical to CD 96-1 and was not transcribed.