

Hebrews 10:19-25

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 29 September 2019

Preacher: Clay Naylor

[0 : 00] Go ahead and up up your Bibles to Hebrews chapter 10. My thanks to all of you parents and grandparents who have done your best to explain to me what newborn life is like.

! It's everything you said it would be. It's been pretty awesome, but tonight was, last night was one of those nights.

So, very thankful to be here with everyone. Let's see, Hebrews 10, we're going to continue on.

Reese did a fine job of going through, all the way down to verse 18 in chapter 10.

And we're getting into Hebrews 10. It's kind of called the lettuce patch of Scripture. I didn't think it was that funny either, but lettuce is repeated quite a few bits in our passage.

And everyone always said that, and everybody found that funny. But apparently y'all don't either.

But we're going to start in verse 19 of Hebrews 10.

[1 : 09] Here we go. Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way that He opened for us through the curtain, that is, through His flesh, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart and full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful. And let us consider how to stir up one another into love and good works, not neglecting to meet together as is habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the day drawing near.

Let's pray together. Father, we love You. We respect You. This is Your Word.

And so, Lord, may we see it as a blessing, a gift of grace this morning, something that each one of us need to hear, something that You have brought each one to hear, Lord, and to allow it to soak into their souls and their hearts.

And, Lord, all of us are very tempted to always draw back from You instead of drawing near to You.

And so, Lord, may You minister this passage to our hearts as You see fit.

[2 : 49] And, Lord, we are so thankful for Your grace. Amen. So, following along with our theme in Hebrews, the overall theme, you could say, is Jesus is superior.

Jesus is better than. That's really close. Jesus is better than the old covenant. And we have been looking at the priesthood.

We've looked at how Christ is superior to the Arianic priesthood, how Christ is superior to the sacrificial system, how He is the best and the great eternal high priest that we are to look to.

And I guess our writer now is turning from so much instruction to start encouraging everyone. This is all the stuff I've been telling you in the previous chapters.

I'm now trying to tell you how this ought to affect your life, how this ought to encourage you and drive you on to have confidence to draw near to the living God and strengthen your faith.

[3 : 56] So, in our passage today, something that kind of points out is, if you notice, the let us stands out three different times in our passage.

And it's important for us to understand that though our salvation is individual, though God has saved us as individuals and has relationship with each of us individually, what a blessing.

He also has not just saved us, but He saved a people. He saved the church. He has saved a group of us to be called His own. And we're to be together. We are the family of God.

And so, that's why there's so much instruction on the one another's in Scripture. And there's also these three exhortations here of, let us draw near together.

So, He's calling the believers He's writing to, to draw near to God. So, let us. Very thankful for the church. And He talks about this in, I guess, what you could almost call the three huge Christian

virtues.

[4 : 59] He mentions faith, hope, and love in verse 22, 23, and 24. So, the first point today in the let us idea is, number one, let us draw near to God in faith.

And we see this in verses 19 through 22. Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way that He opened for us through the curtain, that is, through His flesh.

And since we have a great high priest over the house of God, let us draw near with true heart and full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.

So, a great aim of the writer of Hebrews, as he mentions this over and over and over, is one of his favorite phrases in the book, is draw near to God.

So, he doesn't want us just to settle for a dry, ritualistic, religious life. He wants us to have fellowship with God. He desires God not to be a distant thought in our minds, but a near and present reality.

[6 : 13] So, he's calling us to draw near. Many of us have this idea of God. He's more of a concept in our minds. He's more of a knowledge just in our head.

But we have to connect that to our heart and realize He actually is a living being who's present with us. He is a person. And the writer of Hebrews wants us to come near, as the Puritans used to say, to have a sweet communion with God, to have fellowship with God.

That is the goal and the heartbeat of the writer of Hebrews. He wants the Heavenly Father to be with His children. So, He's calling us to draw near.

And it's not a physical act. It's not like drawing near. It's this physical thing we do. We go from one location to another location. It's a spiritual act.

We have fellowship with God through faith. It's as distant as the Holy of Holies in heaven, but as near as the door of faith.

[7 : 20] God is beckoning us, and even sort of lovingly commanding us to draw near, to come to Himself, to approach Him. And draw near for what? Right.

Well, again, one of the favorite phrases. So, three of the seven occurrences in the book of Hebrews. I'll just read you three of them. In chapter 4, verse 16, He says, Let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. He is able to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them. And then you look at, what's this next verse here?

It's in chapter 11, verse 6, which we haven't gotten to yet. It's going to be a great passage. It says, Without faith, it is impossible to please Him. For he who draws near to God must believe that He is, and that He is the rewarder of those who seek Him.

So, all this drawing near language, drawing near to God for fellowship, to approach the throne of grace for mercy. And so, the question I asked myself when I was studying this, and I'm asking you this morning, is, do you lack confidence to approach the holy, majestic, sovereign God?

[8 : 44] And when I pondered that thought, I'm a little fearful. I shudder a little bit to think that how messy my life is, that I could actually approach, come before the living God, and not be consumed because of my sin.

And, we would naturally want to draw back from God. The God who dwells in unapproachable light, as Paul called it.

And, even the most bold of us would probably shrink back when we really ponder stepping into the holy presence of God. We read about all these moral and upright men in Scripture that we look to as heroes, and we see that they very easily were terrified when they appear before God.

Isaiah, for example. John, the Apostle John, terrified when encountering the holy presence of God. And so, I want you to stop and think about this as well.

When is the last time you actually just sat still and enjoyed the fellowship of the Lord? I feel like I'm just so busy sometimes just trying to check the boxes and read and pray and just get on with it.

[10 : 04] It's kind of like when you have a conversation with someone and they're just kind of going, and they're kind of looking around, not really giving you attention, not really taking in what you're saying.

I feel like that's how we often treat God. We're not giving Him our full attention, and He desires us to draw near for fellowship, draw near to worship.

So when was the last time that you had that? That sweet fellowship with God where you just sat at the feet of Jesus and worshiped and prayed and poured your heart out to Him?

And in our passage, we see that there's probably a couple ways to break this down, and one of them is just a question we can ask, like, how is it that we can draw near to God?

Like, what's made that possible? How can we actually do it? And when you look at verse 19 and 20, we see that it's by the blood of Jesus. As you might remember, the tabernacle and then later, the temple, will have this long veil that separated sinful man from entering the Holy of Holies where the very presence of God manifested.

[11 : 16] The curtain or the veil symbolized separation between us and a fallen sinful man and relationship with God from the holy presence of God.

It's as if the veil could actually talk. It would probably say something like, that's far enough. You may go no further. You are defiled. You are sinful.

You cannot come any closer. Do not draw near to God, but draw away, or you will perish. I think that's like what the veil would actually say. Like, get away.

Back off. You cannot enter into the presence of this most holy God. So, I only have a couple places for you to look outside our main passage today, but flip over to Matthew chapter 27, the gospel of Matthew chapter 27.

And this is around the crucifixion of Jesus, just a small little account. But, when we think about what the veil meant, that separation idea, that you cannot come closer, we are broken and sinful, and God is holy.

[12 : 25] And yet, we see, that God, from eternity past, had a plan to bring us near to himself.

Look at verse 50. Just kind of go down. We can read this whole story, but the crucifixion has been going on, and it gets to the very end. You look at verse 50.

It says, Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, and yielded up his spirit. And behold, the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom.

And the earth shook, and the rocks were split. The tombs also were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised, and coming out of the tombs after his resurrection, they went into the holy city, and appeared to many.

When the centurion, and those who were with him, keeping watch over Jesus, saw the earthquake, and what took place, they were filled with awe, or fear, and said, Truly, this was the Son of God.

[13 : 35] And we see in our passage, this idea of how, when Jesus breathed his last, the veil of the temple was torn, from top to bottom. An impossible task, for just a human being to do.

There's a huge veil, in the temple of Herod. A huge veil. And so what did that symbolize? Well, flip back to our passage in Hebrews, and we see that, the curtain of the temple, was torn in two, from top to bottom.

And now the writer is saying, the good news now, is that we can, with confidence, enter the holy places, by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way, that he opened for us, through the curtain, that is, through his flesh.

So Jesus' flesh, his body, is identified, with the curtain, or with the veil, metaphorically, torn at his death. So we can now, walk with confidence, in faith, through the torn curtain, of Christ, if you would, into the presence of God.

His body was torn, his blood was spilled, and he has provided the way, for us to now have access, to God. Chilling thought, to me, that Christ's body, was torn, his blood spilled, and it gives us access, to the holy of holies, to have fellowship, with God.

[14 : 54] And that's the gospel promises, that one time, you could go no further. None of us could approach, none of us could enter in, but now, because of his son, we no longer draw back, in fear, but we can draw near, with confidence.

Because of what Jesus has done, he's opened a new, and living way, for us to have access, to come and be with God. So, that is a, crazy connection.

You want to talk about, just how the book of Hebrews, connects to so much, from the old covenant, well, that separation, has now been dealt with. We now can have access, alone, through Jesus.

Right? That is a, a huge blessing, huge gospel promise, that we have. Secondly, we also see in our passage, in Hebrews here, how else, can we enter in?

Right? How can we draw near to God, by our great high priest? And we have talked about this, constantly on Sunday mornings, that Jesus is, far greater, far superior, than any priest, to come

before him.

[15 : 59] Greater than Aaron himself, greater than Moses. And he is, an eternal high priest. He never, he's not going to die, he keeps office forever, he's not going anywhere.

He is sympathetic. He's a sympathetic high priest, and he understands, our weakness. He sympathizes, with all that we're going through, so he can present us well, represent us well, before God.

He is a flawless, sinless priest, so he doesn't have to make atonement, for his own sin. He can just go into, the presence of God. All these things, are the beauty of it all.

So remember, at the tabernacle, or the temple, the high priest, only went in, once a year, behind the veil, and he sprinkled blood, on the mercy seat. And people would stand outside, waiting in fear, for him to come back out.

The difference is, Jesus, our great, eternal, sinless, sympathetic high priest, entered not just a copy, like the temple, but he actually entered, into heaven itself, into the actual, holy of holies, and he didn't come out.

[17 : 07] He's still there, and he opened the way, for us to come, and follow him. So one of my favorite, old, timey preachers, from the early 1800's, get into him, and read him.

Robert Murray, McShane. Yeah, I like him, because he's Scottish, but I also like him, because he's just, a really godly guy, and he had respiratory, problems, which I identify with, and he died young, probably at the same age, I would have died, if I hadn't had my transplant, because that's why, I identify with him a lot.

But he preached, a sermon on John 17, in the high priestly prayer, of Jesus. I want you to let this, just soak in. He says, if I could hear, Christ praying for me, in the next room, I would not fear, a million enemies.

Yet distance, makes no difference, he is praying for me. Live near to God, and so all things, will appear to you, little, in comparison, with eternal realities.

Jesus is there, making intercession for us, before the throne of God. And you know, think about someone, that you really love, and trust, and look up to in the faith, and how, just something about, when they pray for you, you just feel like, you're bulletproof.

[18 : 23] You can just run outside, and take on anything. You know, but the idea is, Christ is the one, making intercession for us. Jesus is praying, on our behalf, so we can face anything.

And that's the beauty, of what we have. And also under this passage, if you look at verse 22 again, there's a certain manner, in which we can approach God, which we can draw near to God.

It talks about, with a true heart, and full assurance of faith, all these things. So our hearts represent, our inner life, and our hearts have to be genuine, to approach God.

There's no facade, you can't fake it. God sees right through you. And we must approach Him, with a sincere heart. One that God has, made whole, right?

He wants our heart, He doesn't just want, us to fake our attention. Like I was saying a minute ago, when you sit down, and have a meal with somebody, and you're trying to talk, about something serious, and they're just looking around, and not paying attention.

[19 : 24] And you can just, you know, there's other times, I just say some absurd sentence, just to see if they're listening, kind of thing. And God wants our whole heart, He wants our whole attention, focused on Him.

But that phrase, in the full assurance of faith, we draw near to God again, not in a physical sense, but in faith. Not in doubt or fear, but assurance.

So, we believe here, at this church, that once one person is saved, they are saved forever. And that those who are truly saved, and they alone, will persevere to the end, and be saved.

But you cannot lose your salvation, if it is real. And many people would agree with that, but there's also another part of that. God wants us to have assurance, of our salvation.

He wants us to come, before Him, in full assurance, of faith. And I believe, wholeheartedly, that words like this, wouldn't exist in the Bible, if we actually couldn't know, for sure, that we belong to Christ.

[20 : 25] There would be doubt there, there would be fear, there would not be assurance, of faith. It means we can, experience joy, and peace, and hope, in this life, as a result, of that objective, spiritual reality.

A lot of the Bible writers, talk about assurance, in context of salvation. Colossians 2, verse 2, Paul talks about, full assurance. 1 Thessalonians 1, 5, much assurance.

In Hebrews 6, 11, full assurance, of hope. And now we have, full assurance, of faith. A beautiful word, but the word really means, a complete, and most certain confidence.

So you're not just kind of, hoping, crossing your fingers, kind of wishful thinking, that you belong to God. This means that you know, you belong to God. You can have that peace, that inner quiet. Not all believers, have assurance, but it's something that God wants to give you. If you really belong to him, he wants you to know, that you belong to him, and actually enjoy, the salvation that he's given you.

[21 : 28] And not always be afraid of, falling off the edge. Right? I don't think that words like joy, or peace, would be real words, if that was true. I would not have any peace, or any joy, if I just felt like I would just undo, what God has done.

But praise God, he is the one who saves, and he's the one who, began the good work in us, and he will, finish it. For his name's sake, he will finish it.

Right? And the last place you really have to turn today, but keep your hand in Hebrews 10, is Leviticus 16. So what does all this have to do with heart-sprinkled, bodies-washed?

This idea. But just a couple verses, out of Leviticus 16, when the Lord was instructing Moses, and Moses was passing this on to Aaron, about temple worship, or tabernacle worship at that time, what God desired.

And look at verse 1 and 2 of chapter 16. It says, The Lord spoke to Moses after the death of the two sons of Aaron, when they drew near before the Lord and died.

[22 : 39] So, don't draw near to God at that point. Right? Don't approach God in a sinful way, as his sons had done, and they died. And the Lord said to Moses, Tell Aaron, your brother, not to come at any time into the holy place inside the veil, before the mercy seat that is on the ark, so that he may not die.

For I will appear in the cloud over the mercy seat. Jump down to verse 16. Thus he will make atonement for the holy place, because of the uncleanness of the people of Israel, and because of their transgressions and all their sins.

And so shall do for the tent of meeting, which dwells with them in the midst of their uncleanness.

You see all this separation language? You see this being exclusive?

The high priest only being able to come in once, and he said, Aaron cannot just come in any time he feels like it, or he will die. There is something that needs to be done. And it talks about how the blood is to be sprinkled.

So back in Hebrews, back in Hebrews again, the sacrificial blood that was sprinkled on the priest was an outward sign of their being consecrated for God's service.

[24 : 01] And here the writer is kind of carrying that further and saying that now our hearts are inwardly are sprinkled by the sacrificial blood of Jesus, and his atoning work purifies us from an evil conscience.

And it's so complete that it covers our sin, it covers our shame. The conscience, guys, only condemns us. Do you all know that?

It only says you've broken the law. You may try to reason around it and say, well, it really wasn't that bad. And God really didn't mean it when he said this. But the conscience is just going to say guilty.

It's only going to condemn you. The conscience doesn't know anything of mercy or grace. And because we have sinned, we have an evil conscience.

We have a vexed conscience. Guilt and shame weigh on us constantly all the time for things that we've done. Right?

[25 : 04] But here's the good news. The amazing thing is that the blood of Jesus is so complete, so powerful, that it can remove the guilt and shame and put our conscience at rest.

It can appease our vexed conscience and give us rest. Not because we're sinless, right? Not because our conscience doesn't sometimes accuse us, but because when it does accuse us, we can say in faith that the blood of Christ has covered that.

That Jesus has dealt with that sin, and even though it grieves us, we have a Savior that has shed His priceless blood for us. And we can have a clean conscience because of that.

He has dealt with it. And you can lay down your head on the pillow at night and have peace because of what Christ has done. And not just be torn apart by the nasty things that you've done to yourself and to one another.

The blood of Jesus can bring peace to our conscience. And because that's true, let us draw near. Our bodies wash, most likely alluding to Old Testament imagery of how priests have ceremonially washed themselves with all these different sanctified vessels for service.

[26 : 18] But I guess the connection, I would believe, is here, is pointing forward to how the Holy Spirit cleanses us and purifies us. Not just when we're born again, but as we are being sanctified and as we are growing spiritually.

So there's a huge reminder here. Be reminded. We all need reminders to draw near to God. Though we've been born anew of the Spirit and though we've been adopted as the children of God, and such we are, right?

We still have the strong, I do, strong pull of the flesh on a daily basis. We still have many voices around us telling us that this is what life is about.

This is what you're to pursue. This is what you're to love. The allure of the world and the lies and deception of the evil one. Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it.

We all are like that. So we need reminders like, draw near to God in full assurance of faith. You can draw near. This passage is God calling us to himself.

[27 : 21] So next time you sit down and open up the Word, or next time you're just wanting to sit down and pray with some other friends, draw near to God. Don't just do an intellectual activity.

Ask Him to help your hearts. Connect with Him. Because Christ has prepared the way for you to go. So that's all number one. But the rest of them aren't that long. Number two, the second let us. Number two, let us hold fast to our hope. Verse 23. Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful.

So, secondly, He urges us to persevere by holding on to hope. Another favorite phrase of the writer of Hebrews, this faithful, tenacious, unwavering embrace of what we believe to be true, the confession of our hope.

All that we believe, the gospel, all that we say we believe as followers of Jesus, the confession of our hope. And these truths and promises like God gives us, and the hope is if we actually believe these things, it will produce hope in us.

[28 : 39] Why? Again, what gives you that hope? Because He who promised is faithful. A promise is only good as the one making it.

We all know that to be true. Many of us have been hurt greatly by people who made us promises and didn't keep them or didn't have the power to keep them. Liars and fools cannot be counted on to keep promises.

We've all put our hope in things that let us down. a lot of the leaders of this church, a lot of the time, people just think that we're invincible, that we have it all together.

And then they're disappointed and sometimes even angry that we can't hold them together at times. We can barely hold our own lives together. We need grace as well.

The only person you can fully place your hope in without being let down is God Himself. That's it. You have to bank your hope all in Him.

[29 : 43] And remember, gospel hope is not wishful thinking. It's not crossing our fingers and just hoping it turns out okay. It's this sure, certain confidence. We know that God has made a promise.

And because the Scripture says, in Titus 1 verse 2, we can say that we have hope of eternal life which God, who never lies, has promised before the ages began.

We have a living hope, right? 1 Peter chapter 1 verse 3, according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope. A hope that's active and moving, not just this dead idea, distant thought in our head.

And one of my other Puritan writers I like, he wrote, hope fills the afflicted soul with such inward joy and consolation that it can laugh while tears are in the eye and sigh and sing all in one breath.

It's called rejoicing in hope. So, our hope is real because of the one who has promised. We can throw our lives completely into that.

[30 : 57] The one who promised is faithful. He will do it. Alright, so, thirdly, and lastly, see in verse 24 and 25, let us stir up one another to love.

So, we've seen faith, we've seen hope, and now we see love. Verse 24, let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another and all the more as you see the day drawing near.

We all know that when trials come and when difficult things happen, we're tempted to mainly just think about ourselves. We're not naturally going to be selfless. We, you see the most patient person being destroyed by a certain thing that they're going through.

We're not, love is not our natural outflow when pressure is put on us. It usually is self-preservation, survival mode. But, great gospel faith, great gospel hope that we possess in Christ will inevitably lead us to gospel love, which is sacrificial.

It puts other people before itself. That's as the writer is wanting us to see here that if you believe all these things, if you really do, it's going to lead to love in the form of good works.

[32 : 25] Right? So, but a lot of us get lazy, we get apathetic, we slow down. And so, he puts the phrase in there, stir up, let us consider.

you have to stop and think about it. Give thoughtful consideration to how you are showing love to other believers. So, stir up means to provoke or incite them.

We need that. We need to do that for each other because many of us are just tempted to fall asleep. And that's stimulated by us meeting together for worship, fellowship, mutual encouragement.

College students, you cannot do the Christian life on your own. You have a home and that's the church. And you're married to it whether you like it or not. This is your family.

We all belong to the body of Christ. Fellow believers bought with the blood of Jesus. We are his bride and don't hate on his bride.

[33 : 28] He'd saved you as an individual but he has saved a people for his own possession, the church. And he calls us to be with one another because we need one another.

Here in the Bible Belt it's just so easy just to sort of blend in but you go to many, many parts of this world the other few, few believers in a certain community are precious to one another.

They treasure one another deeply because that's all they have. That's their family. and we need each other for the goal of perseverance.

This is a picture of the local church, the gathering of the saints. And he's saying back then, which is funny, right? Back then in the first century, no less true today, some people are neglecting this gathering.

Some people are just choosing not to come around. They're trying to be solo. They're trying to do this thing on their own. They're neglecting the gathering or the meeting of the saints.

[34 : 34] He's saying don't do that as is the habit of some. We need each other. If you want to cool off and really lose your passion for Jesus, just go solo for a little while and you'll just get your clock cleaned.

You don't have the encouragement. You don't have the fellowship. We need one another. I've done that quite a few times. It doesn't work out. And some people would even argue, what about Paul? He was solo. Not really. Not all the time. Wherever he went, he had other believers. He had the church that God grew at that place. And there were times he was forced to be alone, but he always had other believers as well.

And it says encouraging one another as even more so as you see the day drawing near. That's the return of Christ, the judgment. So even as you think and you see the end coming, step it up.

Continue stepping it up. Love one another. Serve one another even as the day draws near.

Knowing that it's coming. The church is the biggest blessing that a believer can have.

[35 : 43] And I hope that you've experienced that. I hope you've experienced the joy that God desires to give you through the local body. I know many of us have. This is our family.

We don't even know what we would do. I don't even know what I would do without y'all, honestly. It's such a blessing that God has given us. We're not to do this alone. We need each other.

And encouraging one another all the more. You see the day drawing near. There's urgency here.

Stir up one another. So there's all these exhortations for let us do this and let us do that.

Circle those in your Bible. It's okay for you to write in your Bible. All right. If it's not, I'm in trouble.

So, with that in mind, let's pray together.