

## Heb. 10:19-25

### [Intro:]

Tired – that time of year  
Don't need cheerleading pep talk  
Need Jesus – need to hear the good news –  
I desperately need to be reminded of the Gospel about now, you are invited to listen in  
So, if you don't mind, I'd like to spend a little time bragging about Jesus  
And reminding you of what you already know

### [Heb. 10:19-25 Read]

<sup>19</sup> Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, <sup>20</sup> by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body, <sup>21</sup> and since we have a great priest over the house of God, <sup>22</sup> let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water. <sup>23</sup> Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. <sup>24</sup> And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. <sup>25</sup> 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..

### [Pray]

Backward service, backward preaching –  
start at the end of the passage with the application first  
Because I don't want to concentrate on what we are commanded to do,  
I want to concentrate most of our time on the reasons why we should do it  
I want you to hear the good news of Jesus more than commands and rules

### [Application/Commands]

There are 3 commands in this passage:

Focus on encouraging others, Hold on to hope, and draw near to God

1. First command – v. 24- Let us set our hearts on one another to provoke them on to love and good works

- a. **Focus your mind on one another**

cf. 3:1 “fix your thoughts on Jesus”

Carefully consider, be on the hunt for opportunities

with the same regularity and intensity that some of you look around scanning for a potential spouse, look around for an opportunity to encourage someone

- b. **Why? Purpose =**

- i. Provoke one another – strong word

Everyone needs a friend who drives them to be better and who is willing to speak honestly to them, even the difficult things to hear

The irritation of a grain of sand is what causes an oyster make a pearl

Not being a legalistic, judgmental jerk,

but giving positive peer pressure to be better

“You can be better, you don't need to settle”

We can sin against our brother or sister by keeping our mouth shut

ii. Provoke to love and good works

To loving and living according to Christ's character

“But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called “today,” that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.” 3:13

c. **How? Manner – way to do it**

i. Don't forsake assembly together

Can't provoke people if you are never with them

Can do this outside a church building – not just talking about Sunday church, but all of life together

We know it is possible to be present, but not engaged

It is too easy and common to isolate yourself, even in the midst of a crowd

ii. But, Encourage one another

Building one another up, not just hanging out

When you're together, don't just talk about trivial things, don't just talk about personal things, but talk about Jesus things, preach the Gospel to one another

Walk with the wise and you will grow wise, b/c iron sharpens iron

Restatement – so let's be on the lookout how we can provoke one another to grow in love and good works – to grow in Christ and in His character

2. 2<sup>nd</sup> command – v. 23 - Let Us Hold firmly to the confession of hope

a. Holding fast our hope

We are to have stubborn tenacity in keeping our Christian conviction and hope Even against opposition and hardship and doubt

b. **How? Manner** – without wavering, without bending

Uncompromising resolve and persistence in hoping on Christ

Hang on, even when it is difficult – there are tremendous reasons to do so, we'll get to in a minute

3. 3<sup>rd</sup> command – v. 22 - Let Us Draw near to God

a. **Def.** – what that looks like – described a few times earlier in Hebrews

**Hebrews 4:16** “Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.”

At minimum this means prayer and devotion to God, intimate personal relationship

Feeling His mercy and receiving His forgiveness and welcome

Experiencing His fatherly care and finding His help in every circumstance

b. **Manner** – how?

i. Boldness of access

Approach with confidence (not presumption or arrogance)

– key card or security badge – right to be here, supposed to have access

– because of what we'll see earlier in the passage

ii. With a true heart

Sometimes translated sincere heart, compared to pure heart,  
opposite of “evil, unbelieving heart” 3:12 or hard heart 3:8

A heart that has been changed and made appropriate for God’s presence

iii. With full assurance of faith

With a certainty and assurance that comes from complete trust

These in summary are the 3 commands in this passage for us to obey

## [Transition]

You may be thinking “I’m tired enough already and you have just added 3 more commands to my life!”

Not my intention to burden you, but to help you

That’s why I wanted to do the application first, to get it out of the way,

I want us to take these commands seriously, but what I want to leave ringing in your ears is not a command to work, but a promise of grace that builds hope and trust in God’s abundant provision

Need to connect our application with God’s reasons, motivations and power

That will help us with these 3 and with every other command, duty and desire to please God

Why does Hebrews tell us to do these things?

BECAUSE WE CAN

And We Can because of Who Jesus is and what HE HAS DONE

It’s kind of like the logic of your mother when she told you to eat your dinner because there were children starving in China

When we realize what a privilege and an opportunity we actually have, we take it much more seriously

The writer of Hebrews definitely helps us because he has not communicated these 3 commands out of thin air, but has clearly connected them with Gospel reasons.

He gives the reasons for all the commands - which is where I want us to concentrate – this is what I believe will help us most today

Jesus has done something that makes it possible for us all to experience what the Old Testament believers would have given anything to have

What a privilege we have in Christ!

## [Grounding reasons:]

In this passage, the author gives us these three grounding reasons why we should do these things

[REASONS] – Jesus opened our access to God, Jesus continues to mediate for us, and He is faithful to keep His promises

In other words – What He has done, what He is continuing to do, and Who He is.

1. 1<sup>st</sup> reason – v. 19-20 - Jesus has decisively opened unhindered access to the very presence of God.

Why should we draw near? Because Jesus has made the way and brought us near

a. What Kind of access? – full access by a new and living way

**i. Free and full access**

bold and confident access

illustrated throughout Hebrews by contrast with OT tabernacle which had barriers which kept people out from God's presence

Only 1 person could ever enter in, only once a year for a few minutes

In the old order, the way was closed, inaccessible, but now something has changed, so that the way is wide open,

not partial, not trial access as long as we earn it,

but it is full and free access

**ii. Access by a New and living way**

He has opened/inaugurated a way that **was** previously unavailable, but **now** is available, and not just available/possible, but effective

A new and living way

Living = effective because our high priest is living,

The way actually brings its followers to the goal

Living as opposed to the dead/ineffective shadows of the OT

Christ, as our forerunner, opened a path to God that gives us greater access than the greatest of OT saints

We have more access to God than Moses or David or Abraham

**Appl:** Why can we draw near to God? Not because of what we have done, but because He has done it, He has made it possible

Not because I am good enough, but because His provision is good enough

b. What Place of access? – into the holiest place through the curtain

**i. Into the Holiest place**

Place of God's presence in the innermost room of the temple  
the actual throne room of God, the actual place of God's manifest presence

We can now have unfiltered relationship with the God of the universe

This is beyond our imagination better than anything we could dream

If we have access to this, how can we settle for less?

**ii. Through the curtain – which is His flesh**

Again, drawing on the symbolism of the tabernacle

This is the final barrier which stood between the people and the presence of God

Jesus has removed the barrier that stood between us and God,

Jesus took on our humanity so as to be the mediator, the meeting place between humanity and God

And the curtain of the temple was torn in two at the time of His death

**c. What is Means of access? – by His blood**

Still drawing on OT imagery

The OT temple was filled with the blood of animal sacrifices

These sacrifices were commanded to atone for sin,

but they actually could not fully provide forgiveness and access to God

earlier in ch. 10, we're told that the Law "can never, by the same

sacrifices repeated endlessly, year after year, make perfect those who

draw near to worship. If it could, would they not have stopped being

offered? For the worshippers would have been cleansed once for all, and

would no longer have felt guilty for their sins. But those sacrifices are

an annual reminder of sins, because it is impossible for the blood of

bulls and goats to take away sins."

But the blood of Jesus' sacrifice IS effective to take away our sins

In chapter 9, it says, "But now Jesus has appeared once for all at the end

of the ages to do away with sin by the sacrifice of Himself. Just as man

is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment, so Christ was

sacrificed once to take away the sins of many people, and he will appear

a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are

waiting for him."

Jesus' sacrifice is fully finished, fully effective and fully sufficient to pay the penalty for every sin

**Appl:** How can we have access to God? Not by what we do, but by what

He has done. If Jesus' blood is sufficient to pay for every sin, to make a

way for us to know and experience the Father – we don't have to earn or

manufacture it

**d. What is Reality of access? – purified conscience and life**

2 phrases that emphasize the reality of the access

Both refer to past completed actions that have continuing consequences

Both refer to something that is a settled truth/reality for every Christian

**i. We have hearts sprinkled to purify us from a guilty conscience**

**ii. We have bodies washed with pure water**

What does that mean?

This is more imagery from the OT

When Aaron and his sons were first consecrated as priests to God in Ex ch.29, They were sprinkled with blood and washed with water.

After that they were eligible to enter in service to God.

When the priests entered the tabernacle, the first thing they encountered was the bronze altar of sacrifice, sprinkled with blood that symbolized atonement.

Then they went to the water basin where they washed,

After that, they were eligible to enter into the tabernacle

On the Day of Atonement, the High priest did extra washing with water and sprinkled everything with the blood of sacrifice

Even with all these things, they only had partial access, and they never fully cleansed the conscience from sin

What they did not have, we now have!

God promised in **Ezek 36:25-27**:

. 25 I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your impurities and from all your idols. 26 I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. 27 And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws.

And the writer of Hebrews states that these promises are now a reality for us These are not conditions that we must meet to approach God, but provisions already possessed because of the cross and resurrection

Hebrews 9:13-15 says, “The blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkled on those who are ceremonially unclean sanctify them so that they are outwardly clean. How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our conscience from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God!”

**Appl:** You might be thinking “But I have reason for a guilty conscience. You don’t know what I’ve done.”

I would respond, “You don’t know what I’ve done.” - we’re in this together, If He can forgive me, He can forgive you

But more than that, I need to say, “You don’t realize what He has done”

Stop listening to your moods and experiences, but tell your feelings to hear the good news

Christ’s sacrifice is bigger than your past, present, and all your future sins

Let me try to illustrate it

You need to buy lunch and you have \$1000 bill in your pocket.

Your ability to get lunch is not based on your subjective feeling of confidence in your ability to pay.

Your confidence is based on the genuineness of the money and its sufficiency to cover the cost of a pizza.

In the same way, our confidence/boldness is not something we work up within ourselves,

but is based solely on the genuineness and sufficiency of the blood of Christ, period!

Andrew Murray says “The measure of our boldness is the worth that God attaches to the blood of Jesus”

Christ's blood is enough! The access is open! No matter how we feel about it

We don't need to add anything to it

Oh if we could only realize the greatness of the atonement and rest completely on the finished work of Christ with the full assurance of faith!

His worthiness outweighs our unworthiness

His provision is greater than our lack

[Trans:] Jesus has decisively opened access to the Father. And that is not all,

**We can rely**, not only on all that He has done, but also on all that He is now continuing to do:

[2<sup>nd</sup> grounding reason]

2. Jesus is our Great High priest, Who is still actively mediating v. 21

Starting in chapter 4, and up through this passage, the author of Hebrews has been describing Jesus as the greater High Priest

Jesus in some ways is like the OT High priest of Israel,

But in all ways, He is better, infinitely surpassing and effective in His mediation

7:24-25 says, “because Jesus lives forever, he has a permanent priesthood. Therefore, he is able to save completely those who come to God through Him, because he always lives to intercede for them.”

And 10:14, “By one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy”

Jesus is perfect, Jesus is eternal,

Jesus has provided a perfect sacrifice

And Jesus is continually interceding for us at the right hand of the Father

Jesus is consistently acting on our behalf to bring us to the Father

His perfect life covers our imperfect life

His perfect prayer covers our prayerlessness

His perfect sacrifice covers our half-heartedness

His perfect obedience covers our disobedience

His perfect worship covers our wandering hearts

The new and living way is opened by the one who said “I am the Way” and Who is “ever living to make intercession for us”

**Appl:** Again, why would we doubt our access and standing with God?

Is our ability to sin and doubt greater than Christ's ability to save?

Can you see how this gives us reason to draw near to God?

Because He is for us, who can be against us?

[**Trans:**] And that is not all, not only all that He has done and all that He is doing, but all that He will do, because of Who He is:

[3<sup>rd</sup> grounding reason]

3. The One Who promised is faithful – v. 23

Why should we hold on unswervingly to the confession of hope?

b/c He promised and He is faithful! PERIOD!

No possibility that He will flake

He cannot lie, He will not change His mind

No possibility that He will fail

He is the One who freely initiated the promise, so we shouldn't doubt His willingness

God's character is a solid foundation

Not only has He promised (which is more than enough), He has made a solemn oath

God's reputation, indeed the entire universe depends on God keeping His promises

Therefore, we can hold on to that hope, because it WILL be fulfilled

[**Encouragement to application**]

Just a reminder of a few ways this all should make a difference

1. Draw Near to God– bc He has made the way

Why are we sometimes hesitant to fully draw near to God and radically live for Him?

We sometimes keep God at arm's length because we fear that He will reject us

because of our sin because we know how ugly our sin is

– If Jesus is a great high priest, He will not reject us

Or we may fear that wholeheartedly living for Christ will cost us too much

– If Jesus has made a way to the Holy place – that is better than anything we would be asked to give up, and the more we taste God's presence, the easier it is to give up, and we won't miss it

Don Pickerell says, "The main thing we need is the confidence which comes from the full assurance of faith born out of knowing the powerful benefits of His priesthood.

Confidence creates stability in doing the will of God and brings encouragement to others... Confidence is based on the truth of the priesthood of Christ and the open access He gives us to God. Confidence stems from the full assurance...of faith.

Confidence leads to stability, the unswerving steadfastness [and] patience"

How do we have a true heart? By entering in! Don't worry about whether your heart is true, but enter in and Jesus will make your heart true as He has promised

2. Hold on – bc He is faithful

Why would we possibly give up?

Yes, sometimes it's hard, but is always worth it because He promised

There is nothing better to go to, everything else is shadows and pale counterfeit

If your faith is weak, don't look at faith, look at Jesus, who cannot fail

### 3. Focus on provoking others – bc He is interceding for us

Let us look to provoke one another = reminding one another of these Gospel realities and encouraging each other to respond appropriately

Rack your brain for ways to build one another up in the truths of the good news

#### [Final Encouragements]

To those who doubt - don't look at how worthy you are, look at how open Jesus has made the access

To those who are weary and tempted to give up - don't look at your situations, look at what Jesus has accomplished and promised, He is faithful to keep those promises

To those who are stuck in sin and struggling, - don't look at yourself or your sin, look at how effective Jesus' priesthood is and how much better His presence is than your sin

To those who are doing well, - don't trust yourself, but look at Jesus as the one who did perfectly, and look to spur others on

Let me leave you with one more quote from Andrew Murray:

"[this passage] is a call to all doubting, thirsting believers, who long for a better life than they have yet known, to cast aside their doubts, and to believe that this is what Christ has indeed done and brought within the reach of each of us: He has opened the way into the Holiest! This is the salvation which He has accomplished, and which He lives to apply in each of us, so that we shall indeed dwell in the full light of God's countenance." Murray p. 354

**Let's pray**