

A Study of the Book of Hebrews
Jesus is Better
Sermon # 16
“What You Have Is Worth Keeping!”
Hebrews 10:19-26

This morning we come to the turning point in the letter to the Hebrews. The writer turns from an explanation of the superiority of Jesus to this truth’s application in the lives of his readers. He begins in verse nineteen by saying, *“Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, (20) by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh, (21) and having a High Priest over the house of God.”*

The writer now gives a three-fold directive based on our new relationship with God the Father.

First, We Are To Draw Near In Faith.(v. 22)

“Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.”

The wonderful truth is that we can enter into the very presence of God with full assurance that he accepts us and hears us.

By Christ once for all time sacrifice for sin

Christ has purchased for us “a new and living way” (v. 20) into the very presence of God. The resurrection of the one slain has made this new way, a living and enduring way. This stands in mark contrast with the former animal sacrifices under the Old Covenant. These animal sacrifices made by the priest remained dead, they only

temporarily covered sin. We are able, and indeed are invited to walk into the presence of Almighty God on the merit of the risen, and living Christ.

In verse twenty-two we are told how we are to enter into the presence of God.

We are to enter with a clear conscience, for the first time in their lives their guilt was completely gone. The writer says therefore that they should enter into God presence with a "true heart" - the word translated "true" here means 'sincere.'" That is with no mixed motives or divided loyalties. It is the opposite of what we some times experience in our everyday lives. We have all met people, who when they are introduced keep talking and smiling at us but all the while their eyes are roaming looking at other people and other things. They really are not interested in us at all. That is exactly the opposite of what we are told that God expects from us!

We are not only invited to Draw Near In Faith but ...

Second, We Are To Hold Fast In Hope (v. 23)

"Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful."

So many people in our world today live without any real hope. In fact they are not living so much as just surviving. They manage to put one foot in front of the other by depending on some unfounded worldly "hope." By that I mean that they are "hoping" that the future will bring something different into their lives. They live hoping for a brighter tomorrow, hoping for a change, looking for someone new in

their lives to change every thing. But their hope is not founded on truth, but rather wishful thinking.

But as Christians our hope has substance. When the author here refers to “the confession of our hope” he is referring back to what he said in 6:19. *“This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters the Presence behind the veil.”* We understand that an anchor grabs onto the floor of the ocean and holds the vessel securely. But the shifting sands of this world offer nothing to secure us for eternity. So our anchor does not go down to the ocean below, but upward and is anchored in God’s presence in Heaven.

We are not only to Hold Fast In Hope but ...

Third, We Are to Encourage In Love (vv. 24-25)

“And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works.”

Consider means “to observe,” “to contemplate,” or “to have an intelligent insight into.”

The idea here is that we are “to spur or stir up” one another to good works. The King James Version captures the strength of this verb (paroxusmos) by translating it “provoke.” Normally speaking this is not a pleasant word – but here has the pleasant connotation of prodding our brothers and sisters to good deeds. The Greek word speaks forcefully of the tremendous impact believers can have on each other.

- *In Order That We Stir Each Other Up (To Do Good).*

I think that it can truly be said that we as Christians often stir each other up, but it is not always to good deeds.

- *Accomplished Through Frequent Assembly (v. 25a)*

"not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some..."

People have a thousand reasons or should I say excuses for why they do not attend church more regularly. In the church to whom this letter is written, attendance perhaps had been affected by persecution. That, however is not one of our problems.

Perhaps you have heard "The Psalm of Summer."

"Now it came to pass that spring turned to summer again.

God's people raised their voices and said:

"Recreation is my shepherd, I shall not stay at home;

He maketh me to lie down in a sleeping bag;

He leadeth me down the Interstate each weekend.

He restoreth my suntan; He leadeth me to State Parks for comfort's sake.

Even though I stray on the Lord's Day,

I will fear no reprimand, for Thou art with me;

my rod and reel they comfort me.

I anointest my skin with oil, my gas tank runneth over;

Surely my trailer shall follow me all the weekends this summer,

and I shall return to the House of the Lord this fall."

But then it is hunting season and that's another psalm." [Source unknown -

www.bible.org/illus/Hebrews]

But we have a number of sound reasons for not giving in to the urge to not attend church. I just want to share a couple with you this morning.

- First, we meet with Christ in a special way when we gather for corporate worship. Kent Hughes says, “It is true that a person does not have to go to church to be a Christian. He does not have to go home to be married either. But in both cases if he does not, he will have a very poor relationship.” [R. Kent Hughes. Hebrews: An Anchor For the Soul. Vol 2 (Wheaton, ILL: Crossway Books, 1993) p. 34]
- Secondly, Corporate Worship give us an opportunity to praise God that we do not ordinary have in solitude.

Perhaps you have heard of the man who refused to go to church! *“When a pastor asked him why, he answered, “I don’t go to church because every time I do they throw something at me.” “What do you mean?” the preacher inquired. The man went on to explain. “When I was just a child and my parents took me to church, the minister threw water on me. When I got married, the wedding ceremony took place in a church, and they threw rice at me.”*

Hearing this, the pastor quickly responded, “And if you don’t start going to church soon, the next time you do I’m afraid they’ll throw DIRT on you!”

Sadly, this describes the situation for many people. As far as church attendance is concerned, for some they go to church twice in their lives - to be Married, and to be Buried—and that’s about all. For an obedient child of God, however, that will never do. [R.W.D. - Our Daily Bread,

October 28 - www.bible.org/illus/Hebrews]

- *With the Result That We Encourage One Another. (v. 25b)*
“... but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.”

The late Bishop Fulton Sheen once entered a greasy-spoon restaurant for breakfast, and when the waitress, groggy and

disinterested, took his order, he replied, "Bring me some ham and eggs and a few kind words." When she returned fifteen minutes later, she set the food before him and said, "There." "What about the kind words?" The server looked him over a moment, then replied, "I'd advise you not to eat them eggs!" [R. J. Morgan. *Nelson's Complete Book Of Stories, Illustrations, And Quotes* (electronic ed. -2000) (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Pub.)]

Yet there is amazing power in an encouraging word. You and I have the power to change a life with a kind and encouraging word. The fact is that encouragement is a Christian duty.

William Barclay says, "One of the highest of human duties is the duty of encouragement....It is easy to laugh at men's ideals; it is easy to pour cold water on their enthusiasm; it is easy to discourage others. The world is full of discouragers. We have a Christian duty to encourage one another. Many a time a word of praise or thanks or appreciation or cheer has kept a man on his feet. Blessed is the man who speaks such a word." [William Barclay. *The Letter to the Hebrews.*]

Conclusion

Imagine that there is a person standing in front of you struggling with several large packages. You may know them, or you might not. It could be a friend or a stranger Perhaps it's someone you see everyday, or it could be someone you'll only meet once.

Imagine then there before you struggling with several large packages. They've got more than they can carry. The burden is too much for them to bear alone. You see them straining and hurting and aching from the weight of the packages.

Now, what would you do?

Think about it, you're at Wal-Mart or the grocery store and

you're standing there with nothing in your own hands. And all of a sudden you notice this person in front of you who is just about to drop their packages because they have more than they can handle. What is your first thought?

Of course, you have the natural urge to give them a hand. You wouldn't just stand there and watch them struggle and drop things when you could easily help them out.

You know, you really don't have to use your imagination unless you want to. You can see it in living color every single day of your life.

You see, there ARE those in your pathway, standing right there in front of you, who are struggling with more than they can carry. Oh, it may not be groceries or house-hold items from the department store, but it is a very real burden that weighs them down just the same.

Maybe it's a divorce they are going through. Or, it might be an illness. It could be a relationship problem, a difficult decision, a situation at work, or they could just be having a bad day. There are all kinds of things that weigh us down. Things that we struggle with. Things that leave us straining and hurting and aching from the weight that is upon us. Perhaps it is just that they are find themselves in situation where there is no one to turn to for encouragement, no one who understands the way they feel.

Someone who is carrying too many packages will be in front of you today. You can count on it. Will you notice them? It might be a friend or a stranger, someone you are close to or someone you barely

know, someone you see everyday or someone you'll only meet once. And they'll be standing there struggling under the weight.

What is your first thought? Will you reach out and give them a hand? Will you do what you can to help meet the need? Will you offer a listening ear or a shoulder to cry on? Will you be someone to help bear the burden in whatever way that you can?

You can encourage those who have been a blessing to you by letting them know that you appreciate what they have done. There are countless people in every walk of life who are never recognized or encouraged no matter how hard they try. Often that lack of appreciation is what will make or break them.

You can encourage your mechanic by telling him how you appreciate having someone you can trust. You can encourage your wife when you tell her how much you appreciate all that she does. You can encourage your children by telling them how much they bring joy to your heart. To encourage is to strengthen, to encourage is to refresh, to encourage is to provoke good deeds in others. Encourage someone today!