**Hebrews 10 Sermon: Let us Draw Near to God**

Review:

In Jesus we have a perfect high priest through whom we have received a better covenant, we have access to a better tabernacle—the real one in heaven. All of this is because of the greater sacrifice of Jesus.

Jesus sacrifice is great because it was made as a conscious choice by a person who was self-aware and who gave his life by his own choice. He is a perfect sacrifice and his sacrifice is one-for-all. It gives us what the OT sacrifices could never give us, which is a clean conscience before God. We are not perfect, but God sees us as perfect through the perfect sacrifice of Jesus.

Therefore…. Another of our exhortations.

Hebrews 10:19-22 Therefore…. If we have such great things, brothers, let us draw near to God in full assurance of faith.

10:19-22 My favorite verse in Hebrews. We have access!!! With boldness!!

We can have great confidence!!!

v. 20 a new (just a few years in the 60s AD) and living (life-giving) way

v. 20 a… way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body.

[Two interpretations:]

1. [The sacrifice of] his body gave us a way to pass through the veil which, in Judaism, literally separated us from God.

A way through the curtain that (way) is his body

[2. His body was the veil. In other words, as long as he was in his physical body, the way to access God was not open. “His physical death, like the veil, stood between Jesus and his fully realized relationship with God.”

A way through the-curtain-that-is-his-body. In other words as long as he was alive, the way was not open.

Maybe both are true.]

Jesus is pioneer and perfecter. He is the first one to pass through the veil. He has made it safe for us and now he is calling us to come in and join him with God in the true sanctuary.

**Q: How do you feel about this? How do you feel about your access to the true, heavenly sanctuary. Your prayers are no longer behind a veil. You can come in and sit down on the Mercy Seat.**

**v. 22 Here is the admonition**

1. 10:22 Let us draw near [to God] Let us enjoy intimate worship with God. (faith) because we have a clear conscience.

Q: Are you indeed drawing near?

Q: Do you have full assurance?

Q: Do you have a guilty conscience?

2. 10:23 Let us hold to our confession of hope without wavering. (hope)

Remember God is faithful. He will take care of his end of the bargain. Remember Heb 6:18 by two unchangeable things about which God cannot lie. You are in. Jesus is mediating for you right now!

The world has no hope!!! You die and two generations from now no one will even remember you existed. But in Christ we have eternal hope.

3. a. 10:24 But every once in a while we lose hope anyway, yes? So Let us be concerned about one another and encourage one another toward love and good deeds. (love)

 b. 10:25 Let us not stop meeting together. Part of staying faithful is just showing up. How many of you have come to church and regretted doing so?

When the church meets, you are there. Period!

I have missed church for being sick once in 40 years and I was, literally, in the hospital.

The number of times I have flat-out missed church on Sunday can be counted on two hands.

Midweek. Share about chemistry seminars.

 c. 10:25 Let us encourage one another. (who have you encouraged in their faith this week?)

… as you see the Day approaching (when Jesus comes back) approaching. Keep that lamp full of oil. Matthew 25.

Quote from Barclay: No man ever saved his soul who devoted his whole time and energy to saving it; but many a man has saved his soul by being so concerned for others that he forgot that he himself had a soul to save.

A selfish Christianity is a contradiction in terms.

That is on the positive side. On the negative side….

Hebrews 10:26-31. The sternest warning in the Bible. The horror of sin.

Hebrew writer remembers Deuteronomy 17:2-7.

“On the testimony of two or three witnesses [that an Israelite has been worshipping other, foreign gods, bowing down to them] a person is to be put to death, but no one is to be put to death on the testimony of only one witness.

The point: One who is greater prophets, greater than the angels, greater than Moses, greater than Aaron, greater than the high priest, greater than Abraham, who offers a greater covenant, a greater tabernacle, and a greater sacrifice.

How, the, can you fall into sin, and how much more, then do you think we deserve punishment if we do?

Luke 12:48 “From everyone who has been given much, much will be expected.”

Falling away: the heart of the matter Heb 10:26 if we deliberately and continually sin. *hekousios* deliberate, habitual, willful.

a. Trample Son of God under feet.

b. Treat the blood of Jesus as a profane thing.

c. Insult the Spirit which lives in us!

God will take revenge on those who trample the Son of God, his blood and the Spirit he gave to dwell in us. Deut 32:35 It is mine to avenge. I will repay.

An aspect of God we do not like to think about. Justice. Vengeance.

But it is real!!!!!!

Hebrews 10:32-39. You have been running a good race. Do not throw it away now, even if the going gets tough.

When you were a young Christian you remembered that “you yourselves had better and lasting possessions.”

But we tend to forget. Life can wear away at our convictions.

Q: How many of you have thought at one time or another of giving up?

v. 36 You need endurance. Don’t throw your life away. He is going to keep on saying this.

Summary of this section: Let us not be of those who “draw back and are destroyed” but rather let us have faith and obtain life.

Which brings us to our next admonition.

**Hebrews 11. Admonition #5 The key to perseverance is faith!!!!!**

Heb 11:1

We need to believe in and trust in things that cannot be seen. We need to deny our senses. We need to follow Abraham out of Ur to Mt. Moriah. Romans 4:19-24.

11:13-16 All these people were **still living by faith** when they died. They made it!

The challenge to us. They saw it only from afar (by foreshadows and prefigures), yet they were willing to become aliens and strangers.

Q: have you been thinking about returning to the country from which you left?

We have a better country to look forward to.

Phil 3:20 Our citizenship is in heaven.

“We live as if the future is already present.”

2 Peter 3:13 We are looking forward to a new heaven and earth.

v. 15 you can always go back!

v. 16 but God has a better country prepared for you. Heaven.

All this is foreshadowed in the wanderings of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and his sons.

**Hebrews 12 Look to Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of our faith.**

Hebrews 12:1-3 If they could do it (given that it was much harder for them and they had so much less than we), so can we. Be steadfast and persevere.

Advice for perseverence:

1. Throw off whatever will hinder you in the race (v. 1). We cannot run well if we are burdened with sin.

Q: What is hindering you right now from running the race? Is it your job? It is a particular sin? Is it a relationship that is dragging you down? Is it bitterness toward another person? What do you need to do with this thing?

Simple: Throw it off!!!!

2. Run with perseverance (v. 1) Plan for the long run.

3. Keep your eye on the goal: in heaven with Jesus (v. 2)

**Q: How will we run the race with perseverance?** Answer, by considering the joy which is set before us (v. 2).

1-3 are very reminiscent of Heb 3:1-4:13

4. Look at Jesus (and at the cloud of faithful witnesses) (v. 2-3) “Consider him.”

 a. the pioneer. The trail blazer. *archegos*

 b. the perfector. The completer. *teleios* He has endured the entire

 thing and has achieved victory. Just follow him.

5. Despise the shame of the cross. (1 Cor 1:18f) Jesus “despised the shame” of the cross. Despised = laughed at it and considered it to be of no importance to him.

Phillip of Neri: we should “dispise the world, despise ourselves and despise the fact that we are despised.”

In a loving way, we need to “despise” those who despise what we do.

If you feel “faint and weary,” consider Jesus on the cross.

I lost my job. Yeah, but Jesus hung on the cross.

I am sick. I am being persecuted. It is hard right now. I am tired.

Yeah, but consider Jesus on the cross.

How did he get through? He considered the joy of you making it to heaven.

OH!!! It is worth it!!!

v. 4 In your struggle, you have not yet shed blood. Note, he is asking them to think back to the cloud of witnesses, so many of whom DID shed blood.

He is not minimizing their suffering, but calling to see it in perspective. Good advice for us.

6. Accept hardship as discipline (and therefore as love) from God which will strengthen you for the journey. (v. 4-13) The Hebrew writer spends (relatively) a lot of time on this. He must think we struggle with accepting hardship and discipline from God.

Romans 5:3 And James 1:2-4, 12 trials = maturity = receiving the crown of life.

Endure hardship because:

a. Those who came before you did.

b. It is relatively minor compared to what Jesus endured.

c. It is actually an expression of God’s love.

If you cannot adopt this attitude toward trial and discipline, you will not make it.

Attitudes toward discipline:

a. accept it with resignation

b. accept it and get over it as soon as possible

c. accept it with a woe is me attitude

d. accept it with resentment as punishment

e. accept it as coming from a loving father.

**Q: What is your attitude toward the Lord’s discipline?**

7. (Live at peace with all people and) do not allow bitterness to take root or disappointment at the sins and mistakes for others take your focus from the goal. (v. 14-17)

If you do not think this could happen to you, you are naïve and probably have not lived long!

You could lose your salvation, as did Esau over a silly little thing.

Envy and bitterness is almost always over something small. (but even if it is not…)

“bitter root” Deut 29:18 no root among you that produces poison.

Genesis 25:28-34 Essau to Jacob: I am famished! Sold his birthright for a bowl of lentil stew. “What good is my birthright to me? [birthright is the right to receive a double portion of the inheritance]

**Q: How might we find ourselves in this position?**

**Q: Are there any roots festering in your life right now—roots that you need to dig up right away?**

Genesis 27:1-39 Jacob stole the blessing. Genesis 27:41 Esau held a grudge against Jacob. The grudge was so deep that he could no longer “change his mind”

v. 17 Afterward he could not repent *metanoia.*  v. 17 Notice, we can reach a point of no return. If the Holy Spirit leaves is that, too, is “once for all.”

**Question: Any examples that you have seen of this (people selling their salvation for something seemingly very small)?**

v. 14 Live holy (*hagiasmos*) lives. [normally, holy is *hagios*] Different, separate (reminds of aliens and strangers). Do you dare to be different?

Heb 12:14-17 in not necessarily just talking about relationships. An exhortation: be holy. Do not let a pernicious sin into your life, or you might lose it, as did Esau. Do not sell your inheritance for a bowl of lentil soup!