

It's time we start applying what we've learned in Hebrews.

We have a better priest,

- a better covenant,
- better sacrifice,
- better blood.

Don't look back,

- keep running the race.

Christ's sacrifice opened the way to God,

- and beginning in verse 19 the author begins to explain
- how it opened the way and then He invites us to enter in.

Heb 10:19-25

19 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, 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. 23 Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful. 24 And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, 25 not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.

Heb 10:19

19 Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus,

The author is pointing us back to what he said

- concerning Jesus as "the Perfect High Priest,

His sacrifice once and for all,

- sins are completely forgiven under the new covenant
- and there is no more need for sacrifice."

Heb 10:19

19 Therefore, brethren (speaking to believers), having boldness (this word is referring to boldness of speech) to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus,

He's encouraging the brethren to have boldness

- to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus.

Today, you and I can approach God with boldness.

- We don't approach arrogantly, but confidently.

The place which was once off limits to ordinary people, the Holy of Holies,

- is now open to believers.

There are religions out there that don't have that freedom.

Anyone not believing and trusting Jesus as the Son of God cannot have that freedom.

Jesus said that no one can approach the Father but thru Him.

We approach Him as the author says:

20 by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh,

The veil which separated man from God in the OT tabernacle

- is typical of the flesh of Jesus
- when He hung on a cross and died for our sins.

His flesh was ripped, signifying that the way to God was now open.

We're going to notice in the next few verses,

- the author says "let us" 3 times.

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.

Those idea of "drawing near" is used 86 times in the NT.

Drawing to God is nothing that men came up with.

- It was all God who initiated us drawing near to Him.

Psalms 145:18

18 The Lord is near to all who call upon Him,
To all who call upon Him in truth.

Paul said to the Romans that man will be without excuse.

- We simply need to call upon the Lord.

The Psalmist wasn't speaking of nearness as in proximity, but in relationship.

Isaiah 29:13

13 Therefore the Lord said:

"Inasmuch as these people draw near with their mouths
And honor Me with their lips,
But have removed their hearts far from Me,

Heb 4:16

16 Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Notice that we are not to draw near thru fear, but with boldness.

Heb 7:19 says:

19 for the law made nothing perfect; on the other hand, there is the bringing in of a better hope, through which we draw near to God.

There are no more restrictions in our approach to God, but an open invitation.

Heb 10:22

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.

Man's relationship to God is no longer distant,

- but now we have access to the Father thru Christ.

James 4:8

8 Draw near to God and He will draw near to you.

Notice in verse 22 of Hebrews how we are to draw near,

- with a true heart.

That means that our heart is to be sincere,

- not with ulterior motives.

We are also to draw near in full assurance of faith.

James 1:5-6

5 If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.

6 But let him ask in faith, with no doubting,

God is always and has always been dependable and trustworthy.

Heb 10:22b

22b having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

Heb 10:22 (NLT)

22 let us go right into the presence of God with sincere hearts fully trusting him. For our guilty consciences have been sprinkled with Christ's blood to make us clean, and our bodies have been washed with pure water.

The baptism itself doesn't change you,

- but the result of you being changed
- prompts you to be baptized.

So the exhortation then to "draw near"

- is for believers to go deeper
- in their relationship with the Lord.

We recently brought in a new year.

It's that's time of year when many people around the world

- make New Year's resolutions.

One resolution people often make is to draw closer to the Lord.

That's a matter of prioritizing in our life.

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

The word "confession" is used 6 times in the bible.

- It refers to an "expression of allegiance as an action,"
- or "professing," but it can also refer to
- a "statement of allegiance."

Notice in the verse, this confession centers on

- the hope rooted in God's promises.

1 Tim 6:12-13

12 Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, to which you were also called and have confessed the good confession in the presence of many witnesses. 13 I urge you in the sight of God who gives life to all things, and before Christ Jesus who witnessed the good confession before Pontius Pilate,

We are to confess the good news to others.

Wherever we may be, we can share the good news with others.

- You don't have to pound God's word into people.

We are to confess Him with our mouth,

- and we are to emulate Him with our life

There is a great divide today

- between righteousness and evil,
- and the gap is widening.

2 Tim 3:1-4

3 But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: 2 For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, 3 unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, 4 traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God,

I think we'd all agree that we are seeing all the above today,

- more than any time in American history.

People are searching for answers

- that only the scriptures can provide.

As we see the world falling apart, it's not all bad, because as Christians we're living in exciting times.

Verse 23 of Hebrews ends with the words, "For He who promised is faithful."

Faithful as used in this verse means "dependable." It's characterized by steadfast affection or allegiance (to someone or something).

1 Thes 5:24 says, "He who calls you is faithful,"

2 Thes 3:3 says "the Lord is faithful, who will establish you and guard you from the evil one.

In verse 24 we have the last "let us" statement by the author.

24 And let us consider one another in order to stir up (or to motivate) love and good works,

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

Keep in mind that the author of Hebrews was encouraging believers

- to remain faithful and not to go back
- to their ways of Judaism.

After the Holy Spirit was poured out in Acts 2,

- Peter preached the gospel
- and about 3,000 people repented
- and were baptized.

When you become or became a believer,

- you become part of a family of people
- that loves you and wants to help you
- in your Christian walk.

We do this by doing what the scriptures exhort us to do:

but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.

Phil 4:5 Let your gentleness be known to all men. The Lord is at hand.

Heb 10:24-25

24 And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, 25 not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.

The church is made up of fallible people.

But verse 25 of Hebrews counters this tendency by telling us

- to encourage one another.

Listen, people can be easily torn down.

- People are easily discouraged therefore,
- we need to be intentional
- by building others up,
- not tearing them down.

We need one another, along with our flaws, with our sin,

- with our humor, with our smiles.

It's not about coming to a perfect organization,

- or to view professional presentations.

Jesus came to save sinners and we all fall into that category.

The author says not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together.

Church isn't a place to evaluate,

- but a place to participate.

And looking at verses 24 and 25,

- encouragement is not optional, it's essential.

There's an interesting verse in the book of Job 4:4 when Eliphaz spoke to Job, he said,

Job 4:4

4 Your words have upheld him who was stumbling,
And you have strengthened the feeble knees;

Another translation says,

Your words have kept men on their feet.

We are to encourage the brethren especially as we see the day approaching.

Heb 10:26-39

26 For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, 27 but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries. 28 Anyone who has rejected Moses' law dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. 29 Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace?

Some of the Hebrew believers were wavering.

- They were tempted to go back to their old ways.

King Solomon warns about a person going back to his old ways

- when he wrote about a dog returning to its vomit
- and a washed pig returning to the mud.

Peter issued a similar warning in 2nd Pet 2.

2 Peter 2:20-21

20 And when people escape from the wickedness of the world by knowing our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and then get tangled up and enslaved by sin again, they are worse off than before. 21 It would be better if they had never known the way to righteousness than to know it and then reject the command they were given to live a holy life.

These were people that were intellectually aware of the truth

- but never allowed it to transform their hearts.

2 Peter 2:12

12 But these, like natural brute beasts made to be caught and destroyed, speak evil of the things they do not understand, and will utterly perish in their own corruption,

2 Peter 2:22

22 They prove the truth of this proverb: "A dog returns to its vomit." And another says, "A washed pig returns to the mud."

Dogs eat vomit because they're dogs,

- pigs love the mud because they're pigs.

No matter what you do to clean those animals up,

- they are still what they are.
- That's their nature.

The author of Hebrews as well as Peter are speaking of people

- who were exposed to the gospel message,
- they may have had an intimate relationship with Christ,
- but they ultimately turned from Him.

They didn't have the internal change.

Unfortunately, some come to the cross and there is no endurance.

Matt 13:19

19 When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and does not understand it, then the wicked one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is he who received seed by the wayside.

It's the same principle. Some hear the word, but it doesn't take root.

They were exposed to the word, but they didn't possess it.

In all of the situations mentioned in 2nd Peter, Matt 13, Hebrews 10 and in Hebrews 6,

- people were enlightened,
- they tasted of the Lord's blessings,
- but had no perseverance.

Jesus said of His sheep, that no one can snatch them out of His hand.