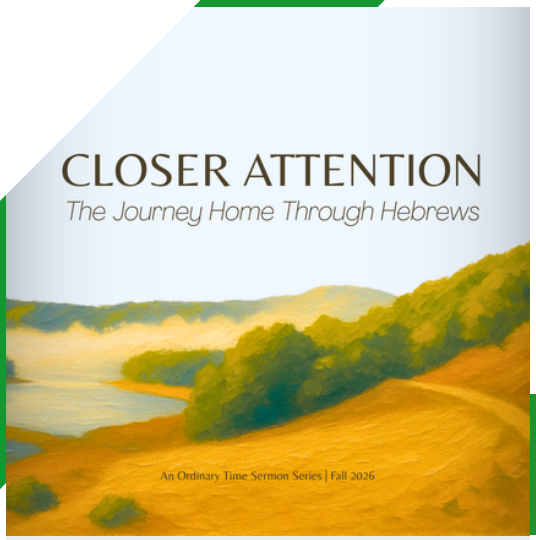

SERMON NOTES

November 22, 2026

SERMON INFO

TITLE
"The Final Piece"

PREACHER
Rev. Tim Frickenschmidt

TEXTS
Deuteronomy 31:1-3, 7-8
Hebrews 13:1-8, 16
Luke 24:28–35

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. When do you feel most accutely the impulse towards isolation? How can "going deep" within a community of other Christians help push back against this?
2. Which of the three topics mentioned - time, sex (your body), and money - do you find hardest to view as a gift of God for the good of a community? Why?
3. What are some practical ways you can give yourself away in love?

SERMON IN SUMMARY

This week, Tim wrapped up our sermon series on Hebrews with the final question, "What is the last thing we need in order to endure as Christians?"

The Need
The final chapter of Hebrews is more than just a list of ethical commands. It speaks to those who, for their Christianity, are being pushed to the margins of society and who are withdrawing more and more into isolation. The author of Hebrews says that as Christians, we will never make it on our own. Both philadelphia, "brother love", and philoxenia, "stranger love", are essential to what it means to be a Christian. He calls the Christians to let brother love remain and do not neglect stranger love. So we must ask the question, are we engaged in both? Are you known by other Christians? Do they have a priority of place in your life so much so that your whole life is impacted by them? And are we reaching out to the stranger in hospitality? Are we known by our love? Increasingly in our culture, isolation is not something we are forced into but something we choose. There is an epidemic of loneliness and isolation in our country with 25% of adults under 30 saying they feel lonely every day. But Hebrews says you cannot be a Christian in isolation for very long.

Tim reminded us of the three options of reacting to hardship that author Tish Warren and her husband Jonathan consider: You can numb out, flame out, or go deep. You can check out, often with the aid of substances or mindless entertainment. Or you can blow up your life in one life-shattering act. Both begin and end in the same place - isolation. The third option, to go deep, says that we know Jesus has been where we are and that if we move forward, deeper into the life he has called us to, he will lead us home. So, pay closer attention to the Lord and His Word. Go deep in community and hospitality.

The Tensions
The three topics mentioned in this chapter are time, sex, and money. These are also the three things that we consider the most personal, private, and individualized. We don't think of them in regard to how they impact others but only how they impact us. We believe the rights of the individual take precedence over the community. But for the Christian, all three of these are gifts entrusted to us by God in order to honor him and build up a community. The Christian life is an interdependent life. Jesus thought this way. Jesus left everything, emptied himself, and gave up his time, money, and body on behalf of a community. This kind of radical sacrifice creates tensions, the care for the poor and the care for sexual morality in and with our bodies. The second century writing, *A Letter to Diognetus*, says that "Christians have a common table but not a common bed." Our modern categories don't fit with this tension that is inherent to building up a community beyond ourselves.

We are people who spend ourselves because that is who God is. When Jesus gave up everything, it was just God being God. When we spend ourselves, we demonstrate that we know and belong to this God. We find the power to pour ourselves out but inside and outside the faith through the Word of God. Regardless of who you have in your life or don't have, you are not alone. Do not fear to give yourself away because God has already given himself to you.