

The Manifestation of Faith, Hope and Love

Hebrews 10:19-25

I. Context

- A. The circumstances that form the setting for an event, statement, or idea, and in terms of which it can be fully understood.
- B. The surrounding information that gives something its meaning.
- C. The church must exist and operate within its context.
 - 1. *“The central, essential and indefectible elements in Christianity”* – C.K. Barrett
 - 2. Faith, hope and love create the context for the church.

II. “The Divine Trilogy”—Faith, Hope, Love.

- A. The divine trilogy must be built on the foundation of Biblical doctrine.
- B. The product of a “mature” church—Ephesians 4:13 *...until we all attain to the unity of faith, and the fullness of knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure and stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ.*
- C. The product of Eph. 4:13 is faith, hope and love as demonstrated in several New Testament churches.
 - 1. Thessalonica—1st Thessalonians 1:2-3
 - 2. Colossae—Colossian 1:3-5
 - 3. Ephesus—Ephesians 1:15-16; 18
 - 4. Corinth—1st Corinthians 13:13

III. The Basis and Three Imperatives—Hebrews 10:19-25

- A. The tabernacle background—a picture of the work of Christ on the cross.
 - 1. Through the blood of Jesus Christ shed on the cross, we have access to God.
 - a. We can be confident to enter God’s presence (19).

IV. The three imperatives.

- A. **Let us draw near**—faith (22).

1. Faith—Utter confidence in God.
 - a. God cleaned our hearts through the blood of Christ.
 - b. God cleansed our bodies.

B. Let us hold fast—hope (23).

1. Hebrews 6:18-19.
2. Hope is a settled certainty confident in expectation based on the promises of God.
3. Hold fast—NEVER let go!
4. Without *wavering*—*Akline* = “No couch!” = no laying down.

C. Let us consider—Love (24).

1. Sign of maturity—The realization that the church is not about you!
 - a. Philippians 2:3
2. We are to stimulate, stir them up, provoke others...to love and good works.
 - a. Without forsaking our assembling together: *How can we stimulate one another if we are not in church?*
 - b. But encourage one another— to implore, comfort, entreat, plead, appeal, even begging.

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Hebrews 10:19-25

Tucked away in my files was a Washington Post piece about an experiment in *busking*... you all know what busking is don't you?... Busking is the activity of playing music on the street for money donations...

The Washington Post sponsored the experiment... in order to evaluate the public's taste, priorities and perception when it comes to public music...

Perhaps you've heard of Joshua Bell... who performed the most famous busking experiment.

Joshua Bell is arguably the finest violinist of our generation... At 7:51 a.m. on January 12, 2007... incognito... wearing a baseball cap, a tee shirt and faded jeans Joshua Bell entered L'Enfant Plaza in Washington D.C.... the busy subway station...

Near the entrance, in a prominent corner, he took his violin out of its case... and set the case in front of him and put a few dollars of seed money in the case... the violin?... a very rare "Gibson ex Huberman, handcrafted in 1713 by Antonio Stradivari... one of the most coveted and expensive violins in existence... worth about 3.5 million dollars.

He began to play some of the world's greatest music pieces ever composed in history... including "Chaconne" from Bach's Partita No. 2 in D Minor.... He played non-stop for 45 minutes... 1097 commuters passed by Bell that morning... only seven stopped to listen... just seven...

His earnings that morning were a little over \$32.00... just three days earlier... Bell had played to a sold out crowd at Boston's Symphony Hall where the average seat cost \$100.00... Bell usually earns around \$1000.00 a minute

What I learned from this was that I should have taken up the violin!

But my takeaway from this experiment is the importance of "context"... no matter how beautifully he played... no matter how exquisite his musical selection was... His giftedness wasn't enough... *it took context that was conducive and favorable to it.*

Context— *the circumstances that form the setting for an event, statement, or idea, and in terms of which it can be fully understood.*

Context is the surrounding information that gives something its meaning.

Context is the background, circumstances, and surrounding details that help explain the meaning or significance of something.

Context is like the setting in a movie. The same line of dialogue can sound funny, threatening, or sad depending on what's happening around it.

The subway context was not congruent with the event that was taking place...people enter the building looking for which train to get on... which gate to go to, where to buy a ticket... looking at their watches to make sure they are on time... the last thing they would be looking for is a world class violinist!...he would be “out of context”

But the symphony hall was in the context of the event that was taking place...the beautiful theater with a stage... seats for an audience pointing toward the stage... the lights, the stage curtains... all created the atmosphere that gave context for a world class violist... Joshua Bell to be there and be recognized and appreciated....

Everything is understood within its context...When speaking of context and the church...think of all the things we do...they all must be in context to be meaningful...you might get the best preacher on earth... one who does excellent exposition of the Scriptures... but excellent exposition of the Scriptures alone is not enough to cause people to continue attending and to stick together as the church...it takes more.

A church near my business in Southern California was going through some difficult times...money was not tight so they were able to afford and bring in a very famous preacher from New Mexico... a name most of you would know... a solid Bible expositor....dynamic.

The results were catastrophic... within eight months the church imploded and no longer exists... the problem wasn't the preacher... it was the lack of key ingredients that would make the context of the church...what C.K. Barrett called

*“The central, essential and indefectible elements in Christianity” ...those essential elements don't include a building... décor...seat arrangements or anything else material...so much more important... **Faith, hope and love**.... Faith, hope and love create the context for the church....without them... you don't have a church...at least not a vibrant, spirit filled, church as God designed it.*

You see... the church is to be the manifestation of Faith, hope and love... *“These words embrace the whole of Christian existence, as believers live out the life of the Spirit in the present age awaiting the consummation.”* Gordon Fee.

Faith Hope and love are called the “**divine trilogy**” and they are found together in several places throughout the New Testament...especially in Paul's writings...in the context of the church...

The letters of Paul and others were mostly addressed to churches... the church in Corinth... the church in Ephesus... the church in Galatia... but when you read them... they sound very personal... as if Paul and others were writing to me individually... that is because...remember... the church is made up of individuals!...so what is true for the church is true for each one of us individually.

This morning I want to talk about the “divine trilogy” being the context of the church... to insure it being the context of *this* church... a few minutes looking at some of the apostle Paul’s letters... but most of our time spent on a great example of this in the book of Hebrews....

Before faith hope and love can be the context... there must be a solid foundation for the three to form and flourish...

Biblical Doctrine provides the foundations of the church (and for us personally, the church)...our behavior should be determined by our Biblical beliefs (Biblical doctrine)... On occasion someone will suggest that instead of preaching expositionally...through complete passages of Scripture.... *In light of all the problems in the world today... even in the church... wouldn't it be better to preach specifically on these issues? ...*

For instance... the divorce rate is just as severe for the Christian as it is for the secular... *should you preach on marriage?...* rather than all the time it takes to go through books of the Bible...the book of 1st Corinthians or Revelation?... my answer politely “No”.

The reason marriages are falling apart... the reason so many Christians have marriages falling apart is because they are not living as Christians. You learn how to live as a Christian through understanding Biblical doctrine... what the Bible teaches...God’s truth...If you know God’s truth... you will understand how to have a great marriage.....Biblical doctrine is the foundation of all things... including the church.

Last week we looked at the problem of immaturity in the church... the church in America has been described as being *adolescent*...a primary characteristic of an adolescent is self-centeredness...

The church is to be *self-less*...faith, hope and love are the results of moving out of immaturity into maturity as the body of Christ... the apostle Paul addresses this in Ephesians chapter 4...I strongly recommend spending time in this chapter...I can’t this morning...

Paul describes so well what we are doing here...

Read sections of chapter 4

Memorize verse 13! **Faith, hope and love are the product of that**... Now some of the churches....a church that was modeling all this was **the church in Thessalonica**...quickly... listen to what Paul wrote to them in 1 Thessalonians 1:2-3

We give thanks to God always for all of you, making mention of you in our prayers;3 remembering without ceasing your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ before our God and Father,

While in prison in Rome... Paul wrote a letter to **the church at Colosse**—a church he had not visited yet... but he had heard about their maturity as a church: Colossian 1:3-5

We give thanks to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you,⁴ since we **heard of your faith in Christ Jesus **and the love which you have** for all the saints,⁵ **because of the hope** laid up for you in heaven, of which you previously heard in the word of truth, the gospel.**

Another letter written from prison, the letter to the Ephesian church... Ephesians 1:15-16; 18

For this reason I too, having heard **of the faith in the Lord Jesus which *exists* among you and **your love for all the saints**,¹⁶ do not cease giving thanks for you, while making mention *of you* in my prayers:¹⁷ that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you *the* Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the full knowledge of Him,¹⁸ so that you—the eyes of your heart having been enlightened—will know **what is the hope of His calling**, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,**

The most familiar... the number one texts for weddings and funerals... **1 Corinthians 13:13**... Paul was not commending the Corinthian church... he's been scolding them for 12 chapters... he's showing them what maturity looks like.... {spiritual gifts mean nothing outside of the context of faith hope and love}

But now abide [remain stable—constant} **Faith, hope, love—these three; but the greatest of these is love.**

Hebrews 10:19-25 here's how it plays out:

In this passage of Hebrews 10... the writer has taken doctrine as the basis...the foundation of what we as the church of Jesus Christ will then build upon build upon...Had we begun in Hebrews 1 and worked our way to chapter 10, we would have tons of doctrine under our belts...

Chapter 10 is a transition from laying the foundation of doctrine to applying it to our lives... verse 19 is specifically the place of transition... *because of all this truth from God... here's what we do...*

Paul does this in Ephesians... three chapters of doctrine followed by three chapters of application...chapter 4 begins application with the word “**therefore**”... In Romans, the first 11 chapters doctrine... chapter 12 begins with the word “**therefore**” and the following five chapters application... *here's how God's truth should come out in your life.*

We come to another “**therefore**” in Hebrews 10:19... we get a summery of all that doctrine with a picture of that Old Testament tabernacle.

A Basis and Three Imperatives

Tabernacle

Within the tabernacle were three parts to it...there was an outer court... then a room called the “Holy Place” and then within that room, behind a large veil/curtain was another room... a cube...called the “Holy of Holies”...

All Jews were allowed to enter the outer court...their family would come with them along with their lamb for sacrifice...the priest would meet the family, take the lamb, places it on the alter for a burnt offering... the fire consumes the offering.

The priest leads them into worship before God... separating the outer court and the Holy Place was a tent wall... in the Holy place was three pieces of furniture...a seven pronged lampstand (menorah)... the alter of incense...the table of the Presence or showbread on top are twelve loaves of bread symbolizing the 12 tribes of Israel.

Only the priests can enter the Holy Place... separating the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies is a large 2” thick curtain/veil... inside that room is the ark of the covenant... and the golden mercy seat... covering the ark... no one could go into the Holy of Holies, not even your average priest could enter.

Only the high priest could go in... and that would be only once a year...on the “Day of Atonement”... he would enter carrying the blood of the slain sacrifice... the blood is sprinkled on the alter, the mercy seat...and God would forgive the sins of the nation of Israel for that year... ALL THIS IS FORESHADOWING A MUCH GREATER TRUTH...

Old Testament... fast forward to about 30 AD.... John the Baptist is preaching... he looks up and says **”Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world”**... Jesus Christ... Jesus goes to the cross... dies... sheds His blood... all four gospels tell us that the moment Jesus died... that two inch thick veil that separated the Holy of Holies from the Holy Place supernaturally tears in half...top to bottom.

God was showing... He was telling us... that now... through the shed blood of the perfect sacrificial Lamb... the Lamb of God...Jesus Christ...His body literally torn apart (**Read V. 20**) {like that veil}. We now have access to Him...to God Himself!

We have access and He receives us!...He welcomes us in!...this is what this writer of Hebrews is referring to....This is the basis

Read Hebrews 10:19-21

We have confidence!...do you have confidence this morning!...because of the shed blood of our Lord Jesus Christ...we can have confidence to enter into the presence of God!... what do we do **in His presence?**... we worship Him.

Do you stop and realize that when we come together as the church... we are as a corporate body coming **into the presence** of the most high holy God?... I think we forget this truth... how casual we have become in our “services”...

Would anything change if when you entered this building to be with the gathered church...we remembered that we as a church are entering into worship together **in the presence of God?...** and the ONLY reason we can do that is because Jesus Christ was crucified on the cross on our behalf??... Confidence is not the same as disrespect

This is the basis of then what we are to do...that is the basis of the church... the truth underlying everything that is to go on in the church rest on what Jesus Christ has done on the cross...the truth underlying the very context of the church...

Now... on that foundation...the three things... three things each one of us is commanded by scripture to do... three things that the church is **commanded to have as its context**...faith, hope and love....it is in these things that we all are to mature to the full knowledge of the Lord

1. Faith

Read verse 22

Let us draw near...this is using the visual of what the high priest only was allowed to do...all believers in Christ are now allowed to do...draw near to what? Or to whom?... to God is the implication... let us draw near to God...this is present tense... this is a continually ongoing drawing near... it never stops... **draw near with a sincere heart**...

Sincere heart = pure motives = genuine desire = unhypocritically... not play acting... now here it is... we have confidence... we have a sincere heart because we **have a full assurance of faith...** UTTER CONFIDENCE IN THE PROMISES OF GOD... this “confidence will result in heartfelt assurance and security.

Notice this faith is a product of God... two things happened in the past... **Having already had our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience**...the moment you were saved... God cleaned you up... He cleaned up your heart... cleansed you internally... your heart.

AND externally... our **bodies washed with water**... both are taken from O.T. imagery of the priest work in the tabernacle when they would sprinkle blood for cleansing and they would wash themselves in sacred vessels of pure water for further cleansing in the laver that was in the outer court of the tabernacle... Jesus’s blood cleanses us from evil.

By the blood of Jesus Christ... Inwardly and outwardly we are clean before God... the product of that cleansing in faith.

2. Hope

Read verse 23

Let us hold fast... This amazing hope we have in Christ was already mentioned earlier in Hebrews... Hebrews 6:18-19....actually I'm going back to verse 13 to get the context...which is the reliability of God to come through with His promises... which is a basis for our confidence in the hope He gives us:

For when God made the promise to Abraham, since He could swear by no one greater, He swore by Himself, God is saying *I swear to God*...14 saying, "I will greatly bless you and I will greatly multiply you."15 And so, having patiently waited, he obtained the promise.16 For men swear by one greater *than themselves*, and with them an oath *given as confirmation* is an end of every dispute.17 In the same way God, desiring even more to show to the heirs of the promise the unchangeableness of His purpose, guaranteed *it* with an oath,18 so that by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have taken refuge would have strong encouragement to take hold of the hope set before us.19 This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, a *hope both sure and confirmed* and one which enters within the veil,

The word "hope" in the Bible does not mean what you and I think it means in English... *I hope you were just joking... I hope it isn't as hot today as it was yesterday... I hope I get an A in English... I hope I live to 100...*

Hope like this is more a wish.... Hope like this might or might not happen... but when the Bible refers to hope... it means something completely different... here is a definition I think nails it... **Hope is a settled certainty confident in expectation based on the promises of God**...our hope is sure... it is settled...

What are we to do with this certain hope?... we are to **hold fast** to it... *grab a hold of it and never let go!* ... [What would it take for you to relinquish your faithfulness to Jesus Christ?... how much difficulty would it take?... how many problems would it take for you to let go of your hope in Jesus?...how much pressure?... how much stress?]

Hold fast **without wavering**...literally...Greek... *aklines* Ah-Kliness...[here we go with the Greek!] hold on this is interesting... a compound Greek word, made up of two parts... "*a*" = "no" or "not"... and the word *klines*...does that sound like another word in English?... "clinic"...

What is a clinic?...it is a place to go when you don't feel well... when you go to the clinic... the doctor usually tells you to get up and lay on that paper covered platform... not a bed!... *kline* literally means "couch".

A clinic is the couch place... the place you go to recline when you aren't well... so literally *AKLINE* means "No couch"...so this verse literally reads **let us hold fast the confession of our hope no couch!**.. no lying down on the job!...without wavering.

How and why can we do that?... **for He who promised is faithful...** [do you see the synergy that is to exist in the church?... the effort and responsibility each one of us has and the provision and strength provided by God...]

We can only have hope because God is faithful and true and is the source of our hope... our part is to HOLD FAST to that truth!

God is faithful... He always comes through with His promises... that's why we can hold fast to our hope...

3. Love

Read verse 24

Remember, these are imperatives... these are things God is telling us we must do... **Let us consider...**... when a church reaches maturity it realizes that...

“Church is not about you”...all Christians are members of the church.... But all Christians but you, are more important members... the most important member is Jesus Christ...you are the least important!...but don't worry... according to *him* you are more important... according to *her* you are more important... according to *you* they are more important....

WHAT IF THIS WAS THE REALITY IN OUR CHURCH?... WE'D HAVE REVIVAL!

Philippians 2:3 **consider one another as more important than yourself...**

One crusty old preacher liked to say *If your church is all mirrors and no windows...you got a problem!*... what does the writer tell us to do?... consider one another!... what are we to consider?...how to stimulate one another... literally **how to stir them up!**... (24)

Some of you just woke up... *that's what I like! To stir people up!*... *That's my gift!*... it's even better in the King James ... it tells us to **provoke one another...** *now we're really talking!*...here's the catch... we are to stir up... provoke one another **to love and good deeds...**

That's the kind of provocation the church greatly needs today.... **Love is the internal... good deeds is the external...** Love is the source... good deeds is the product... verse 25 goes with verse 24... it is not a new thought... it is the conclusion of stirring up others to love and good deeds...

A negative and a positive... Here's one way not to do it and one way to do it...

Here's the negative... verse 25 **not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some...** here's the obvious... **Have you ever noticed how difficult it is to stir up others in the church in love and good deeds when you're not there?!**

It's impossible for you to fulfill this imperative when you're not with the church!...that's why we do not forsake the assembling of ourselves together... Attending church is not to make God

pleased with you...it is not to make up for all the sins you did during the week...It's not even to make you feel good...

Attending church is to mature the entire body in faith hope and love!

This verse is a warning for all of us... not assembling together as a church can become a habit it says!

Many, many times over the last couple decades regular attendees for some reason start to slip in their church attendance... until we don't see them at all for weeks, months... I try to talk to them, they almost always say the same thing... *We just got out of the habit of coming to church...*

Try that with your employer... *I just got out of the habit of coming to work....* Try that with the IRS... with your wife! *I just got out of the habit of coming home at night...* **Stimulate one another to love and good deeds...** but you have to be here to do that!... I know I'm preaching to the choir... you are all here!...[at least your bodies are.]

Here's the positive...not forsaking our own assembling together as is the habit of *some but encouraging one another and all the more as you see the day drawing near.*

We come to church to **encourage** one another...*parakaleo*...to implore, comfort, entreat, plead, appeal, even begging...everybody needs encouragement!...we're all going through stuff!... there's an urgency in this...eschatological... **the day is drawing near...** time is limited...

When was the last time you encouraged someone?... some of you are really gifted encouragers... but for most of us it just isn't natural... I'm much better at teasing than I am an encourager... I'm working on that...there is an immense need for encouragement.

[We are becoming a culture of individuals... now people spend most of their free time scrolling... *just me and this phone*... Years ago a book came out called "*Bowling Alone*"...about the decline of social capital... increased social disconnection.

The observation was that there has been a drastic drop in bowling leagues... there was a time when it seemed like everyone was in a bowling league... no more!... bowling leagues are almost non-existent.... BUT more people are bowling more than ever!... bowling alone.

People have become socially disconnected with each other... and as a result... there are more people that are critically lonely... increased depression and anxiety... and hopelessness...] The church should be...must be a place where we encourage each other...

Hebrews 3:13 urges believers to encourage one another daily so that hearts are not hardened by sin.

1 Thessalonians 5:11 says to "encourage one another and build one another up."

Ephesians 4:29 teaches that our words should build others up according to their needs and benefit those who listen.

- **Draw near** to God with assurance of faith.(vv. 19–22).
- **Hold fast** to your confession of hope (v. 23).
- **Consider one another** by encouraging love, good works, and faithful gathering (vv. 24–25).