

## The Confidence We Have in Christ

Anchors in the Darkness: Words of Hope in Our Troubles / Hebrews 10:19-39 / April 19, 2026

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### Introduction:

Today, we are continuing our series “Anchors in the Darkness,” working through passages selected by Pastor Perry that have sustained him through his brain cancer, and he would preach as words of hope for you where he able to. Hebrews 13:7 tells us, “Remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the word of God. Consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith.” When those who proclaim God’s word walk through trials with steady peace and hope, we should consider their life and imitate their faith. Our honoring of Perry is to encourage you to consider and imitate his faith because we know many are facing their own trials, and those who are not experiencing trouble now will need these words of hope at some point. Church, sometimes Sunday’s truths don’t serve to meet us in our current circumstances, but to prepare us for things to come. So, if these things don’t apply now, bury them in your heart for when they will. With this in mind, we turn today to a second anchor in the darkness from Hebrews 10:19-39. This passage concludes a major section that began in Hebrews 5:11-6:20, where the author called God’s people to cling to the gospel, press on in earnest hope, and imitate Abraham’s patient faith in God’s promises. Hebrews 6:19-20 says this, “We have this [God’s promised salvation in Christ] as a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters into the inner place behind the curtain, where Jesus has gone as a forerunner on our behalf, having become a high priest forever.” Chapters 7-10 unpack what Jesus has done before our passage calls us to live in the confidence we have in Christ. I want to consider two truths about this confidence. First, we have,

### A Confidence to Enjoy Fellowship with God

We need to notice the function of each clause in this passage to see the main point. Look at verses 19-21, “Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh, and since we have a great priest over the house of God.” Pause there. “Therefore” points back to what he has been teaching since 7:1, and “since” shows that what follows is a summary those truths. The language speaks of entering the holy of holies, a place in the tabernacle and temple that only the high priest could enter once a year after ceremonial cleansing. A place marked by a massive curtain that kept God’s people from entering. Yet now, through our great high priest, Jesus, we have free and open access to God by a new way, distinct from the old covenant, and a living, always open way. Soak this in because it’s the impetus for everything that follows. Through Christ, we have confidence to enter God’s presence because His blood made a way and He is our great high priest. Because of Christ’s atoning and priestly work, verses 22-25 call us to enjoy this fellowship with God through faith, hope and love. Look there with me, “let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.” Three responses are commanded: (1) “draw near in faith,” (2) “hold fast to hope,” and (3) “consider how to love one another,” each with clauses that explain how we walk in them. The first, to “draw near in faith,” is understood through how the word “with” functions in verse 22. “With a true heart in full assurance of faith,” alludes to Ezekiel 36:26, where God promises, “I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.” We now have a true heart. The second “with” confirms this by using a Greek tense to indicate the subject receiving a completed action with ongoing results, connected to covenantal language. In Hebrews 9:11-28, the author compared the old covenant’s inauguration through the sprinkling of blood of calves and goats, to the new covenant’s inauguration through the sprinkling of Christ’s blood, specifically to show how only Christ’s blood is sufficient to cleanse our consciences from guilt and dead works.

Washing with pure water pictures the high priest's ceremonial cleansing, which baptism in the Spirit accomplishes for all believers and water baptism symbolizes. So, we have been cleansed and washed. Church, this is not a call to try to have a true heart, clear conscience, or pure life as you draw near to God, but understand you already have these things in Christ. The second command to "hold fast to hope" involves enjoying fellowship with God as well, because it hinges on God's faithful promises to those He has brought near in fellowship. Our confession of hope is a confession of being reconciled through Christ's blood, which means God's promises are ours now and will be fully realized when we enter His presence forever. Then, loving one another also involves the enjoyment of God's fellowship. Note how this command is accomplished. By "not neglecting to meet together," which refers to assembling together for corporate worship. And by "encouraging one another," which, throughout Hebrews, has the expressed purpose of keeping each other in fellowship with God. Hebrews 3:12-13 says, "Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God. But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called "today," that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin." We stir one another up to nurture our enjoyment of God. Now, two details in verse 25 help us understand verses 26-31. Some negatively neglect gathering together and our encouragement is to be done more as "the Day" draws near, a reference of God's final advent and judgement. Continue in verses 26-31, "For," meaning this is a reason to follow the commands of verses 22-25, "For if we go on sinning deliberately after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a fearful expectation of judgment, and a fury of fire that will consume the adversaries. Anyone who has set aside the law of Moses dies without mercy on the evidence of two or three witnesses. How much worse punishment, do you think, will be deserved by the one who has trampled underfoot the Son of God, and has profaned the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has outraged the Spirit of grace? For we know him who said, 'Vengeance is mine; I will repay.' And again, 'The Lord will judge his people.' It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." The sin is a specific sin, related to not drawing near, not holding fast, and neglecting to worship with God's people. This is saying the willful rejection of the sufficiency of Christ's sacrifice and a persistent lack of worshipping with God's people will put you in danger of abandoning Christ, which is the sin of apostasy. If you deliberately abandon Christ, His sacrifice has not covered your sins and you are still under God's judgement. See, these believers were persecuted by Rome and unbelieving Jews. And they were being enticed by unbelieving Jews to forsake Christian worship and turn back to Judaism to receive God's blessings. The book of Hebrews shows how all things associated with the old covenant—the temple, sacrifices, high priest—were merely shadows of heavenly realities, with Jesus' death, resurrection, and ascension bringing their true reality. Turning to those things and forsaking the new covenant community outrage the Spirit of Christ and stir up the vengeance of God because it denies God's grace and Christ's superior work. And, if in the old covenant there was no mercy for those who set aside Moses' law, then it will be much worse for those who deny Christ's superior atoning work. Here what this is saying family, denying the sufficiency of Christ's atonement and neglecting corporate worship has devastating results. Instead, live in the confidence we have in Christ to enjoy fellowship with God.

Second, because of this, we have,

### **A Confidence to Endure Suffering**

Pay close attention to how this passage ends. Look at verses 32-34, "But recall the former days when, after you were enlightened, you endured a hard struggle with sufferings, sometimes being publicly exposed to reproach and affliction, and sometimes being partners with those so treated. For you had compassion on those in prison, and you joyfully accepted the plundering of your property, since you knew that you yourselves had a better possession and an abiding one." The contrasting acts to abandoning Christ and neglecting corporate worship begin with a reminder of their initial perseverance in suffering. And note how that suffering connects with the new covenant community.

When they first believed, they endured hard troubles, including standing by the faith community with compassion that exposed themselves to affliction, including the plundering of their property. What moved them to endure? “They knew,” they “had a better possession and an abiding one.” Notice verses 35-39, “Therefore do not throw away your confidence, which has a great reward. For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God you may receive what is promised. For, ‘Yet a little while, and the coming one will come and will not delay; but my righteous one shall live by faith, and if he shrinks back, my soul has no pleasure in him.’ But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who have faith and preserve their souls.” Their confidence in Christ, as their abiding possession, moved them to suffer well and even lose earthly possessions. And, the author is saying, “don’t throw that confidence away because endurance is needed to receive the fullness of God’s promises.” The reason, in verses 37-38, brings together the promises of God’s final advent from Habakkuk, Isaiah, and Haggai and how He will only find pleasure in those who have not shrunk back but lived by faith. And verse 39 declares that true believers are those who preserve our souls through enduring faith. Consider the flow of verses 32-39. Remember how your confidence in Christ, as a better and abiding possession, led you to suffer well and keep that confidence to endure suffering, because the full reward is yet to come. Raymond Brown says well, “They may lose a lot in this life, but, relying on Christ alone, they are not even remotely in danger of losing the only possession that matters, ‘the life which is life indeed’” (Raymond Brown, *The Message of Hebrews*, p. 194). What is that life? The “life which is life indeed” is fellowship with God that will be fully realized when Christ returns.

### **Conclusion:**

As the worship team comes for our time of reflection and response, I want to bring this all together with three exhortations based on what I’ve observed from Perry’s way of life connected to this passage. First,

#### **1) Draw Near in Heartfelt Corporate Worship**

Many would have retreated from gathering with God’s people in Perry’s trail. Some might continue to worship, but they would shy away from any involvement. Have you noticed how Perry rarely misses our gatherings and still seeks to encourage your faith while here? This is a faith worth imitating. In 2016, Perry preached on Hebrews 10:19-25, exhorting this body to persevere together in the faith. Consider some comments from that sermon. When speaking of his confidence in Christ, Perry shared, “My faith is not based on how well I feel it. It’s not based on how consistent I’ve been. It’s based on the fact that it’s fully provided by God through Jesus Christ.” When later commenting on Hebrews 6:18, which says, “by two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled for refuge might have strong encouragement to hold fast to the hope set before us.” Perry said this, “Hold fast to the hope He set before us. God doesn’t lie. His promises don’t expire. They don’t have a short shelf life. The same promises that kept these people true, keep Perry true today, keep you true.” Then, when speaking on the need to gather, Perry said, “God created a physical world where groups are stronger than individuals. We call them flocks, schools of fish, herds. And when we become new believers in Jesus Christ, we’re not just abandoned. We become part of the Body of Christ. Our desire, the closer we get to the return of Christ should be I’ve got to get together with more believers more often. I’ve got to do this.” These comments have proven to not be words Perry simply shared but truths he has clung to. Imitate his faith by drawing near in heartfelt corporate worship. Second,

#### **2) Know All Suffering Can’t Compare to Your Better Abiding Possession**

As I have met with Perry to pray fervently for his healing, I have been met with a response of deep trust that God is his strength, will do what is best and the glory that awaits him far outweighs anything he’s experiencing. This is the faith the author of Hebrews refers to these saints having in verse 34, and the faith we see in the apostle Paul’s life. Paul says in Romans 8:18, “For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us.”

And 2 Corinthians 4:16-17, “we do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day. For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison.” Imitate the faith of Perry, Paul, and these saints by knowing all suffering can’t compare to your better abiding possession. Finally,

### **3) Believe Christ is a Present Help in Every Trouble**

Have you ever wondered how people find peace in difficult trials? Perry will be the first to tell you the peace he has is not natural for him. Hebrews 4:14-16 tells us, “Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.” This is how we find peace in trials. Because Christ, as our high priest, understands our sufferings and weaknesses, and now sits at the Father’s right hand, we have confidence we will “receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.” This is a promise because Christ lives to intercede for you, dispensing grace through the Spirit to carry you through every trial. Imitate Perry’s faith by believing Christ is a present help in every trouble. Would you pray with me as we respond to God’s Word together?