

A Consistent Hope: Hold Fast

HVFC

September 28, 2025

Jesus is Better Series

Hebrews 10:23-25

Fall has officially started, at my house the leaves are turning and blowing away. The breeze has a noticeably cooler clip, and in my opinion we are entering into the best time of the year.

Which is what we talked about last week, entering in. We have reached the part of Hebrews where the writer is moving past the doctrinal portion of the book and turning to us, the reader, to explain the response that we should have to this new covenant. You and I now have the pleasure and ability to live in a consistent hope of eternal life thanks to God, through Jesus Christ. No longer do we have to wait for the day of Atonement to come around every year, we can now daily with boldness enter into God's presence and experience a new way of life.

We don't have to wait for Sunday to roll around, daily we can come before the Father with a sincere heart, and with thanksgiving, with confidence that he will accept us. So the first step in a consistent hope of eternal life is to enter into God's presence allowing him to cleanse our conscience and to wash us with the word of God so that we can go out and live lives (through our deeds) that point to the change that has happened internally. Doctrine and deeds or Faith and works are now going to become a vital part of the writer's encouragement for us.

Today is the next step, when we enter in, we are then to hold fast, to not waiver or let go of our faith.

Turn with me to Hebrews 10 and we will start our passage today in verse 23.

Hebrews 10:23-25

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.

NKJV

Let's pray.

Most of us are familiar with and have quoted these passages from time to time.

And when we were in college, a professor of ours called this portion of Hebrews the salad bar of living our faith.

Let us draw near, let us hold fast, let us consider.

The point of emphasis has changed, no longer are we looking at what God and Jesus have done for us, but now the focus is on what we do.

God doesn't make us draw near to himself, he doesn't override our choice to hold fast or not, and he doesn't make us consider.

We have to choose to do these things.

I was listening to a Billy Graham message this week, and he made this statement.

God has given us an amazing gift of Free will. We are not a robot that God just pushes buttons to get us to do what he wants. We have the right to resist and reject God, but we also have the choice to accept God.

It is that choice to reject or accept God that puts emphasis on these passages and gives weight to the words we hear Jesus and the apostles say over and over, those who endure to the end will be saved.

We can choose to enter in, and we all know those who have entered in, but stopped.

We all know some who were holding fast to their faith, that now have let go.

We all know people who were near to God and now have walked far away from God and the faith.

And last, we remember people who once pressed on in the faith, that have backslid and become degenerate, conscience seared, people.

While we don't do anything for our salvation, we must daily and consistently choose to enter in and hold fast to our faith.

I want to briefly look at this concept of holding fast to our confession of hope.

Hebrews 10:23

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

NKJV

What does it mean to "hold fast"?

This isn't a word we use much anymore.

Fast is an older term, meaning steady, consistent, securely adhered to, stalwart, unyielding.

We are to consistently be securely adhered to and unyielding in our confession of our hope in Jesus Christ.

Some of your translations may say profession of faith.

And while the difference isn't much it is different.

A profession is a strong statement of belief with a personal focus. By that we could have different beliefs about a certain part of our faith. Some believe in Jesus but also profess the work of the Holy Spirit to be all but completed and no longer needed. That is not my profession.

A confession is a more formal and structured declaration of core beliefs.

And our hope of eternal life is what our faith rests on.

I can make a confession for the hope that I hold fast to because He who promised eternal life is faithful to complete the transaction of faith in Jesus for life after death.

Hebrews 10:23

Let us hold tightly without wavering to the hope we affirm, for God can be trusted to keep his promise.

NLT

There is another part to this passage that we must do, we must not waver.

The Greek word is *aklino*, and means to “not lean” or un-inclining, to be steady, firm and not bending to the pressure around you.

We must hold fast to the confession of our hope of eternal life without bending to the pressure that would cause us to lose faith, because God can be trusted to keep his promise.

God will not fail to keep his word or his promises, because that would make him a liar and thus no longer God.

In that same sermon from Billy Graham, he goes on to say that Hell was not made for mankind, nor does God send people to hell. Being that we have free will and

can choose to accept God or reject God, that means that we choose heaven, or we choose hell.

What this is telling us is that we don't have to worry if God will keep his promise or not. Because when I was God's enemy he made a way for me to come into his presence and spend eternity with him through Jesus, and that promise does not bend or waver or falter.

And because of that I can have hope that if I hold fast, God will honor his word.

What a great promise.

How many of have prayed and pledged to hold fast to your confession of hope in Jesus Christ..... only to slip and struggle with sin?

Over and over again we enter in and do our best to hold fast, only to waver when a bad doctor's report comes, or bills pile up, or addictions resurface, or that person that just causes the devil to come out in me starts attending "my" church.

We have all heard those, but what about when life starts going well. Health is good, extra money is piled around, we are only surrounded by good friends that don't need anything from us, and all of a sudden, I don't need God anymore. Life is good, thanks God.

I have said several times our faith is a personal faith, but it isn't a private faith. And this morning that takes on a new meaning.

Hebrews 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.

One of my favorite things of studying the bible is when you find something that you were not expecting to find, but it illuminates the context of the passage. And brings cohesion to things that don't seem to have much cohesion. This week was just such an occasion.

The word translated Hold Fast in the Greek holds a unique quality. It is the word "cat-eh-co-men".

And the definition I shared earlier is the same definition, but it is meant to be done in community. To have collective purpose, to strive together for a common purpose. How we "hold fast" is we do it together.

If we tried to go alone, we would not have the strength within us to hold fast and not waver.

But if you come along side of me and encourage me to love and to good works, my strength is renewed, my resolve hardened to hold fast my confession of faith.

The word for consider is also something done in community.

We are to consider one another, you to me and me to you, how we can provoke each other to love and good works.

Now how many of used to, or maybe still provoke reactions from people?

At our dinner table each night, our four remaining kids actively seek to provoke reactions from each other in their own ways, knowing what gets under the other skins. And I will say this because she is gone, but Makiah's skill is missed as the

peacemaker at the table, especially between Shilah and Billy. Now both Shilah and Billy will scoff at this, but there you have it.

And we all know how to provoke people. Husband's and wives become excellent because of the nature of the relationship, but also with siblings, and very close friends we learn what buttons to push and how to incite the reaction we want.

How many of us use the power to provoke to push each other to love and good works and holding fast to our confession?

Dare I say, not many.

Paul shares this idea many times in his writings.

1 Thessalonians 5:11

So encourage each other and build each other up, just as you are already doing.

NLT

Galatians 6:2

Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

NKJV

Ephesians 4:29

Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear.

ESV

Are you surrounding yourself with those whom you can build up as well as receive encouragement from?

When I think of this passage it reminds me of small groups.

The daily interaction with believers that helps us not waver from our faith in Jesus.

And there is more...

Hebrews 10:24-25

24 Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works.

25 And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of his return is drawing near.

NLT

Covid was an interesting and hard time for most of us, no matter where you find yourself regarding it.

But one of the most damaging things covid did was to isolate people. And years later, when looking back and studying residual effects of isolation was the mental toll it took on people not coming together.

And unfortunately the church has struggled, because of the ability to sit at home with your PJ's on and watch the sermon without interacting with all those hypocrites at the church has fooled us into thinking we are better off alone.

Many are beginning to loosen their grasp on the faith, because they want to isolate themselves and just be me and God. It's just me and God, no one else.

The only problem is that the Day of Jesus return draws near.

Which means it is going to get harder and harder as it gets closer.

Paul outlines this in the second book of Timothy chapter 3.

Know this, that in the last days perilous times will come...

He gives a long list of types of people that have a form of godliness, but denying its power, those who are always learning but never arriving to the knowledge of the truth of Jesus Christ.

That is why we must come to church, gather together, to be encouraged and to know that we are not alone.

I would encourage you to read Romans 12. The whole chapter.

Verse 15 says to rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep.

That is how the church functions and gives life to keep us holding fast to the confession of the hope that is in us.

Stand with me this morning.

We have been looking at our response to all that has been done for us.

And how we are to maintain a consistent hope and endure to the end.

Last week, I shared that the writer focuses on doctrine and deeds until the end of chapter 11.

Today we learned that if I am to hold fast to my confession I must do it in a community setting.

There are no lone wolves, no hermit monks in the faith that finish well.

And as we learned today that coming together and encouraging each other and provoking each other to be more like Christ is a pivotal part of holding fast to our faith in Jesus to experience the promise of eternal life.

Look around this church, this is where God has put you and everyone else to help each other hold fast in your faith. Are you connecting with members of this church?

Are you provoking others to grow and succeed or are you provoking them to fall away?

Are you an encouragement to those who call this church home, or are you sowing discord, pushing people away?

Are you neglecting meeting together and realizing that because of that I am loosening my grasp on the hope I had in Jesus?

I am reminded of the passage in Exodus where Joshua is told to go with the people and cause them to inherit the land God had promised them.

We make a personal choice to follow Jesus, but we succeed when we go together into the promise of eternity.

Let's pray.