

24—Hebrews 10:19-25—We Have Therefore Let Us...

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I. Introduction

- A. To continue with our previous analogy from last week, if you have a love for vanilla ice cream then you should eat and enjoy vanilla ice cream.
 - 1. The fact that you possess a love for it has an expectation of eating it and enjoying it.
- B. We have sight and hearing therefore it makes perfect sense to look and listen.
- C. The title of sermon is, “We have therefore let us...”
 - 1. If you have a key to your house, then you should unlock the door and go in and enjoy your house.
 - 2. It would not make any sense if you had the key but lived in the yard, refused to hold fast your property deed, or refused to plan family gatherings to celebrate birthdays and the blessings of life.

II. Main Point

- A. This section exhorts us how to live together in light of what we possess if we are in Christ.
 - 1. In other words, we have two massive possessions therefore let us do these three things.

III. Outline

- A. Two Possessions—Confidence and Jesus
- B. Three Ways to live in light of our Possessions

IV. Exposition

- A. We've been thinking about Jesus as the priest after the order of Melchizedek since chapter 5 with a brief pause in chapter 6 where he was concerned they had become dull of hearing and would not hear these glorious truths. Verse 18 ended that explanation and now moves into how they ought to live in light of who Jesus is and what he has done for us. The preacher begins with two possessions they have.
 - 1. This section, verses 19-25, are a clear unit because it's actually one sentence. Let's unpack these incredible truths.
 - 2. Verse 19 begins with “therefore.” It is pointing us back to all that has been said about the priesthood and sacrifice of Jesus. Indeed, the finished work versus the never ending work. The can never vs. have completed forever. The clean conscience vs. merely external cleansing. The writing of the law on our hearts vs. the writing of the law on stones. The remembering of our sins vs. never remembering them again. A token vs. actual payment. Temporary vs. eternal. All of that is packed into that word “therefore.”
 - 3. I will say more about this as we go, but this is addressed to the brothers and sisters—that is, the church of the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - a) This is an incredible address. Because of what Christ has accomplished, we have been adopted into God's family. That's why we call each other—brother and sister.
 - (1) He doesn't call them “addressees” or “members” as though there's no real bond here.
 - (a) It's not like calling the person you do not know that's working at your house...the electrician. The contractor. The plumber.
 - i) I also hear this used in our culture in ways I'm not sure what they mean.
 - ii) When we use it, we ought to use it intentionally and specifically about those we believe to be part of God's family.
 - iii) The term brother is not reserved for pastors. But rather this is glorious description of who we all are if we have repented and believed in Christ.
 - 4. Now, let's see the first possession we have.
 - a) This long sentence literally begins with the word “having.” It describes two possessions that we continually have.
 - b) The first one is confidence. It is necessary to clarify what we have before we talk about what we ought to do.
 - (1) Our identity is not in what we do but who we are in Christ.
 - (2) But identity in Christ results in us doing certain things.
 - c) What is this possession of confidence?

- (1) We've already heard this used back in Hebrews 3:6 And we are his house, if indeed we hold fast our confidence and our boasting in our hope.
 - (a) We hear the conditional statement that we are his house, if we hold fast our confidence.
- (2) But what is this confidence? It is like that of authorization.
 - (a) If you are allowed "back stage" it's because you have clearance.
 - (b) Provisions have been made and arranged to allow you inside.
- (3) In other words, we possess authorization from Jesus and by Jesus' sacrifice.
 - (a) Notice there in verse 19—we have confidence to enter the holy places BY THE BLOOD OF JESUS.
 - (b) We have clearance not just "back stage" but into the holy place.
 - i) The place we've heard had not clearance for us.
 - (1) Fear of judgment was real because the law could not cleanse the conscience. It could not wash the evil desires of the heart and the wicked thoughts of the mind.
 - (2) If we were to enter God's presence in that condition—with no authorization... without the blood of Christ—we would perish eternally.
- d) This is access to God's presence by the blood of Jesus is the new and living way.
 - (1) Indeed, this is the new covenant we have been pouring over.
 - (2) This way leads to life—eternal life; not death.
 - (3) It's new and fresh because of what Jesus has accomplished for us.
 - (4) Notice there in the middle of verse 20—the way which he opened for us.
 - (a) We could not gain access to God no matter what we did.
 - (b) We are fully dependent that Jesus opened the way.
 - i) Christ claimed that he was the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through him (Jn 14).
 - ii) There are no other paths to God. Last week I mentioned that some were on their own path to God but we believe God sent his Son to come save us and bring us to God.
 - (1) None of those other paths deal with payment for our sin. If the word God means the greatest and highest being, why would anyone think we could stroll into his presence without authorization? We can't even get into many places in this world much less to heaven without the full and just payment of the blood of Jesus.
 - (a) 1 Peter 3:18 For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God.
 - iii) Jesus is the only one who paid for the access and he's the only one who can bring us to God.
- 5. We have confidence to enter the presence of God...through the curtain.
 - a) What does that mean?
 - (1) This describes the curtain that separated God from the people.
 - (2) Thus, he is saying that we have confidence to enter the presence of God by the blood of Jesus, that is, through his flesh.
 - (3) Jesus died to bring you to God and he's the only way to God.
- 6. The second possession we have besides confidence to enter the presence of God is a great high priest over the house of God.
 - a) There's not much more to say here than what we've already heard in verses 19 and 20.
 - (1) This priest offered himself in all the ways we've talked about which means he died but he's also alive by way of resurrection.
 - (2) Therefore, he is over God's house.
 - (a) So the living priest who is seated at the right hand of God has been given all authority in heaven and on earth.
 - (b) He is the one who gives authorization to those who enter God's house.
 - i) But what is God's house?
 - (1) We, the church, are God's house!

- (2) Christ is the priest who represents us before God.
 - (3) He mediates the new covenant for us.
 - (4) He intercedes on our behalf continually.
 - (5) The reason you make it to heaven will rest on the finished and ongoing work of Christ as our great high priest.
- b) We have authorization to enter the holy places through the blood of Jesus and he is there already to make sure we get there.
- (1) Remember the last will and testament discussion a few weeks ago?
 - (a) He died to enact the will and testament but he is also the executor over the eternal inheritance.
 - (b) He will see to it that all his brothers and sisters get what God has promised—God himself!
7. So, we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus and we have the great high priest who is in the holy places interceding for us.
- a) If we have these two things then what should we do?
- B. In light of these two possessions, the preacher exhorts us to do these things.
1. The first thing is there in verse 22—Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance.
- a) If you were a former practicing Jew, this statement is completely ridiculous.
 - (1) As we've talked about, only the high priest did this once a year.
 - (2) And if you were just a worshipper, as close as you could get to drawing near to God was outside the tent. You couldn't even look at the furniture inside.
 - b) Some think you have to go to Jerusalem.
 - c) Others think you must go through a priest with a white collar on.
 - d) I don't know how this glorious command to draw near to God hits you, but none of those I just mentioned are necessary.
 - (1) "For God's people...He is present in covenant relationship and blessing (1 Sam 4:4; Exod 25:22; Matt 18:20). Thus, to be "far" from God (Eph 2:13) does not mean spatially distant but spiritually and covenantally separate from God. When God reconciles us and brings us "near" to the Father by the Son and in the Spirit, this does not require a journey, but repentance and faith (cf. Isa 57:15; 59:2; Prov 15:29; Eph 2:11-22; Heb 10:19-22)." (Wellum 625)
 - (2) We draw near to God in prayer when we need help—Hebrews 4:16 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.
 - (3) The Lord wants you to draw near to him.
 - e) And we should do so with a true heart in full assurance.
 - (1) We do not draw near to God as though we are worthy in and of ourselves. We do not demand our way in as though we think we have access to anyone and anything we want.
 - (2) Nor do we come timid and ashamed. We do not come expecting God to be disappointed in us. We do not come expecting him to drop the hammer of judgment on us.
 - (3) No. We come with a heart that has been cleansed by the blood of Christ—sprinkled clean from an evil conscience.
 - (a) When you draw near to God, we know that he sees into our soul and knows everything about us.
 - (b) But our hearts are genuine and true before the Lord because we trust that Jesus paid it all—all of it. It is finished.
 - i) If I were drawing near the Lord on what I have accomplished, it would not be in full assurance.
2. The second thing we are exhorted to do in light of the authorization and great high priest we have is to hold fast the confession of hope.
- a) Another way of saying holding is having. In other words, hold fast to what we have.

- (1) Though quoted earlier because of the connection with confidence, Hebrews 3:14 says For we have come to share in Christ, if indeed we hold our original confidence firm to the end.
 - (a) Again, we have been given access to God by the blood of Christ and we must hold on to that firm to the end.
 - (b) That confession of hope is the gospel. It is the blood of Jesus—the perfect sacrifice that has made us perfect.
 - i) Bound up in the gospel are all sorts of doctrines that we confess and hold fast.
 - (1) Who God is and how do we understand the Son of God who took on flesh. Humanity. Sin.
 - (2) All of these are important to holding fast the confession of hope.
 - (3) That's why we have a confession faith.
 - (a) The word confession is homologos—which means same words.
 - (b) A healthy church holds to the same words—the same doctrines.
 - (c) We hold all of them to protect the gospel. Every time I see the church cave on a secondary issue they often end up losing the gospel too.
 - (d) But to hold fast the confession of hope, we must hold fast to Christ through the Word of God.
 - (2) This holding fast is described as not wavering.
 - (a) To waver is to doubt that you have access to God by the perfect sacrifice of Christ.
 - i) Again, if it were based on whether I had done enough, I would have plenty of reason to waver.
 - (b) Does the cross prove God's love for you?
 - (c) Do you believe that Christ's blood is enough? Did he do enough?
 - (d) Maybe we doubt God's faithfulness.
 - (e) Maybe that's why at the end of verse 23—for he how promised is faithful.
 - b) Let us hold fast the confession of our hope together that we may persevere in that hope together to the end for he who promised is faithful.
3. The third exhortation since we have confidence to enter and we have a great high priest over us—let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good deeds.
 - a) What we should consider here is one another. This is in the context of the church—the house that Jesus presides over.
 - (1) It literally says—let us consider one another.
 - (a) If we focus on the how to stir up then we might miss the unique ways in which each person is stirred up differently.
 - (b) There's a risk here of stirring up something wrongly and inappropriately timed.
 - (c) We are seeking to incite their hearts to love.
 - i) What excites you to show love towards others?
 - ii) What motivates you to do good deeds for others?
 - (1) Since there are different personalities and different levels of maturity within a church, their must be consideration of each brother and sister.
 - (2) We should take people along with us—don't always go alone.
 - (3) Find younger people to show the ropes and pass the baton.
 - (4) Delegate things by asking for help even when you don't need help. Get people involved. Be a good example. Take some risks.
 - (2) A negative example of how to do this is found in Genesis 3.
 - (a) To consider means to see or to understand. To consider someone is to understand them...to see them. It is in most cases to impart wisdom which leads to life!
 - (b) But in this example, Eve was stirred up by the serpent to see that tree was desirable to make one wise...make her understand.
 - i) In other words, the serpent's words stirred her up to consider his words over God's. She was stirred up evil deeds.

- b) Well, we have another negative way of considering how to stir one another up to love and good deeds.
- (1) By NOT neglecting to meet together.
 - (a) This is the assembly. Sunday School is not the gathering. The morning gathering before Sunday School is not the gathering. This is.
 - i) Those are important but they are there to help encourage the assembling of God's people.
 - (2) Do you want a simple way to stir each other up to love and good deeds? Show up when we gather for worship.
 - (3) Do you want a simple way to stir each other up NOT to love and good deeds? Neglect the gathering.
 - (a) As the text says, some of this lack of attendance is from habit—not any particularly good reason.
 - (b) Missing has become the norm.
 - (4) I heard a pastor make this clarification—He said some people tell him that it's not necessary to go to church to be a Christian.
 - (a) He replied that it's not necessary to go to church to be forgiven of your sins. That comes through faith in Christ and that can happen anywhere.
 - (b) But it is absolutely necessary to gather with the body of Christ to be a Christian.
 - (c) The book of Hebrews was written to a church. Almost every book of the NT was written to a church.
 - (d) You cannot consider each other if you are not together.
 - (e) You cannot do good deeds for one another if you don't even know someone has a need.
 - (f) There's something fundamentally wrong with the Christian who refuses to gather with the body of Christ.
 - (g) There's no way they are holding fast the confession of hope to the end.
 - i) Obviously I don't mean the homebound.
 - ii) But seriously, that TV preacher is not going to preach your funeral.
 - iii) He's not going to send you any relief when a tornado destroys your house.
 - iv) Will he be there when your family falls apart to give you council and weep with you?
 - v) Furthermore, where is the love for Christ and his church?
 - vi) A life that neglects the assembly of believers is a life that does not glorify God.
 - (1) It is a life that does not have confidence to enter the holy places.
 - (2) It is a life void of the Great High Priest when you are under and submitting to his authority over your life.
 - (5) The final way to consider one another is to encourage each other. This is meant to be in contrast with neglecting the assembly.
 - (a) It is discouraging to neglect the gathering.
 - i) Don't miss the word—neglect. We use that word when a mother neglects her child.
 - (b) Encouragement is so easy and so important.
 - i) Ways that you can do this are arriving early and hanging around afterwards to check on each other.
 - ii) Invite people over for lunch or include them in your lunch plans.
 - iii) Be joyful. Don't fake it. If you are struggling share that with one of your brothers and sisters.
 - iv) Let your conversations be filled with gospel reminders. Make much of God's grace in your life.
 - (c) And finally, if you have a test at school or even a difficult test at the hospital, do you not spend more time studying or praying as the day of that test gets closer?
 - i) So too, we need encouragement all the more as you see the day drawing near.
 - (1) The Day is the day of judgment.

- (2) We need to help each other cross the finish line. We need to be reminding each other of the gospel hope.
- (3) What a beautiful picture it is when our brothers and sisters come alongside each other and root one another on into the hands of the Almighty.
- 4. If we have confidence to enter the holy places and we have Jesus as our great high priest reigning over us, then we are commanded to draw near to God, hold fast the confession of hope, and consider how to stir one another up to love and good deeds.
 - a) We have therefore let us live together like this so that we persevere in faith to the end.
- 5. If you don't have this confidence or you do have Jesus as your great high priest, then I plead with you to come to Jesus—repent of your sins and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - a) When that Day of Judgment comes, you will have authorization to enter heaven with the blood of Jesus.