

# “Is the Church Essential?”

Hebrews 10:19-25

East Berlin Community Church

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## Introduction

- The “new normal” caused by the recent COVID-19 pandemic
  - The government deemed certain business as “essential” and were allowed to remain open during the pandemic.
  - Many are doing their grocery shopping online and having them delivered to their door
  - The popularity of online shopping has skyrocketed while “brick and mortar” stores are closing.
- The restrictions on “non-essential business” has slowly been lifted.
- As other businesses were allowed to reopen, but not churches, some began to ask the question, “Isn’t the church an essential business? How come large groups of people could gather for protests, and yet the church was not allowed to gather to worship?”
  - First Amendment protections from government interference in church matters?
  - On-going battle between Grace Community Church and the governor of California.
- Since March we have met together virtually on ZOOM, but ZOOM has its limitations.

## “Is the Church Essential?”—Hebrews 10:19-25

- Hebrews 10:19-25--*“Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He has consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh, and having a High Priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled 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 one another in order to stir up love and good works, 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.”*

### A. The Question—Not New.

1. Excuses today for not attending church
2. First-century excuses
3. Bottom line: Not in the habit of going

### B. The Answer—Three Reasons the Church is Essential”

#### 1. “Let us draw near”—Hebrews 10:19-22

- Hebrews 10:19-22-- *“Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh, and having a High Priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.”*
- a. **Under the Old Covenant, we would be barred from drawing near to worship God.**
  - b. **Jesus makes it possible for us to “draw near” to God.**
    - 1) **By His death...**
      - a) **Perfect sacrifice for our sins**
        - Hebrews 9:12-- *“Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption. But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever sat down the right hand of God.”*
      - b) **Veil or barrier was removed.**
        - Matthew 27:51-- *“Then, behold the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom.”*
    - 2) **By His resurrected life, He is our great High Priest**
  - c. **We can have “boldness to enter the Holiest”**
    - Hebrews 4:16-- *“boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.”*
    - 1) **Must come with a sincere heart, full of faith**

- 2) **Must be cleansed and holy**
- d. **We can draw near to God alone.**
- e. **But there is a special dynamic in worshipping with others.**

**2. “Let us hold fast”—Hebrews 10:23**

- Hebrews 10:23-- *“Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful.”*
- a. **Forces in this world that seek to draw us away from our devotion to Jesus Christ.**
  - 1 Peter 5:8-9-- *“Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world.”*
- b. **Part of the mission of the church is to build believers—that is, to strengthen our faith so that we hold fast.**
  - Ephesians 4:11-16-- *“And He gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him, who is the head—Christ.”*
- c. **Tragic results of “dropping out”**

**3. “Let us consider one another”—Hebrews 10:24-25**

- Hebrews 10:24-25-- *“And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much more as you see the Day approaching.”*
- a. **“Stir up love and good works”**
- b. **“Exhort or Encourage one another”**