

Hebrews 10:19-25 High School Bible

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Bible Text: Hebrews 10:19-25
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And Paul is writing to his fellow Jews who are believers in Christ and teaching them what the entirety of their religion was supposed to show them. It was supposed to point to the finished work of Jesus. It was supposed to point to him ultimately and perfectly, and that's what we've learned thus far. And I will say this, that I believe that the good news of Jesus, I don't want to use the word "Gospel" all the time because it is the good news of Jesus, is our confident assurance before God. It's our confident assurance before God.

So in this text, there are many many many things and the way I teach normally, you know how I can just go and we could have 40 or 50 points, but today I want to focus on two primary things: that this text gives us the understanding that we have an assurance of eternal life, and because of that we have an intimate relationship with each other in Christ. Those are two specific things that these few verses will show us. So let's get started to that end.

When he says, "Therefore, brothers," what in the world is the "Therefore" there for? "Therefore" is looking forward because of what was previously said. So that is there so that we can be reminded of what we've just learned. And what is it that we've just learned? We've just learned over a series of, you know, 18, 19, 20 weeks, that Jesus Christ is the great high priest, he is the exalted one, he is God, he is the supreme Creator of the world, he is greater than Moses, he's greater than the law, he's greater than the angels, he's greater than Melchizedek, and we've seen all of these different pictures that Judaism held tightly to, that Jesus is the fulfillment of them all; that all of those were the small, remember what I said, the small commercials or the previews of the true who is Jesus Christ. So the first thing that we see here is that we have confidence to enter into the holy places by the blood of Jesus, then by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh.

So in that phrase, in those phrases, there's a lot there. The first thing we need to see is that we can have confident assurance. We talked about that last week, we talked about assurance the week before. Assurance is eternal life. Now I know that might be playing with words for you, but if you have, as a matter of fact, I think I asked and some of you even answered, what are we sure of? What do we have assurance of? And you said, what? Death. We are sure that we will all die. We have confident assurance that we are

breathing in. It is a guarantee, it's something that we can, as people like to say, take to the bank. There's nothing that can stop that which is certain.

And so in this text, we learn that we have assurance in Christ but assurance in what? Assurance for what? And how do we have assurance? Because a lot of people can say, "Well, I'm certain that I have eternal life," but then what do they do? How do you know? You have to define what they mean by that assurance. Where does their faith lie? How is it that they are able to come to the table of confidence and rest without any fear, knowing that they do indeed have eternal life? And this is what Paul is doing here is he's just reiterating or recapitulating everything that he said thus far.

And if we look and we see this confidence, what does it say in this imagery? There's a picture here of the Holy of Holies. The presence of God is what is symbolized. Do you remember that? And as the presence of God is something that cannot be just flippantly approached, we cannot just jump into the presence of God and say, "Hey, God, here I am. Deal with me. Oh, I know I'm a sinner." What does the Scripture teach? That God is just and righteous, that his justice and his wrath and his perfection and holiness requires dealing with sin, and the Scripture thus far has taught us that Christ has dealt with sin. In the days of the high priests, as we'll see, even beyond, but as we've already seen and as we see today that Jesus is the mediator over the house of God, we'll understand that in a little bigger picture. But we can and do have absolute confident assurance of eternal life because Christ has opened up access to God. We can be in his presence. We can come bold before the throne of grace.

For those of you who didn't get the news, my father has announced his retirement and when he goes out next January, whoever the new sheriff is, he's no longer my father so it would be a little odd if I just bounced up into the sheriff's department unannounced. So chances are now after 44 years, I'll have to go through the front door, ring the buzzer, and state my business rather than just having the access code to go in. Friends, we don't have to have an access code or we don't have to have the front door buzzer and state our business to approach God because Christ is our access code. He is the one who opened it.

So therefore we have confidence, but how can we have confidence? Did Jesus just give us a pass? Did Jesus just give us the password? Did Jesus create in us some kind of righteousness that we're getting better and good enough to stand in the presence of God? Not at all. We have been given access to God through, what? Through the blood of Jesus. Through the blood of Jesus.

Now this access is not something that we have to go get, this access is something that has been given because if we are on the hook for getting it, guess what happens? What happens if we forget? What happens if we don't take it seriously? What happens if we have a lack of sincerity? I'll tell you what happens: we're banging on the door and we're not getting in, because if we're not in through Christ and his death, his propitiatory substitutionary atonement, if he is not the satisfaction of God's wrath for us guys, the only way that door will be opened is if we step into the wrath and the judgment of God.

But because of the blood of Christ and the explanation of what that blood did, look at verse 20, "by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain." Now when it says "curtain," a whole lot of things come to mind. I mean, what does a curtain do? A curtain separates something. In the Holy of Holies in the temple and the tabernacle, the curtain separated that intimate place, the mercy seat where the ark of the covenant and all those things, and the blood was poured, and the sacrifices were offered, because not everybody could go there. Remember Sinai? As we'll see here in chapter 12, we will really get a good picture of the contrast between Sinai, the judgment, the wrath, the law, the shadow of God's righteousness, and Zion who is Jesus Christ, the new and better covenant. But what does a curtain do? A curtain blocks something. I mean, if we put curtains on the window, we do it for, what? To keep the light out so we can sleep. Sometimes you can buy thick enough curtains to keep some noise out. But sometimes maybe you're getting dressed and you want to keep the peeping eyes out. A shower curtain keeps the water off the floor, and so on.

So the curtain in the worship of Israel was to keep people who were not prepared in a sacramental way from being in that holy place where God was, but Christ has torn that curtain down. Christ's body is the curtain and he ripped it down, that is, through his flesh. So we can have confidence and not just that we can have confidence, we should have confidence because we have been given assurance of our access to God, the assurance of eternal life. Not just that we're with God, but that we are righteous before God once and for all.

But how does that really work? Well, you see this idea of Jesus being the high priest, Jesus being the sacrifice. Remember, we just learned this last week and the week before, that the high priest daily, always, continually prepared himself, gave a sacrifice for himself, gave a sacrifice for the people, and then got out of there, got out of the area that symbolized the presence of God. Jesus went into that place and saved to the uttermost, and when he was done being the sacrifice and done mediating the sacrifice as the high priest, what did he do? The Scripture gives the picture of Jesus sitting down at the right hand of God the Father, the place of preeminence, the place of supremacy, because he is God and he's not like all of the shadows of the worship of men throughout all the ages, all the sacrifices that were shadows, all the priesthood work that was shadows. He is the ultimate and true high priest. He's the ultimate and true mediator and, better yet, he is our advocate.

He's our advocate so that if there ever was, remember that little scene that I played out some weeks ago where if we walked in and God were to actually ask, "How is it that you can stand in my presence? What offering do you bring for your sin?" What do we say? We can plead nothing. We can plead nothing but that Christ has brought us into righteousness because he satisfied God's wrath for us, and that's what verse 21 teaches, "and since we have a great priest over the house of God."

Now I want to think about, I want you to think about something for a second. When you, how many of you just by show of hands have ever had your mom or dad say, "This is my house," and emphasis this is not your house? Okay, good, so maybe everyone but one.

And it was always, "My house. I pay for it. I pay for the lights. I pay for the food. I pay for all this." So if someone has bought it, paid for it, and continues to operate it, it really is their house, right, until they get married and then it's not their house anymore, it's y'all's house, or what's mine is mine and what's yours is mine. That's how it works, depending on who's saying it. But if it's your house, I mean, how about your neighbor, how many of you have ever busted into your neighbor's house unannounced and just plundered through their stuff? That's called burglary. You just admitted to a crime. Alright, so if it's your house, it's your house, it's your business.

Some people look at this building like this building, this Baptist facility here, and it's been here a long time when I was a child, my grandfather pastored this church and it was his first pastorate, as a matter of fact. And I remember sitting over there and then sung in the choir. We didn't have these nice padded things, the pews were a little bit older and there was no carpet on the floor that looked good. Either way, people have always called buildings like this, what? The house of God. It's the house of God. When I pastored in California at First Baptist Newark, we had a building that was really old. The building in itself and the Platt had been there since the '30s but the construction in the front where we worshiped had only been there since the '50s, and I began to look at it and our social hall was very thin and very long like a single wide, triple long trailer. It was just very small and I always wondered why is this thing so weirdly shaped? Who would have built this? Come to find out it was the original foundation of a chicken house. They cut it in half and made a fellowship hall out of it, and as people would talk to me sometimes, the kids get a little too rowdy in the building, you know, and the old guys, you know, the old ex-Marines from World War I and from the Revolutionary War and all those other, you know, "Get outta here! You're tearing up the house of God!" And I would remind them and say, "Wait a minute now, before it was God's house it was a chicken house. So it's really the house of chicken." And they would laugh thinking I was joking but I was emphasizing something to try to teach them: though we should be good stewards of our building, it's not the house. The house are the people. We are the body of Christ. We are the temple. We are the church. We are the assembled ones, the gathered ones, and the building where we meet is irrelevant, yet we have in our culture this mindset that the house is the property but the house of God are the people whom Christ has saved.

So we have confidence because Jesus not only finished the work of redemption, offered himself as a sacrifice, that his blood and his body tore away the curtain giving us access to God so that we can have absolute assurance of eternal life, but he also oversees it. He manages it. He takes care of it. He tends it. On Sunday mornings I'm preaching through John 17 and in John 17 Jesus is praying for the house. In John 5 when Jesus was debating, if you can say that, with, he was destroying the Pharisees, and he talks about Moses being a servant over the house of God. Paul deals with the same thing here that we've already learned months ago, Moses was a steward over the house of God but he was not a son. It wasn't Moses' house. Jesus deals with that in John 10 when he talks about the hired hand who runs away when the wolves come, but that the true Shepherd, Jesus Christ, he takes care of the sheep and the sheep hear his voice and they follow him. Friends, we are not going to be misled, led astray or forgotten, for Christ is the great high priest. He is the one through whom we can approach God and God is satisfied because

Christ his Son is the final and true mediator and priest over the house of God. You are safe in the Lord Jesus.

So that's the first thing that we learn from this text. The second thing that we learn here is not only do we have confident assurance of eternal life because of who Christ is, because he is the priest over the house of God and he's given us access to God through his death and resurrection, but because of that we can have intimate life together as God's house. Intimate life together as God's house, as God's people.

Now the New Testament in itself is written in letter form. Outside of the Gospels which are still letters if you can say that, all the rest of them are letters. They are written to send to specific people groups, specifically sometimes, all the time, about certain occasions, certain reasons that Paul had to write, or James had to write, or Peter had to write, or John had to write, etc. of things that might be going on. But were these letters ever written from a political point of view? Were they ever written to a government seat? Were they ever written to an institution or an organization? No. They were written to a people that we improperly call the church, the word in itself is historically inaccurate, but we are the house of God, we are the people of God, so that every New Testament letter is written for the sake of us who have confidence of our eternal life in Christ, to live together in a manner worthy of his glory.

Now we should not conflate the two. The way we're qualified to have eternal life is through Christ alone, but because we are together in Christ, there are certain rules and manners and details that are given to us through the Scripture to help us live at peace with one another, and so that's where Paul goes next in verse 22. He gives three, "let us." He gives three. The first one is, "let us draw near"; the second one is, "let us hold fast"; and the third is, "let us consider."

So let's look at these three things because we are confidently secure in Christ, we have intimate life together as Christ's people, as the house of God. How is that so? Because, first, we have intimacy with God. We have intimacy with God. Now the word "intimacy" scares us. We don't know what it means, we don't use it like it's supposed to be used. As a matter of fact, many of you probably think when somebody says, "Well, that was an intimate moment," somebody's kissing or making out, right, like it's a soap opera or something. Or maybe it was some sweet exchange or a romantic parting on a movie, yeah? "Oh, wasn't that intimate?" Or maybe some of us who are animal lovers, our little puppies wake us up by licking us on the face because they need to go poo, and we think, "Aw, that was so sweet." You know, so, I mean, depending on who you ask, you could have a lot of different explanations of what it means to be intimate, but ultimately intimacy is an exchange of proximity, or it's a detail of how we are relating together and it's a depth of how we're relating together, and the Scripture uses the creation of man and wife, marriage, and the marriage bed, which has to do with sexual relations, as an image, picture, yup, I said it, y'all are in trouble now, as a picture of intimacy with God through Christ.

Now we can't play that out in such a literal way, but we're supposed to understand that the most intimate moments of our human existence are nothing compared to the true reality of our intimacy with Christ, so much so that the Bible teaches us that the most important relationships in this life are considered to be our brothers and sisters in Christ, for we as brothers and sisters in this room, have an eternal relationship, one that my wife and I will not have, for when we die or the Lord returns, I will no longer be a husband. As a matter of fact, according to the Scripture, I'm a fake husband. Christ is the true husband. I'm actually a bride. S

o marriage is a symbol, as a friend of mind told me one time many many years ago, it's a microscopic picture of the macrocosmic reality of Christ and the church, Ephesians 5, Colossians 3. Yet we're supposed to have true spiritual intimacy with the house of God and what does that look like? What does that mean to have intimacy? I'll tell you what it's not, it's not about feelings. It's not about emotions. It's not about fun times and good opportunities. It's not about common ground or affinity or habits and hobbies and interests that just keep on going and we just really, everything's good and when those things go away, "Eh, we're just really not close anymore." It affects a closeness. So if we have closeness with Christ and all who are in Christ are his body, should we not be close to everybody?

I mean, how many of you are really intimate with your eyes? Yes, you are. Throw some sand in there, some salt in there. Poke it out and throw it on the ground. It's gonna hurt. You're gonna be in very bad pain and you're gonna have an opportunity to experience separation. That's not that we're dreaming about our eyes, "I just love my eyes. They're so pretty," and you sleep with your eyes open with a mirror in front of you. But you have an intimate relationship with your eyes because they're part of your body. They're necessary. You use them all the time without even thinking about it, and when something, when you get my age and, you know, for the last 10 years I've really been suffering with eyes, they get worse and worse and worse and sometimes I have 2-3 pairs on trying to get the right prescription, if I'd just go to the doctor and get the news ones. You know, get the right prescription so I can do what I'm trying to do.

We have intimacy with each other that's more important than anything else because we have intimacy with God. "Let us draw near." Let's draw near to God, not that we're just saved and that's the end of it, but there is an effort on our part as we grow in the knowledge of grace where we're supposed to strive to be closer to God. This is not a feeling, though David, as we see in the Psalms, he exalts, he has joy in the Lord and we see that. We see he has agony. We see he has depression. We see sometimes that he feels like the Lord has abandoned him. But those things do not measure our assurance. What measures our assurance is the faithfulness of Christ, the finished work of Jesus. The confidence that we have is that we have been brought near to God and we are forgiven and we have eternal life, and we can have life together because of that so that our, I say it this way, our relationship with Jesus, which is an extremely bad term, our relationship with Jesus is his finished work for us, but our salvation, our spiritual journeying is personal. We must believe. Christ saved you on the cross but it is not private. It is not private just for me, it is for the rest of my brothers and sisters. My faith is to be shared

with you and your faith is to be shared with me, and in order for that to be effectual, we must learn to draw near with a true heart.

And how do we draw near with a true heart? Look at that, "in full assurance of faith." So if we don't get, it's like I told y'all last week, if we don't get this text down, the rest of this letter is going to be very difficult. You're gonna stumble over it. So when I'm done today, I'm gonna have another opportunity for you to ask questions for clarifying because I want you to understand this.

So we have full assurance of faith, in other words, we're not lacking in our confidence. We're not putting Christ, adding to Christ or putting Christ a little bit to the left so we can put our toe on another ledge to keep us from falling. I remember when I used to boulder, and I used to boulder and I'd go a little higher than I should. And bouldering, if you don't know, is climbing rocks without restraints, and you typically, you know, you're about that high, you fall, oh well. You rehabilitate and you do it again. You know, rock climbing, you could be hundreds of feet, you harness yourself, but bouldering, you just sort of do it. And there were many times where I thought, "I'm gonna slip and fall. I am worn out. I can't do this." Well, I'm a little higher than I want to be or I'm just not dumb enough to land on my head from 28 feet, and I just find a little spot with my foot and I just put it there and I just sort of rest. It's like when you're qualifying sometimes for scuba, in order to be a licensed scuba, not that I've done this but friends that have told me, my father even when he was qualified for that to search for dead bodies, that was the reason, in the ponds. You have to tread water for like 15 minutes and he said he'd find that little jet and the instructor would walk by and stick his toe in it. Stick his toe in the little jet, you know? The instructor would come back and.... Just that little bit would let us hang on just a little bit more.

Friends, we can't have a toehold and say we have confident assurance in our faith. Faith alone in Jesus Christ is faith alone in Jesus Christ, forsaking everything else, forsaking all others forever, and because we can have that type of assurance, believing in the finished work of Christ, we have hearts that are clean. We have a conscience that has been cleansed. Our bodies in this picture and all of these are images of the preparation for the presence of God in temple worship, but Jesus has done it all. He's done it all. Confident assurance is drawing near to God or allows us to draw near to God because we have access to life through grace. It is by the mercy of God. So we have assurance in the finished redemption of Christ with a clean conscience. We see our sin, we know our sin, we engage in sin at times, God forbid, but we do, and we don't judge our hope based on that, we judge our hope based on Christ took care of that. He offered himself as a sacrifice for that.

So we have intimacy with God, that's the first thing that we need to understand and having intimate life together. The second thing, "Let us," then, "hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful." And I'm gonna be honest with you, I think Paul is just redundant. He's over and over and over again the same thing. We have intimacy together as Christ's people with assurance in his work. Have you noticed that that's what Paul is teaching? You notice that this letter here is helping you

recognize that the foundation on which you stand, the rock is Jesus and his righteousness. It's not your righteousness. It's not my righteousness. None of us can ever be good enough even with God's power to stand before him and not be judged guilty, but by God's mercy, we will not be judged guilty because Christ took our sin and his righteousness is given to our account.

"Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering." How do we do that? I mean, do you not doubt? I doubt. I have seasons and when I say season, I mean, there are times where I just think even if it's a fleeting second or two, "Am I lost?" Have you ever felt that way? Have you ever been in that place where you start measuring yourself by the world's standards, or worse, by the law, and you go, "There's no way possible." Woe be to the one who measures himself by the law of God and finds no fault for that man is condemned.

But we get to that place and we think, "Am I truly saved?" Well, what is this teaching us? We do not waver with the confession of our hope that is in Christ. That means when we start looking in the mirror and figuring that maybe we're just not quite as saved as we ought to be, and we start shaking, and we think our intimacy with Christ and our relationship with Christ and our approach to God has to do with our working, we are failing to see what Paul is teaching here, "he who promised is faithful." The promises of God, as the Scripture says, are yea and amen. It is done. They're yes, so it is. And Christ promised eternal life for those for whom he died and they will see and trust fully.

If you trust in the finished work of Jesus, you have a certain assurance. It's really interesting here. This is the pragmatism of Christianity. This is the practical approach of what the Bible would teach us as living out the faith, trusting in Jesus continually, continually, continually. How can we do that? Because unlike me and my promises even with good intention this morning, Abby comes to me, now she's gonna turn 7 this year and she's tearing up and she goes, "Dad, when I was 5, mom said she'd take me to the bakery and she lied!" You know? "She didn't keep her promise!" I said, "Well, sometimes things just don't work out." "Well, she promised!" I'm like, "Abigail, sometimes things just don't work out." So even with the best intentions, we are not able to always keep our promises. With the deepest of sincerity. Do you see the difference? God cannot lie. Where did I get that? Well, all over the place but we've already seen it here in Hebrews. God cannot lie so when he says he will do something, when he says he has forgiven our sins in Christ, it is finished. It is finished.

His promises stand but why is this important? Because as we hold fast to our assurance, as we hold fast with our intimacy with God because we have confidence of eternal life in Christ, we are living together with all the saints. We have intimate life together with all the saints. Verse 24, "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."

What does it mean? What does it mean to consider? Well, it means to think about it; to approach it; to look; to stir each other toward love, to stir each other toward good deeds.

Do you know what a good deed is? Serving each other. That's not about obedience to a set of laws, it's about serving one another. Serving each other in a way that the Scripture shows us. The discipline for what we call the means of grace, like how God works in our lives to show us the truth.

And what is this grace, how is this grace obtained? By not neglecting to be together. That's what he says, do not neglect to be together, and there's a lot I could, I could teach an entire message on this. But friends, how are we going to serve one another if we're not together? Have you ever been to a restaurant and had a terrible server? Have you ever waited like 10 minutes, 20 minutes, 30 minutes on your drinks? And then you order and the food comes out wrong? I mean, you spend an hour at a Hardee's, I mean, something's wrong. That's fast food. I mean, I wouldn't spend an hour in a five star restaurant unless I'm done eating.

It's difficult when we have all of these things that take place and when we experience people who are supposed to serve us and they fall down on the job, but you know, the worst way to not serve is to not be there at all. If you owned a business and your employees who were supposed to serve and you pay them and they serve others, no matter what kind of business it is, if they don't show up, it ruins everything. It demotes your opportunity. It removes your opportunity to serve somebody.

My friends, if you're not living together, if you're not living together, if you're not working together, if you're not with the body of Christ and other Christians, intentionally holding fast together to the confidence that you have in Christ, holding fast together to the work of the Gospel, to the work of God, then you can't serve one another, and if you're not serving one another, then you are literally eliminating 50% of your Christian life. There is not one thing in the New Testament letters that you can apply to your life if you're not with other Christians.

When should you apply those things? Well, you need to encourage people to act in love. You need to encourage yourself to act in love. Why? Because of God's love for us in Christ. And to serve one another, think about what that looks like. It doesn't just mean taking care of needs, or sometimes it's just living in a way of serving each other for the sake of Christ, reading the Bible, praying for one another, and being an ear to listen.

How long do we do that? How should we do it and why? Well, there's a lot here in this last little phrase. We should not be in the habit of neglecting to be together but be together so that we might encourage one another and do it more and more and more as we see the Day of Christ approaching. That means there will come a day when Christ will come and take us all, and every enemy of his will be under his feet. And at the end of it all, we will not have to worry about how we're supposed to serve. Christ served us by dying for us, we, then, in turn, can serve one another and it is all for the Day of Christ, for the glory of Christ, our full and confident hope of eternal life and life together is for the glory of Christ.

When Paul says, "Do everything for the glory of Christ," this is the primary point that he's trying to make. Whether you eat or drink or talk or speak or write or do, whatever you do, do it for the glory of Christ because when we do it for the glory of Christ, it means we're doing it for someone else, for the sake of their joy and for the sake of their understanding of the Gospel of grace, for the sake of their application of this new life, this new covenant, this finished work of Jesus, because without Christ, everything we do, even the greatest service