

## **Bold** **Hebrews 10:19-25**

### **Introduction**

You've heard the expression, "Fools rush in where angels fear to tread." You've known people like that. Perhaps "brash" is a better to describe them than "bold." They need to learn to show some respect and self-control.

But we also know there are times to be bold. *History is full of missed opportunities and humiliating defeats all because those who should have shown courage were frozen in fear.*

So what about the Christian life? Given who God is and who we are, who of us can be so bold as to pursue relationship and power with God? It seems prideful presumption for sinners by birth and by choice to think they could experience such a closeness with the almighty, holy God of heaven and earth.

Clearly, God has to make some kind of move on our behalf. We cannot bridge the gap ourselves. So our text this morning starts with **Our Reason for Boldness (19-21)**  
<sup>19</sup> Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, <sup>20</sup> by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain,

that is, through his flesh, <sup>21</sup> and since we have a great priest over the house of God,

“Confidence”—free, unhindered, bold—like the speech of the apostles when filled with the Spirit

In this case confidence or boldness to enter into the holy places of heaven itself by the blood of Jesus. In contrast to the old covenant sacrifices with the rituals, rules, and barriers, this is a new way under the new covenant. A living way—in that the risen Christ is forever alive in heaven, interceding for us before God.

Under the old covenant, the way into the holy places was barred by protective curtains. As Christ yielded up his spirit on the cross, the curtain into the holy of holies tore in two from top to bottom, indicating that Christ’s sacrifice had opened the way for us.

Matthew 27:50-51

<sup>50</sup> And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice and yielded up his spirit. <sup>51</sup> And behold, the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. And the earth shook, and the rocks were split.

According to early Jewish tradition that woven curtain was four inches thick, 60 feet high, and 30 feet wide. Only God could tear it

apart—and He did—from top to bottom. Only God could open the way for us.

What was that last cry from the cross before Jesus died and the temple curtain was torn in two?

John 19:30 When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, "It is finished," and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

The writer of Hebrews draws a parallel between the rending of the temple curtain to open up the holy of holies and the rending of Christ's flesh to open up the way for us to God.

The infinite, holy God sets the rules of worship. He establishes who can approach Him and who cannot. Because of our sin, there is no way to get to God apart from substitutionary sacrifice—someone who is perfect to pay for our sins.

That's why as Jesus teaches why he must go to the cross to prepare a place for us in God's presence, he declares  
John 14:6 I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

This is our reason for boldness—Jesus has opened the way. But there's more. There's a present reality that encourages us to be bold:

Hebrews 10:21 and since we have a great priest over the house of God,

Jesus not only once served as our mediator at the cross. As risen Savior and Lord, He now serves as our mediator, our intercessor, at the right hand of God. Our great high priest after the order of Melchizedek, both king and priest forever. He finished the work on the cross. He now works from a throne.

We can be bold because we have an Advocate with the Father, a Savior-King who rules and will do so till every enemy is subjugated.

Boldness generates action. For it to remain just an idea or a feeling sucks the meaning out of the term. Bold people move. They do stuff. They act.

*So there is a way of living that ought to inevitably flow from our recognition and affirmation that Jesus has made a way for us to God and even now intercedes for us as Priest and King.*

Our text reveals what that bold life looks like: <sup>22</sup> 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. <sup>23</sup> Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering,

for he who promised is faithful. <sup>24</sup> And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, <sup>25</sup> 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.

“Let us”—not allow us; rather a way of translating a first-person plural command. In English we use only second person singular or plural for a command—You do this or that.

1. Bold in Our Worship (22)
2. Bold in Our Confession (23)
3. Bold in Our Love Work (24-25)

### **1. Bold in Our Worship (22)**

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.

Draw near—come close, into the very presence of God; what worship is all about—a recovery of what we lost in Eden

Not the first time Hebrews has called us to do this.

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.

With a true heart—sincere, unhypocritical; you're not just going through the motions of worship. You really are worshiping from the heart. It's impossible to draw near to God if you're faking it. He knows. You know He knows.

In full assurance of faith—relying fully on God's promise in Christ to forgive us, to receive us, and to reward us  
Hebrews 11:6

And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.

With hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience—Christ's sacrifice actually purifies our consciences from sin guilt; internal, spiritual cleansing

Our bodies washed with pure water—as were the bodies of the priests to fit them for service in the tabernacle or temple. There is a connection between purity of heart/mind and purity of our outward physical deeds. The ritual washings were symbolic of this connection. Clean hands and a pure heart.

Ezekiel 36:25-27 (parallel to Jeremiah's prophecy of the new covenant)

<sup>25</sup> I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses,

and from all your idols I will cleanse you. <sup>26</sup> And 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. <sup>27</sup> And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.

Application:

*Be aggressive and bold in drawing near to God. Don't shrink from it. Don't be timid. Don't be lazy and neglectful. Don't coast. Christ has opened the way for you to live close to God. Don't throw it away.*

Confession, repentance, cleansing; washing of water by the Word and filling your mind with it; fervent prayer; deliberate dedication of your body to the Lord (Romans 6). Zealous adoration of Christ, grateful and glad, yielding to the Spirit to make all your life a liturgy of praise to God pursuing His will in every facet of your living (Romans 12:1-2).

Because of the new and living way Jesus has opened to you, you can actually walk with God today, all day, every day—if you will be bold to do it.

## **2. Bold in Our Confession (23)**

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

Hold fast—don't let go.

Confession means "to say the same thing as." We usually think of this term as referring to confession of sin—saying the same thing about our sin as God does. But here it is—The confession of our hope—saying the same thing about our future as God does. Hope is not wishful thinking, it is conviction regarding what is future

Without wavering—does not fluctuate with the circumstances or the intimidating viewpoints of the times

Why? He who promised is faithful. The reason we hold fast to the hope we have confessed is that we know God is completely reliable. He always makes good on His promises. He cannot do otherwise. We are saved by this hope.

*What drives Christian thinking and doing is the total trustworthiness of what God has promised us in Christ. What God will yet do on the basis of what God has already done through Jesus Christ.*

The *gospel* is good news not just good advice. What God has done not what we must do.



Those who defect from the faith love mocking those who believe the gospel for their faults and failures at every turn, even if they have to make it up. They love joining with the accuser of the brethren. They justify their betrayal as a justified response to the personal insult of Bible-believing Christians who would not embrace their unbelief and their willful denial of Biblical authority.

It is telling that they like to wear the badge of "evangelical." Their attacks against the foibles of believers are only an excuse, a cover. Why should anyone be shocked when human beings sin or fail? Who will cast the first stone? The real root of their defection is that they no longer hold to the good news of what God says He has done and of what God says He will do. They strip Him of being the Creator. So it's not surprising they strip Him of being the Redeemer too. Instead they pant after the approval of the wise ones of this world. They parrot the mantras of the knowing ones of this age. They cannot bear to be considered foolish or irrelevant or unloving by those who consider God and His Word irrelevant at best and oppressive at worst. Hence, it is often the most educated, the most intellectual from among us that jump ship the fastest. Their pride in self will not let them do otherwise.

This is nothing new. Our whole civilization is built on the rediscovery of the ancient classical world in which the apostles lived.

### 1 Corinthians 1:18-31

**18** For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. **19** For it is written, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart."

**20** Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? **21** For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, it pleased God through the folly of what we preach to save those who believe. **22** For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, **23** but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, **24** but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. **25** For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

**26** For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. **27** But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; **28** God chose what is low

and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, <sup>29</sup> so that no human being might boast in the presence of God. <sup>30</sup> And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption, <sup>31</sup> so that, as it is written, "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord."

Be bold in holding fast to your confession of hope. Don't be bullied or seduced into giving it up. It's worth living for and dying for. The world and those who are of the world are lying, the same way their father the devil lies. And whoever believes the lie is destroyed. That's why the devil—the slanderer—is called a murderer. These people do not care about your welfare even if they have deceived themselves into thinking they do. Their doctrine is damning.

Keep reminding yourself of what God has done, what God is doing, and what God promises He will do. Live your daily life accordingly. Get your eyes off yourself and off the flaws of others. Your hope is in the Lord, not in human beings—except for the God-man, Jesus.

But that does not mean you isolate yourself—

### **3. Bold in Our Love Work (24-25)**

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.

Consider—intensive form of “think”—literally, to place the mind down on; focus your thinking, think carefully, intentionally, thoroughly

How to stir up one another—to incite, stimulate, motivate, move to action  
One another—we all need this from each other

To love and good works—love for God and love for others drives all moral and beneficial works—“on these two commands hang all the law and the prophets.”

How do we find the opportunities to do this?  
“Not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another.”

We require time together to do this. That’s why we meet every week as we do. It’s not about meeting some legalistic requirement, checking off some box. That’s ritual religion. It is about benefiting from the necessary interaction God commands believers to have. A dismembered body cannot function well, and no part of a body functions well apart

from the body. If you want to move into self-destruct mode, just cut yourself off from your brothers and sisters in Christ.

Don't forget WHY we get together. Yes, we get together to worship and to learn, but we are getting together to stir up one another to love and good works. What we do for one another impacts everyday of our lives and every person we encounter.

There is urgency to doing so.  
"and all the more as you see the Day drawing near."

The writer of Hebrews predicts that the whole temple system is about to be shaken. Within a few short years the temple was destroyed, and all the old covenant rituals were rendered impossible. Because of the close relationship of the fall of Jerusalem with the events end of the age as prophesied in passages like Matthew 24 and 25, the first century Christians fully expected the end of the age to follow quickly on the heels of Jerusalem's fall. And every generation since then has lived with the expectation of Jesus' imminent return.

The day of consummation is coming. And even if it seems delayed from our perspective, the day of each of our homegoings is coming. We have only today.

Tomorrow to opportunity may be gone. But be sure of this, God will complete what He's begun. So live ready. And stir one another up to do so.

*Who are the brothers or sisters with whom you have boldly, intentionally connected to encourage them toward love and good works? Who are the brothers or sisters who do that for you?*

*What are you doing to build and nurture such relationships?*

Husbands-wives—doing this for one another?

Parents-children?

Young mom—reach out to a mom who has some years of experience rearing children and spend time together building one another up (or vice versa).

Young man—who are your battle brothers who know you and pray for you and encourage you and when necessary, confront you?

Young woman—who are your sisters with kindred spirits who have open hearts and open ears to you, who give you a safe place of steadfast love and wise council

Senior saint—who are you investing in the coming generations? If God preserves your life, who will walk this journey with you when many in your own generation have gone home?

God did not design you to walk this path alone, Christian. We need one another. Keep how you're going to help others at the forefront of your mind. And benefit from those who do that for you.

## **Conclusion**

1. Be Bold in Your Worship.
2. Be Bold in Your Confession.
3. Be Bold in Your Love Work.

Jesus has paid His life blood to purchase this bold life for you. He watches over you and intercedes for you all the days, even to the consummation of the age. So don't hang back. Be bold!

### Discussion Questions:

1. What are some examples you've seen or experienced when lack of boldness proved costly?
2. What makes boldly drawing near to God impossible for us, and how does Jesus solve that impossibility?
3. What are some ways you practice drawing close to God?
4. Why do you think it's crucial to our living boldly to remember both the past work (on the cross) and present work (at the throne) of Jesus on our behalf?

5. When people use the failure of gospel-believing Christians as their reason for defecting from the faith, what are they missing about the reason for our hope, as evidenced by the very meaning of the term *gospel*?
6. Rather than glorying in the work of God, what do such *exvangelicals* typically look to for their sense of identity and value (superiority)? How does 1 Corinthians 1:18-31 correct their approach to life?
7. What are some ways you intentionally think through how you can stir up other believers to love and good works, and what have you found helps them most?
8. Why is it so critical to carve out significant time together with your brothers and sisters in Christ, and what do you find tends to interfere with doing so?
9. Who are the persons (name them) you already have regular opportunity to encourage toward love and good works? Are there others you could add? How?