

“Our New and Living Way”  
(Hebrews 10:19-25)

Introduction: Christ, through His work as our great High Priest, through His laying down His life for our sins, has done many things for us. He has removed our sins once and for all, so that no one of us who has trusted in Jesus will ever have to face God for them. He has clothed us with a perfect righteousness, for His blood has removed all of our sinful stains, and His righteousness has covered us. He has ratified and inaugurated the New Covenant and has established it forever. And it is in this covenant that the Lord has promised to forgive the sins of those who will trust in His Son. He even gives His Holy Spirit to His elect to make them willing and able to believe in Christ. And He has opened a way into the holy of holies in heaven for us, so that we can approach the throne of grace with boldness. Do we really understand or appreciate these blessings as we should? Sometimes I wonder if we really understand even a tenth of how precious these blessings are. We are like those who have been given a fortune in foreign money from some generous soul from another country. Even though he gives it to us and it is ours, we really don't understand how much its worth. God has given to us something far more precious than money. He has given to us His Son. He has taken away our sins. He has received us as His sons and daughters. May He help us to understand these things, so that we can do what we need to thank Him.

But with great privileges also come great responsibilities. It is a very high honor and privilege to be the president of the United States. But with this honor comes great responsibility and accountability, much more than for the average person. If a person who holds this office does something illegal or immoral, he should be punished even more severely, and not less. The same thing is true with the privileges that the Lord gives to us. They are things which He expects us to take advantage of, not for ourselves, but for Him and for our brethren. And this is what the author now tells us as he exhorts us to

*Use the privileges He has given us in Christ, both for our own strengthening and for the strengthening of our brethren.*

**I. First, the author reminds us again as to why we should do what he will tell us to do.**

A. The first reason he gives us is that “we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus” (v. 19).

1. God has opened a way into the holy place through the blood of Jesus.

a. This is what we saw last week.

b. This is something, as I said, which we can easily take for granted. We don't know what its like to have to approach God through the blood of animals. We don't know what its like not to be able to come straight to Him. Since we have been Christians, we have lived our lives under the way things are in the New Covenant and not in the Old. In the Old there was no entrance to the holy place for anyone, except the high priest. And even then, he didn't come boldly. He probably wondered the whole time whether or not he was going

to be struck down by God.

- c. But since the blood of Christ has been shed, we who come to God now can have confidence. We can have boldness. And this boldness, as we saw this morning, does not come from our own worth, as though we deserve to come to God. No! It comes from the blood of Christ. It comes from His righteousness and His pleading before the Father on our behalf.
  - d. Remember what the author told us earlier in the book, in chapter 4:14-16, “Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and may find grace to help in time of need.”
2. The Israelites did not have this boldness of access to God.
- a. Christ put it into force. He inaugurated it when His blood was shed on Calvary’s cross.
  - b. And so it is a new way. It is not one which was there before. It was not previously available to the people of God.
  - c. And it is a living way. It does not come through death, as in the Old Covenant. It is true that Jesus needed to die to open the door to heaven for us. But Jesus does not remain dead, like those animals. He has risen. And He has ascended into heaven. And He sits at the right hand of God and ever makes intercession for you and for me.
  - d. Christ has opened the way for us through His death. And now it is through His death, through His flesh, that you or I must come to God.
    - (i) The author says that Jesus inaugurated this way into heaven through the veil.
    - (ii) Remember that the veil, or curtain, was what separated the holy place from the holiest of all, the holy of holies.
    - (iii) That veil actually represented the flesh of Christ. It was His flesh that veiled His deity. Remember the very familiar Christmas hymn, “Hark the Herald, Angels Sing!” In it, Charles Wesley writes, “Veiled in flesh the God-head see; hail th’incarnate Deity.”
    - (iv) The veil was Christ’s human nature. When He was put to death on the cross, do you remember what happened? The veil of the Temple was torn from top to bottom. At the time His flesh was torn, and He died, that which represented His flesh was also torn. And it was through this human nature that Christ needed to enter into heaven. He could not enter with an appropriate sacrifice. The blood of bulls and goat would not do. Human blood was needed. And this is what Christ provided through the offering of Himself. And through His offering, He enters into heaven. And through that same offering or sacrifice, you and I must enter, for it is the only way.
    - (v) This is what gives us boldness of access into the holy place.

- B. But there was more. Not only do we have confidence to enter by His blood, we also have a great priest over the house of God.
1. The priest, you will recall, not only offers sacrifices for sin, but he also prays for God's people.
  2. Christ offered His sacrifice and has sat at the right hand of God so that by His continued prayers on our behalf, we too might enter finally into heaven.
  3. But more is meant here. This great priest is also over the house of God.
    - a. The priests of the Old Covenant has authority from God to sacrifice and to pray for the people. But I don't believe you could say that they had authority over God's house. They were servants in the house.
    - b. But Christ is not a servant. He is the King of kings and the Lord of lords. He is a royal priest with authority to rule. We saw this last week where after Christ made His atonement for us, He sat down at the right hand of God until all of His foes submit to Him.
    - c. And so not only does Jesus, by His death, open a door into heaven for us, but He also has the authority to keep it open. No one can block that door, for our great King will keep it open for His people.

## **II. It is upon this basis that the author now begins his exhortation.**

- A. "Since these things are true," he says, "Let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water."
1. He says let us draw near.
    - a. It is possible for a door to be open and for us not to use it.
    - b. Children, it is possible for you to be in a room which is on fire, to pray to God for a way out, and to have a way out provided by a fireman, and yet not to see it. Your eyes might be blinded by the smoke, so that you can't see it.
    - c. The world and our flesh is like the smoke of a fire. Sometimes the spiritual darkness these two things create becomes so thick when it takes hold of our hearts, that we have difficulty seeing spiritually. We begin to have difficulty finding the way to God's throne which He has provided. Why else would we not draw near, when God has opened a door of access to Him at the cost of the life of the One He loves the most? Why else would we neglect that blessed privilege of prayer and treat it as something which we could either take or leave? *We must be blind in some measure!* The world certainly is. They don't see the value of prayer, or of this way to God through His Son. If they did, they would use it and come to Him. But they are blind. They don't desire God at all.
    - d. But we don't have that excuse. We are those whose eyes have been opened by the Lord. We know how precious it is. *We must therefore be deceived!* May God open our eyes and remove this dark blindness, so that we will draw near, boldly, in order to seek for His glory.
  2. But there is a certain way we are to draw near.
    - a. We must draw near "with a sincere heart." This means that we can't be hypocrites. We can't come to God and tell Him that we love Him and want

to draw near to Him, when we really don't. We're really just trying to keep up appearances. No. Our hearts must be sincere, they must be genuine. We can't hide from God. He sees what is in our hearts. There must be some measure of sincerity, or He will turn us away.

- b. But we must also come "in full assurance of faith." Without faith it is impossible to please God, for the one who comes to Him must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him (11:6). We must be fully persuaded that God is, that He has opened that door to us through Christ, and that we have been granted the privilege of coming through Christ.
  - c. But how can we do these two things? The author tells us that we must have "our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water" (v. 22).
    - (i) These things must be done before we will ever be able to draw near to God in the way he has told us.
    - (ii) But how can we do this? Well, the author has told us of the importance of the sprinkling of blood for purification of sin. He told us that the blood of animals was also to wash outwardly, ceremonially, but it could do nothing to cleanse our consciences. But there is a better sacrifice which is able. If we are sprinkled by this blood, then it is able to cleanse our conscience. It is, of course, the blood of Christ.
    - (iii) The only way to be washed by this blood is to trust in Christ. You must turn from your sins, and at the same time believe on the Son of God to save you from them.
    - (iv) If you do, your sins will be washed away by the sprinkling of His blood, just like the water washes the dirt from your flesh when it is sprinkled on you in baptism.
    - (v) And at the same time your conscience is cleansed by that blood, your body is also washed, it is cleansed, it is sanctified. You are not only a soul, but also a body. These two things belong to your makeup as a man or a woman or a child. And both must be cleansed if you are ever to be in heaven as a whole man. But Christ is able to cleanse both from the defiling influence of sin.
    - (vi) But both of these things must take place, before you can "draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith" (v. 22).
- B. This must also happen before you can do the second thing he exhorts you to this evening, which is to "hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering" (v. 23).
1. To hold fast the confession of your hope means to hold fast to your belief that God is real, Jesus is real, that Jesus is the only way of salvation, that heaven is a real place, and someday you are going to be there. To hope for something does not mean that you don't believe it is true, but you hope it is anyway. What it means is that you know it is true, but you don't see it yet. But you are so certain that it will be yours that you continue to hope for it.
  2. To hold this confession of hope without wavering means that you are so certain

of it, you will not let anything shake it out of your grip. You will not let your doubts take it away. And you will not let your sins steal it from you.

3. When your hope is gone, so are your chances of being or doing anything good at all for the glory and honor of Jesus.
  - a. Doubt so easily sneaks into our hearts. It takes away our God, our Christ, and our hope of heaven.
  - b. But we are the ones to blame when we do lose it. We allow ourselves to doubt. We allow ourselves to fall into sin which strengthens our doubts. After a while, we have no hope left. And when we are in this state, we are useless.
  
4. But how can we maintain our hope in this world of sin?
  - a. The author says consider that “He who promised is faithful.”
  - b. The One who promised us heaven is the One who sent His Son to die for us; He is the One who sent His Spirit to change our hearts. He is the One who never lies and who never changes, and who has not only promised us life if we would believe on His Son, but also strengthened His promise by making an oath, the author writes, “in order that by two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we may have strong encouragement, we who have fled for refuge in laying hold of the hope set before us. This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, a hope both sure and steadfast and one which enters within the veil, where Jesus has entered as a forerunner for us” (6:18-20).
  
- C. On the basis of this hope, he exhorts us to “consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds.”
  1. Since there is a heaven that we will one day arrive at, by God’s grace, and since there is a judgment in which He will reward us for those things we have done for His glory, let us be busy doing the Master’s work.
  2. But since we are to love one another as much as we love ourselves, we should be doing all that we can to encourage one another to do the same.
    - a. He says that we should encourage one another to love. If we see someone becoming hardened by sin, so that they are unwilling to forgive and to love either their brother, their neighbor, or even their enemy, we should pray for them and exhort them to repent and to love. Love is the fruit of the Spirit, but it can grow dull in us as well as any other grace of God.
    - b. And we should also encourage one another to good deeds. If we are not doing good deeds, then we are not helping anyone, not even ourselves. It is on the basis of these two things -- love and good deeds -- that God’s judgment of us will be made. If we love one another, let us consider how we might stimulate one another to do more of these things out of love for God and His Christ.
  
- D. Lastly, he says we should not forsake “our own assembling together.”
  1. We need to come together as a body, if we are going to be able to encourage one another.
    - a. Some professing Christians seem to think that church attendance is optional.

But it isn't. God requires it of us.

- b. What true Christian would want to be absent when God's people are gathering for worship, when he didn't have to be? The desire of his heart is to worship God. He won't be able to stay away.
  - c. But if we never gather with God's people, then how will we ever be able to fulfill what the author just told us? We won't!
  - d. Therefore, we should never allow ourselves to get into the habit of not coming. If we do, we have a very serious spiritual problem.
2. Rather, he says, "Let us encourage one another, and all the more, as you see the day drawing near."
- a. The day which was drawing near for them may well have been the destruction of the Temple and the end of the old age.
  - b. They were to encourage those who were on the fringes, who were in danger of falling back into Judaism, to persevere, so that they would be swept away.
  - c. But for us, that day is certainly the day of the Lord, when He comes again in judgment to render to every man what he has done.
  - d. Since we know that day is coming, let's get ready for it. We must all stand before the judgment seat of Christ to answer for everything which we are now doing. We need to bear that in mind as we seek to live for Christ's glory, but also as we seek to encourage our brethren to live for His glory as well.
  - e. May the Lord therefore encourage us through this text this evening to take these things to heart and to act accordingly. Let us seek to live godly lives for His glory. And let us seek to help our brethren when we are gathered together for worship, and throughout the week individually, to do the same. With God's gracious help and assistance, perhaps we will make a difference. Amen.