

# Christ Reformation Church

Tillamook, Oregon

[www.sermonaudio.com/crc](http://www.sermonaudio.com/crc)

[www.cryingoutforjustice.com](http://www.cryingoutforjustice.com)

## *God's Word to a Hesitating Church*

Since we have these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit, bringing holiness to completion in the fear of God. (7:1)

*“Living for that Day”*

**October 5, 2014**

**Sermon Text:** Hebrews 10:19-25

**Scripture Reading:** Hebrews 10:19-39

### **Introduction-**

Hebrews 10:19-25 Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, (20) by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh, (21) and since

we have a great priest over the house of God, (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. (23) Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. (24) And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, (25) 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.

This past week the following news story appeared in a New York paper-

“A microbiologist and emergency trauma physician is taking extreme measures to protect himself from Ebola. Gil Mobley checked in at Atlanta's Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport on Thursday in a protective jumpsuit, goggles, gloves, boots and overalls to protest what he

thinks is a major bungling of the Ebola crisis by the CDC.

He urged passengers to not wait for official recommendations regarding the disease, which has killed more than 3,000 people in West Africa.

"The CDC is asleep at the wheel," Mobley told the Atlanta-Journal Constitution, blaming the federal org for "sugar-coating" the risk of transmission in the U.S. "It's going to be bad, and I want to make sure that this conversation is happening that this could get out of control in the U.S."

His move comes two days after a man in Texas became the first American diagnosed with Ebola on U.S. soil, and one day after Mobley had a flight from Guatemala, where security only checked him for tobacco or alcohol.

Mobley, of Springfield, Mo., made it past security in his protective garb. The back of his jumpsuit had the words "CDC is lying!" on it. "If they're not lying, they are grossly incompetent," Mobley told the Atlanta-Journal Constitution. "For them to say last week that the likelihood of importing an Ebola case was extremely small was a real bad call."

Mobley thinks that the disease will "consume every third world country" and as a result the U.S. "will be importing clusters of Ebola on a daily basis," which will lead to a U.S. epidemic." (New York Daily News)

Well, we will see if Dr. Mobley is correct or over-reacting as time progresses, but you have to commend him for one thing – he believes something and he is taking action. Some event is coming, perhaps a world-wide event, and he is taking precautions.

Christians believe that a Great Day is coming. The author of Hebrews mentions it in this 10<sup>th</sup> chapter –

*"...but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near."*

We see, with the eyes of faith, the Day approaching. The Day of the Lord. The Day when Christ is revealed from heaven and He comes to judge the earth –

Romans 13:11-14 Besides this you know the time, that the hour has come for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed. (12) The night is far gone; the day is at hand. So then let us cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light. (13) Let us walk

properly as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and sensuality, not in quarreling and jealousy. (14) But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

Dr. Mobley put on his protective suit. Christians have a garb to put on as well – the Lord Jesus Christ. We put on Christ when we live in obedience to Him and in agreement with who we are now as new creations in Him. We put off the deeds of darkness and live in holiness and righteousness. The hour has come. We live in the last era of the history of this old creation. Each day salvation draws nearer and nearer to us. And so we must live accordingly. Unlike Dr. Mobley's seeing what he believes is going to be a plague, we put on Christ and look forward with eager anticipation to this Day, not with dread.

Follow along as I read once again the 19<sup>th</sup> thru 25<sup>th</sup> verses of this chapter and then we will consider the exhortations the Apostle gives us. Count them as I read –

Hebrews 10:19-25 Therefore, brothers, **since**

we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, (20) by the new and living way

that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh,

(21) **and since**

we have a great priest over the house of God,

(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.

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

(24) **And let us** consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, (25) 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.

Two reasons (since) and three applications (let us). Those are our points.

Every week I speak with people who have withdrawn from fellowship in a local church. Some of them say they will never go to a church again. A few go so far as to say that their very faith in Christ has been so shaken that they don't seem to know if the Bible is true anymore. And these are not flaky, careless people. These are people who

have professed Christ for decades, but they have been so grievously assaulted and wounded by wicked people who claim to be Christians, by churches and church leaders who claim to stand for Christ, that they wonder if the whole thing hasn't been just a sham.

Listen to this very insightful statement from a friend who has been on the receiving end of evil and who has grown much wiser as a result-

*"It is becoming more and more evident to me that much of what calls itself "christianity", whether it's a book, a program, a church, song lyrics, a person, etc., is devoid of Jesus Christ...Christianity has been so covertly perverted on its fundamental level that it goes undetected by the masses."*

Many of you have tasted a lesser or greater amount of evil in the battles we have had to face in this church. And it is easy – I am sure you will agree – to sometimes wonder, is it true? With such widespread hypocrisy and façade and so many false professors of Christ – maybe the whole thing I have believed is just a joke? Maybe the world is right? Maybe we Christians are fools. I have thought those things or at least *felt* them. I work with this stuff every day. Every day I am given true accounts of pastors who are really wolves, of church leaders and church

members who are molesters or abusers. I am told by wives that their missionary husband has abused them for decades – and the missions board will do nothing about it. I am contacted with some frequency by the evil ones themselves, parading as fine, godly, eminent saints who just want me to help them get their wife and children back. But I know their repentance is false. I recognize their evil language. We call it “abuserese”.

How then can we persevere in faith in light of all these things? Maybe we really are just a bunch of religious fools who need to repent of teaching the things we claim God has said?

No! We are not fools. We are not wrong. Christ's church still exists, and all of His promises are true. The work we have done in His name is not in vain. Even if every human being on this planet tells us the gospel is false, even if every church member around us turns their back on Christ, we will not. Why? Two reasons and three calls to action. Here they are:

## **Reasons #1 &2**

### 1. Christ is Our Propitiatory Sacrifice

Hebrews 10:19-21	Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, (20) by the new
------------------	---

and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh,

## 2. Christ is Our High Priest

(21) and since we have a great priest over the house of God,

The exhortations we will look at in a moment (the “let us” statements) flow out of these facts. The way into the holy of holies has been opened to us by Christ. By the blood of Jesus, by the offering of Himself on the cross, He being the Lamb of God given for us, He has opened the veil to us. He has effected the “new and living way” which is the New Covenant in which we are justified before God, in which we die in Christ and are raised with Him. In addition, the One who was the sacrifice is also the High Priest who offered that sacrifice and who remains our High Priest interceding for us in the Father’s presence.

Which is all to say we have peace with God. We have confidence to enter into the Father’s presence. All of this is to say that the curse has been lifted off of us and that God dwells among us and we with Him. *As it was in the beginning, tis now and ever shall be. World without end. Amen.*

Remember the Lord’s great purpose in Christ?

Exodus 29:45-46 I will dwell among the people of Israel and will be their God. (46) And they shall know that I am the LORD their God, who brought them out of the land of Egypt that I might dwell among them. I am the LORD their God.

Leviticus 26:11-12 I will make my dwelling among you, and my soul shall not abhor you. (12) And I will walk among you and will be your God, and you shall be my people.

It has happened in Christ-

Ephesians 2:19-22 So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, (20) built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, (21) in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. (22) In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.

So when Hebrews reminds us that Christ’s blood has opened up the holy of holies to us and that Christ is our High Priest, the point is that things

have been set RIGHT between us and God! There is no condemnation.

Therefore! No matter how much phoniness and evil and hypocrisy is around us using Jesus' name falsely, ALL is repaired. We are redeemed. We are reconciled to God, and so -

### Applications (Let Us)

#### 1. Draw Near

Hebrews 10:22-25 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.

Faith draws near to Christ. Wavering faith tempts us to distance ourselves. Faith believes the Lord's promises and Word. Wavering faith, shaken faith, stands off. Don't let that happen.

Do we have a Savior? Do we have a High Priest? Yes. Yes. Are we then in a right standing with God? Yes. Is He our Father? Yes. Being assured of these truths then, and realizing that because of Christ we are CLEAN! Hearts sprinkled clean by the blood of Christ – an evil conscience and the filth of sin washed away. So draw near! Don't hold back.

Don't look out there at all the false teachers and false Christians and false

religion parading as Christ! Look at Christ your Savior and High Priest, and *look at yourself in Him. You are CLEAN!* From the inside out!

#### 2. Hold Fast

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

Of all these verses, I like this one the best. The confession of our hope is our confession of the promises of God in Christ. Our hope, consistently in the New Testament is the return of the Lord for us, the judgment of the wicked, the resurrection and the establishment of the new heavens and new earth. Hold fast to that confession by faith. Don't doubt it. Don't keep silent about it. Live in light of it. Christ is coming.

Notice this incredibly important phrase – *for He who promised is faithful*. Who has promised us these things? The Lord. What do we know about the Lord? That He is faithful.

Hebrews 6:17-20 So when God desired to show more convincingly to the heirs of the promise the unchangeable character of his purpose, he guaranteed it with an oath, (18) so that by two

unchangeable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled for refuge might have strong encouragement to hold fast to the hope set before us. (19) We have this as a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters into the inner place behind the curtain, (20) where Jesus has gone as a forerunner on our behalf, having become a high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.

1 Thessalonians 5:24 He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it.

Titus 1:2 in hope of eternal life, which God, who never lies, promised before the ages began

Has God promised? Yes. Therefore, He will do it. So don't waver in your confession of the gospel and all it promises. People are unfaithful. People fail to keep their promises. But God is not a man that he should lie. What God says, God will do.

### 3. Encourage One Another

Now, with all of that background, this final "let us" should make sense.

(24) And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, (25) 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.

Why come to church? Why do we preach and teach? Why do we love one another and do good works for one another? To encourage and strengthen one another in holding fast to our confession of hope in faith. And as we know that the Day is drawing closer, we should be gathering together and encouraging one another all the more. Notice the next few verses that underscore the importance of all this even more -

Hebrews 10:26-31 For if we go on sinning deliberately after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, (27) but a fearful expectation of judgment, and a fury of fire that will consume the adversaries. (28) Anyone who has set aside the law of Moses dies without mercy on the evidence of two or three witnesses. (29) How much worse punishment, do you think, will be deserved by the one who has spurned the Son of God, and has profaned the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has outraged the Spirit of grace? (30) For we know him who said, "Vengeance is mine; I will repay." And again, "The Lord will judge his people." (31) It is a fearful thing to

fall into the hands of the living God.

“For” – if we go on sinning *deliberately...*”.

We need to talk about something called “apostasy.” An apostate is a person who has confessed Christ but who later denies Him. I think Paul describes these kinds of people –

Philippians 3:16-19 Only let us hold true to what we have attained. (17) Brothers, join in imitating me, and keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example you have in us. (18) For many, of whom I have often told you and now tell you even with tears, walk as enemies of the cross of Christ. (19) Their end is destruction, their god is their belly, and they glory in their shame, with minds set on earthly things.

Listen to John Calvin on this –

It is of importance, also, to take notice of whom Paul speaks—not of open enemies, who were avowedly desirous that doctrine might be undermined—but of impostors and profligates, who trampled under foot the power of the gospel, for the sake of ambition or of their own belly.

And unquestionably persons of this sort, who weaken the influence of the ministry by seeking their own interests sometimes do more injury than if they openly opposed Christ. We must, therefore, by no means spare them, but must point them out with the finger, as often as there is occasion. Let them complain afterwards, as much as they choose, of our severity, provided they do not allege anything against us that it is not in our power to justify from Paul’s example.

Every Christian needs to keep watch against the temptation to apostasy. We know that Christ’s true sheep will never be lost. He holds them and no one plucks them out of his hand. At the same time, we must not be presumptuous about this. We are warned, as in Hebrews, to keep watch and take care. The enemy is afoot and he who would have had Christ deny the Father would surely work on us to deny Christ.

And so we have this remedy in this sober reminder about the fate of the apostate. We are a privileged people. We have received the knowledge of the truth. We have tasted of the heavenly gift. We have experienced the fellowship of Christ’s church, been washed in His baptism, and eaten of his body and blood. To know these things, to profane them and to spurn Christ is to come into the most fearful



condition a person could ever place themselves in. Notice the intensity of the modifying words here:

- A fearful expectation of judgment
- A consuming fury of fire
- Death without mercy intensified
- Outraged the Spirit of grace
- Vengeance is mine
- It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands...

Pretty intense, right? Now don't miss this. This is ALSO a reason we should heed the "let us" exhortations above.

- Draw near to God in Christ
- Hold fast to the confession of our hope (the gospel, especially the resurrection)
- And gather together to encourage one another, taking care not to neglect this meeting together

Our flesh would have us deny Christ and walk in sin. The world and the devil are in agreement with this. We must oppose them. Draw near to God. Hold fast to our confession. And don't try to go it alone. Do not neglect to gather together and encourage one another to hold fast.

Because there are many around us who seemed to start out well, but now they are apostates – enemies of the cross.

And remember Calvin's observation – they can still *look like* and *sound like* Christians – yet they have spurned Christ.

### What the Church Should Be

(24) And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, (25) 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 is supposed to happen when we as a church gather together – or when we gather in smaller groups? Let me suggest from this text:

- We actively stir up one another – not to frustration, but to love and good works,
- We WANT to be together and thus we don't neglect the gathering
- We encourage one another, specifically to draw near to God in Christ and to hold fast the confession of our hope
- We gather with the realization that this world is perishing and that the Day of the Lord is drawing nearer and nearer.

That is what the church must be.

Consider something in this regard. It is my understanding that alcoholics who enroll in AA begin by confessing their powerlessness to alcohol and, among other things, they commit to gathering together in their group in some cases even *every day*. They know that the alcohol is going to allure them every day. They have to go. They need that support and encouragement from others.

Now we face something far more sobering than alcohol! It is the Day of the Lord. It is the enemy working and working on us to cause us to deny Christ, to give up our confession of Him, to distance ourselves from the Lord and resume walking in sin. So let me ask – do we need this encouragement from one another? Of course we do. Let me ask all of us then, how seriously do we take our need here? Some professing Christians are simply careless. They do what the Apostle here warns us against – habitually neglecting to gather together with Christ’s people. Neglecting the Scriptures. Such neglect never ends well.

I am encouraged when I come here. Oh, often I feel like sleeping in or thinking of other things I might do. But inevitably gathering together with you, with Christ’s people, encourages me. Christ is present with us individually, but in some manner He is

particularly with us when we come together to worship Him, to observe His ordinances, to pray and to hear His Word preached and taught.

Dr. Mobley put on his bio-suit because he sees a plague coming. We put on the Lord Jesus Christ, because we see HIM coming, and we want to be ready to meet Him on that day.