

*Draw Near*  
Hebrews 10:19-25  
Reading: 1 Corinthians 13

Bethany Baptist Church  
February 17, 2019  
(February 10, 2019 was iced out)

...pray...

Let's open our NT (*tap your app*) and find Hebrews 10:14-25 (focus: 19-25).

Let's start w/ a hermeneutics lesson (how to study your Bible! ☺): *what is that therefore, there for...?* That important first word calls us to remember a few things as we come *to* & then *through* v.19.

*First*, we've entered a completely new section of *Hebrews*. To think of it simply, the writer is done *laying his foundation* of New Covenant doctrine (ch.1-10) and will spend the rest of his sermon (ch.10-13) focused on *applying* what the New Cov requires when it comes to *living* the Christian life.

*Second*, "*therefore*" takes a quick look back, and the **immediate** context of vv.16-18 is a great *starting point* for *entering* this **new** section & offering this *invitation*. Those verses (16-18) were a direct quote from **Jer 31's** New Covenant preview:

**V.16 (read)** – God will make you completely new: *heart & mind* (Jesus: *born again*; Paul: *new creation*).

**V.17 (read)** – God *refuses to remember* all (any) of your sins! You're **100%** forgiven. Your *conscience* can rest easy!

**V.18 (read)** – The *forgiveness* of the Gospel makes it very clear that the Law (**OT** *priests & sacrifices*) is *obsolete*!

*Third*, I think we miss out if we don't see the very **first** *application* of New Cov life is this invitation to **enter**...*draw near*! Is it too much to say that the most important pursuit in the Christian life is to consciously pursue *drawing near* to God!?!

Beloved, He's *waiting* for you!

**Answer your invitation to draw near to God!**

1. **One invitation (v.19).**
2. **Two assurances (vv.19-21).**
3. **Three instructions (vv.22-25).**

**Beloved, you've been invited to enter God's presence! Read v.19 & 22.a.**

1. *Who* entered the Holy of Holies in the **OT**? Almost *no one*! And **not** very often! **Only** the *High Priest* who was **only** from the line of *Aaron* who was **only** from the *Tribe of Levi*... Who enters *now*! Dear, brothers & sisters...***you & I!***

a. And so the *first* thing we read is the invitation to ***enter...the holy place.***

i. There is still lot of **OT** images in our text and the picture here is of the *Holy of Holy*. But *this* one is the *real* one, the *eternal* one, the *heavenly* Most Holy Place.

b. And soon we read the invitation again (22): ***draw near.***

1. *Draw near*...Hebrews loves this idea!

2. In **4:16** we are invited to *draw near to the throne of grace* to offer our prayers. Jesus is *loving & listening*.

3. In **7:19** we *draw near to God* through a *better hope*, guaranteed by Jesus & His shed blood.

4. **Now** we read the invitation to *draw near* to God's presence, the *Holy Place* of Heaven.

c. *Draw near!* Christ is in the *Holy Place*, at the *Throne of Grace*, and He is *calling* you! He is *seated* at God's right hand (**10:12**; 1:3); *enthroned* as our King & Priest, and He is our *Brother*; **2:13** – "*Behold, I and the **children** whom God has given Me!*"

2. What does this invitation *mean*?

- a. It means you and I are expected to live in *intimate individual fellowship* w/our Heavenly Father. **OT** saints waited *outside* the tabernacle, you and I are called *into God presence*.
- b. We *enter* with our *prayers* to offer them at the Throne of Grace. Jesus, who *knows* and *feels* our temptation and weakness, meets us there to *plead* them better than we can *plead* them ourselves.
- c. To *enter w/confidence* implies *privilege*. We are God's *children*.

**Beloved, I ask you to read these simple words w/ joy: *enter...draw near*.**

**If this invitation sounds *too good to be true*, the author offers two reasons why it *isn't*!**

1. I just love the “*invitation vocabulary*” here: *confidence & new & living & sincerity & assurance!* Where does that all *come from*? It's the overflow of knowing that Jesus made your “*invitation to enter*” a ***certain*** reality.
  - a. And Hebrews offers **two reasons** for certainty, found in the **One Man** – our **Great Priest!** Both reasons are “priestly” reasons...
2. *First*, you enter because of the *death of Jesus* (**read vv.19, 20**).
  - a. The **OT high priest** (only) repeatedly entered the *Holy of Holies* bearing of the *blood* of many sacrifices. But **we all** enter by the blood of **one sacrifice**, the *death* of our Lord! **10:14** – *For by one offering [Jesus] has perfected for all time those who are sanctified* (every one of His followers).

- b. Then the writer goes on (20) to call on a *powerful scene* from the account of our *Lord's Passion*:
- i. As Christ was *offering up His Spirit, breathing His last, dying* on Golgotha's bloody cross in the *place of sinners*.
  - ii. We read this (Mk 15:37): *And the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom!*
  - iii. God demonstrated that He was *receiving His people by reaching down* out of Heaven and *grabbing* the inner veil of the temple that blocked the way to Most Holy Place, and God *tore* the veil in **two** – *from top to bottom!*
  - iv. This is the most *beautiful torn tapestry* in all of eternity! That *veil* symbolized the *body* of Jesus (**20**: *the veil = His flesh*), and that *tearing* symbolized the *death* of Jesus, and that *rent veil* portrayed that you now confidently *enter* the Holy Place by the *sin-paying death* of God's *only begotten Son*.
  - v. Jesus did **not** *pull open* the veil and *enter* the Holy Place and pull the veil closed behind Him! *He left the veil open!* He cries: "*All who come to Me I will never turn away!*"
  - vi. Sinners, **look** to the *crucified & resurrected & ascended & seated & interceding* Jesus! ***Paradise is open!***

3. Our *second* ground of confidence follows: you *enter* God's presence because of the *priesthood* of Jesus (21).
- a. Christ is the *Great Priest* over God's house. Now, we may be tempted to think of the *house* as Heaven, but a better **NT** understanding of "*God's House*" might simply be the household of *God's people*.
    - i. In fact, we've already read in **3:6** that *Christ was faithful as a Son of **His house** – whose house we are, if we hold fast our confidence and the boast of our hope firm until the end.*
    - ii. So Christ is the *Great Priest* over the household of *God's elect people*. That would be *us!*
  - b. *Hebrews* has often compelled us to think about the *function* of a *priest*, and how that office relates to Jesus. Let me remind you of a *simple definition* of the priestly office: a priest represents *God to men*, and he represents *men before God*. (It is a *mediating* office.)
    - i. Jesus is the *perfect priest!*
      1. He is *truly* God and *truly* man. (The *Incarnation* and His *miraculous conception* powerfully make that case.) Thus Jesus can show *God to men* (Jn 14:7 – *seen Me, seen the Father*) and He can also represent *men before God*.
      2. Furthermore, because Jesus is **God**, His sacrifice is *perfect*; it has *infinite atoning value*.
      3. Because He is **man**, Jesus' *sacrifice* can perfectly represent & redeem us, and Jesus' *sympathy* can perfectly pray for us.
    - ii. Which *sums up* what Jesus has done: our Great Priest has *sacrificed* for us (once), He has *entered Heaven* (once), He has *left the veil open* (now), and at the Throne of Grace, Christ *pleads* over His house (forever).

**Enter beloved! God awaits your fellowship. Don't hold back! Jesus, our Great Priest, has guaranteed that the invitation is as good as it sounds!**

**Hebrews invites you to *enter God's presence* with three confident steps.**

1. This morning's text (19-25) is really just **one** long, careful sentence in the Greek! The "big idea" is the *invitation – enter w/confidence*, the **two assurances** (19-21) are found in Jesus' priestly work, and now **three instructions** are outlined in **vv.22-25 (read)**.
  - a. *Draw near...hold tight...stay together*
2. The *first* step is to *draw near* (v.22) – to **do** what God has *invited* you to do!
  - a. And *faith* is the starting point of drawing near to God. *Faith* is *trusting (being assured)* that God will honor His *promises & invitations*.
  - b. In a few more chapters our author will define *faith* like this (11:1): *Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.*
  - c. *Faith* in God's promises gives *full assurance* to the *sincere heart*.
  - d. *Gospel faith* (22) brings **two** blessings:
    - i. *Clear conscience* from a *sprinkled heart* (OT imagery).
      1. A *clean conscience* is a *big idea* in Hebrews. It's a *mark* of a *Christian*.
      2. You have the inward testimony of a *conscience* that knows for certain that Jesus' *blood* paid for all your *sins*.

ii. *Clear testimony of a holy pledge.* Do you see the end of **v.22** – *our bodies washed w/pure water?* Bible teachers admit that’s a *tough one...!* 😊

1. **Most** agree that it’s a reference to *believer’s baptism*, w/ its *testimony of faith & its pledge of holy living*.
2. But it could be an allusion to the **OT** priests’ *ceremonial washing* (which could make sense in *Hebrews*). They *washed* so they were *cleansed to serve*.
3. I agree with this *second* interpretation. I see this washing as another use of OT imagery to suggest our *holy lives & service*.
  - a. Just as our *hearts* are sprinkled unto a *clear conscience...*
  - b. Our *lives* are washed for *holy living & serving*.
  - c. And so we *worship & serve* with all our *hearts* and with all our *strength* (re the *Great Commandment*).

e. *Genuine faith* in the *blood of Jesus*, a *clear testimony* of your *pledge to Jesus*, enables you to *enter the holy place*, where God is *waiting*.  
***Draw near!***

3. *Second, draw near and hold tightly (read v.23).*

- a. Do you remember the threat that *casts its shadow* over the book of *Hebrews...? Apostasy! Desertion!*
  - i. Society was *persecuting* the church. It would get *worse*.
  - ii. *Wavering church attenders*, spec. *Jewish* listeners, were getting ready to *pull back into the relative safety of their traditional Judaism*.



- b. The *preacher* of Hebrews cries, “*Hold fast!*”
    - i. ***Hold fast*** the confession of our gospel hope.
    - ii. *Hold fast w/o wavering.*
  - c. *Hold fast* because Jesus is *faithful*.
    - i. Paul wrote (2 Cor 1:20) – *For as many as are the promises of God, in Him [Jesus] they are “yes”; therefore also through Him is our “Amen” to the glory of God ...*
    - ii. ... in Jesus all of the gospel’s *promises* and all of God’s glorious *invitations* are *yes & amen!*
  - d. *Hold fast...stand firm...waver not. He who promised is faithful.*
4. Finally (24-25) ***stay together***. **Read vv.24-25.** We *draw near* to God as we *draw near* to one another.
- a. The big idea is that we are to *be intentional* about (“*consider*”) how to help one another *draw near to God* as we *live faithful lives*. The action under consideration (24) is to how to “*stimulate*” (NASB) to *faithfulness*; it’s a *strong word* – it originally pictured a *convulsion!*
    - i. So, *what’s the plan* for ***shaking*** *one another* (if necessary) into *gospel faithfulness*, demonstrated in our *love & good deeds*?
    - ii. (OBTW, everyone knows that *good deeds* can’t save you, but *good deeds* prove you’re really saved – ***right!?!)***
  - b. **Where** does this *shaking up* take place...? What do you suppose Hebrews is getting at w/ “*one another*” (24) & “*our own assembling together*” (25)?
    - i. Your *local church!* You can’t live in *Christian love & obedience w/o* your local, Bible-teaching church.

- c. So **what's** the *problem...?* *Forsaking fellowship*. Not missing church when you just *can't*, but when you *habitually* just **won't**.
  - i. And again (historic setting), *desertion* was *threatening* the church! *Social pressures* were luring people away...
  
- d. So **what's** the *soul shaking encouragement* implied here...? *Stay together...love one another...serve one another in good deeds*.
  - i. But beloved, you can't *love/serve* people you don't *hang out* with!
  
- e. Every pastor on the planet could *wear us all out* applying these verses! But *I* know that if *you* are here this morning, for the *most part* I'm simply preaching to a *faithful choir*.
  - i. None the less, like most churches, we have "*so called*" members who **aren't** *faithful*, and I've given their *lax habits* a lot of thought over the years.
  - ii. I'd like you to consider what you *miss*, when you choose to *habitually miss church* (we could grow this list!):
    1. you can't practice all the NT "*one anothers*" (*love, humility...30; love* is not something you can give *online*),
    2. you don't use your *spiritual gift* to *serve one another* (Romans 12:6),
    3. you don't give your *offering* to support the church's Great Commission ministry (2 Corinthians 9:7),
    4. you don't receive the *spiritual equipping Bible teaching* that results in *spiritual stability & maturity* (Ephesians 4:11-12)
    5. you don't *submit* to your elders (Hebrews 13:17),
    6. you don't give your elders cause to give Christ a *good account* for your soul (13:17),
    7. you don't give your elders reason for *joy*, but rather a cause for *grief* (13:17),

8. you don't have a *strong testimony* to everyone who thinks of you as a Christian (Luke 6:46; *Why do you call Me...*),
9. you don't *love* Christ's Bride (Ephesians 5:27; you might claim to *love your wife*, but if you *never go home...?*),
10. you won't have an easy path into God's *presence*. It would seem (this morning's verses) that it's tough to *draw near* **alone**.

iii. Finally, you *wait* for *Jesus* all alone, and perhaps you *forget* that He's coming *at all...*

1. ...and soon, you lose the **NT** *fuel* for *persevering*, the *hope* of the Day of Deliverance!
2. Do you *see* it there (25b): *but encouraging one another, and all the more as you (all) see the Day drawing near*.
3. And so we all cry together: *Come quickly, Lord Jesus!*

***Our Lord Jesus has opened the way!***

***Let's draw near to Him, beloved, in faith, in steadfastness, in fellowship!***

***Enter!***

***...pray...***