



To Have and to Hold

Lesson 3 The Vows of Marriage, Part 2

1. Our identity changes. We become God's chosen, treasured possession.
2. This new relationship and new identity is rooted in the vows of a covenant.
3. The focal point of the New Covenant is God's promise that He will completely sanctify us, making us a perfectly faithful bride forever.

Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine. (Exodus 19:5)

Know therefore that the LORD your God is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments, to a thousand generations. (Deuteronomy 7:9)

1. _____ to God:
Be faithful to Him, committed to always moving toward deeper relationship with Him.

Since therefore, brethren, we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He inaugurated for us through the veil, that is, His flesh, and since we have a great high priest over the house of God, **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. (Hebrews 10:19-22)

A. Possible only because of the Jesus.

According to Jeremiah 30:21 and Hebrews 10:31, what is the expected attitude of people who wish to draw near to God? _____

Our ability to draw near to God is based solely on Christ's priestly work on our behalf to allow us to draw near without fear of being consumed by God's wrath.

B. Requiring a true heart.

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. (Hebrews 10:22)

You shall love the Lord your God with **all your heart** and with **all your soul** and with **all your might**. And these words which I am commanding you today shall be **on your heart**. (Deuteronomy 6:5-6)

What is the problem with this requirement of drawing near to God? _____

What does God do about the unfaithfulness of the hearts of His people? _____

I will sprinkle clean water on you. . . **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.** And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules. (Ez. 36:25-27)

I will set my eyes on them for good, and I will bring them back to this land. I will build them up, and not tear them down; I will plant them, and not pluck them up. **I will give them a heart to know that I am the LORD,** and they shall be my people and I will be their God, for **they shall return to me with their whole heart.** (Jeremiah 24:6-7)

C. Requiring faith.

Let us draw near with a sincere heart **in full assurance of faith.** (Hebrews 10:22)

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. (Hebrews 11:6)

This was according to the eternal purpose that he has realized in Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom we have boldness and **access** with confidence **through our faith in him.** (Ephesians 3:11-12)

It is our faith in the work of Jesus on our behalf and God's continuing faithfulness toward us that enables us to draw near to Him.

2. _____ in faith to
God: Work hard at staying faithful.

Let us **hold fast** to the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. (Hebrews 10:23)

What is the first reference in the Bible to *holding fast* (clinging or cleaving)? _____

Marriage vows often include, “To have and to hold from this day forward.” This phrase suggests drawing near and holding fast.

So choose life in order that you may live, you and your descendants, by loving the Lord your God, by obeying His voice, **and by holding fast to Him**; for this is your life and the length of your days. (Deut. 30:19-20)

What are the elements of idolatry listed in the following verse?

They abandoned the LORD their God who brought their fathers out of the land of Egypt and laid hold on other gods and worshiped them and served them. (I Kings 9:9)

Let us hold fast to the confession of our hope without wavering, **for he who promised is faithful.** (Hebrews 10:23)

In His faithfulness, God holds fast to us precisely because we are not faithful and will stray if He doesn’t hold onto us!

For I, the LORD your God, hold your right hand; it is I who say to you, “Fear not, I am the one who helps you.” (Isaiah 41:13)

So you, **by the help of your God**, return, **hold fast** to love and justice, and wait continually for your God. (Hosea 12:6)

3. **The means of drawing near and holding fast.**

a. **The collective bride of Christ.**

And let us consider how to stimulate **one another to love and good deeds**, Not forsaking our own **assembling together**, as is the habit of some, but **encouraging one another**, and all the more, as you see the day approaching. (Hebrews 10:25)

b. Lay aside sin and encumbrances

Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us. (Hebrews 12:1)

In marriage terms, we could say that we are to actively fight against anything that would jeopardize our faithfulness.

Notice the description, “sin which clings so closely.” I am to hold fast (cling) to God in part because sin seeks to hold fast (cling) to me.

c. Fixing our eyes on Jesus.

Looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted.

In your struggle against sin you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood. (Hebrews 12:4)

In marriage language, we could say, “Keep focused on your spouse. Don’t let your eyes lead you astray.” These verses indicate three important outcomes of keeping our gaze fixed on our Savior.

- i. **Focusing on Jesus perfects our**
_____.
- ii. **Focusing on Jesus keeps us from growing** _____
and losing _____.
- iii. **Focusing on Jesus keeps us fighting**
_____.

Conclusion:

“It is not natural to draw near to God; it is supernatural, and he has called us to himself away from the natural pulls of the world. His invitation and promises stand. Our part is to respond to his call and approach the throne. Our sympathetic high priest has experienced the temptation to bolt and run. He has been with us in our humanness and invites us to be with him at the throne of grace.” (George H. Guthrie)

Study Questions

Day 1

A. Chapter 10 is not the first time the author of Hebrews has taught on the truths of drawing near and holding fast. In fact, chapter 10 reiterates much of Hebrews 3 and 4.

What are the reasons given in the following verses for people falling away from God and not entering His rest?

3:12 _____

3:18 _____

3:19 _____

4:2 _____

4:6 _____

4:11 _____

How do the above answers relate to the two requirements of drawing near given in Heb. 10:22?

B. After the warning in Hebrews 3:7-12 about having a hardened heart and falling away, what is the antidote given in 3:13?

After the warning about falling away given in 4:11, what is the antidote given in 4:12? _____

According to 4:12, what is it that the word of God helps us to discern? _____

C. Read Hebrews 4:14-16. What are the two instructions given?

What is the basis of our being given those two instructions? (Look for the clauses that begin with *since* and *for*.) _____

What does verse 16 give as the result of drawing near? _____

Day 2

Psalm 91 contains many of the themes of this lesson. Read Psalm 91 and answer the following questions.

A. What phrases in verses 1, 4, and 9 have a similar meaning to “draw near”?

What phrases in verses 2 and 14 indicate that the drawing near is in faith with a true heart?

B. List the actions of God on the behalf of one who draws near as stated in verses 3, 4, 11, and 14.

What attribute of God is specified in verse 4 and what does that attribute especially have to do with this study? _____

C. In verse 14 the psalmist quits speaking to his reader and allows God to speak directly. How does God describe His beloved in this verse? (The ESV translation of this verse is most helpful.)

In verse 15 what action does holding fast to God in love result in? _____

What are God’s responses to this action given in verses 15 and 16? _____

Day 3

One of the means we have of drawing near and holding fast to the faithfulness of God is the collection of psalms, the songs of the people of God. The following questions consider some of what the psalms say about our faith.

A. What is the object of our trust given in the following verses?

Psalm 4:5 _____

Psalm 20:7 _____

Psalm 52:8 _____

Psalm 119:42 _____

B. What is the source of our trust named in Psalm 22:9? _____

C. What do the following verses identify as misplaced objects of our trust?

Psalm 40:4 _____

Psalm 44:6 _____

Psalm 52:7 _____

Psalm 115:4-8 _____

Psalm 118:9 _____

Psalm 146:3 _____

D. What are the natural outcomes of trusting in the Lord given in the following verses?

Psalm 21:7 _____

Psalm 22:5 _____

Psalm 28:7 _____

Psalm 32:10 _____

Psalm 33:21 _____

Psalm 56:4 _____

Psalm 112:7 _____

Psalm 125:1 _____

Day 4

Consider the following verses :

From Hebrews 3:1-6	Hebrews 12:3-4
Consider Jesus, the apostle and high priest of our confession, who was faithful to him who appointed him . . . And we are his house if indeed we hold fast our confidence and our boasting in our hope.	Looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted.

What is the common instruction in these verses?

How is Jesus the “high priest of our confession”?

How is Jesus the “founder and perfecter of our faith”?

How are the descriptions of Jesus (the clauses that start with *who*) in these verses similar?

In both passages, what is the desired end result of focusing on Jesus?

According to Psalm 17:15 and II Corinthians 3:18, what is the result when we look to Jesus?

What is the purpose of looking to God in Micah 7:7 and Psalm 123:1-2?

In I John 1:1-3, what was the result when John and the other disciples looked upon Jesus?

Day 5

A. Consider the following verses:

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. (Hebrews 10:22)	Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. (James 4:8)
---	---

What ideas are the same in these verses? _____

What ideas are different in these verses? _____

Read Philippians 2:12-13. What are the seemingly contradictory phrases in those verses? _____

B. In John 6:22-59, Jesus has an encounter with Jews who were doubting Him. According to verses 37, 44, 65, what causes people to either draw near to God or withdraw from Him? _____

Read John 6:66-69. What evidences are there in Simon Peter's answer that indicate that God had drawn him to Jesus? _____

In John 17, Jesus prays for His disciples as He is preparing to leave them. Read verses John 17:9-19. What is Jesus' first request in verse 11?

What three phrases does Jesus use in verses 12 and 14 to describe what He had done for His disciples?

What additional requests does Jesus make of His Father in verses 15 and 17?

What does the Psalmist pray in Psalm 119:116-117?

Based on the verses considered in this day's questions, who is responsible for you drawing near to God?

Who is responsible for you holding fast to God?

Memory verses

Review Jeremiah 31:31-34 and Hebrews 10:19, 22-23. Memorize Hebrews 10:24-25. Find a partner to help!

³¹ Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah,

³² not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares the LORD.

³³ For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

³⁴ And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the Lord. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."

Hebrews 10:19, 22-25

¹⁹ Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus. . .

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.