

The New and Living Way
Hebrews 10:19-25

John 1:1-18

Ephesians 2:11-22

Responsive Philippians 4:4-9

Turn with me to Hebrews chapter 10, today we will be looking at verses 19-25, which as we read this passage this morning you will notice it starts with the words therefore..which we know ties it to all that was said previously here. This section serves as a conclusion of sorts of much of what the Author here has been saying that we have been studying over the past few weeks. In verse 19, he says therefore, meaning since all of things things in which I have spoken about are true, we can do what he mentions in the verses that follow verse 22. So let us read this morning starting in verse 11, through verse 25.

So as we had talked about last week, Christ has fulfilled the old covenant, he has fulfilled the law, the temple sacrifices. Today we see how he has and is also the true substance of the shadow of the veil that was in the temple which was torn in 2 upon his death on the cross. But we will get into all that a bit later, right now I want to focus on the fact that Christ having become the perfect and holy sacrifice for mankind, who, being sent from his father for this very purpose and accomplished his fathers will and redemptive plan has sat down at the right hand of the father.

Becoming a better high priest than the shadows, than the Levitical priests of the old Testament, for Christ accomplished redemption, he completed it, and in him it is fulfilled once and for all. No longer do the temple priest need to offer animal sacrifices daily which as we have learned here in this book never actually atoned for sin, but rather just pointed to the lessons of the severity of the punishment of sin, and pointed to the need for a sacrifice to pay that penalty. So since the priest no longer need to offer such sacrifices, therefore the earthly temple is no longer need, along with all things that pertained to it.

They have faded, they are gone, they have passed away since the substance of those shadows have arrived. Now that we have our true High priest, who sits in the midst I the heavenly true temple, who being both the sacrifice, and the one who offered the sacrifice for the sins of his people makes intercession for us before God. His blood covers our sins, granting us a true atonement, and true redemption of sins that the blood of animals could never provide.

Christ our High Priest is sitting at the right hand of the father. Maybe this isn't quite the proper image but when I read such wording I think of what we have all seen in movies. The king sitting on his throne as subjects come before the throne and approach the king, either for judgment for crimes committed, or to appeal to the king for aid. And usually sitting next to the king is his advisor, or most trusted colleague, and I get this image of a person being brought before the king who has been condemned on crimes against the kingdom, one who has broken all of the rules but not only that has been treasonous to the king. But before the king passages judgment the one who sits on his right hand side leans in, and whispers in the kings ear, and the king having heard what has been said chooses mercy over punishment.

This is the image I get on Christ making intercession for us before the father. We stand condemned as it were before God, for our sins, for our rebellion, but Christ leans in and says, This is one of my brothers, or one of my sisters who I have died for, my blood has been shed to pay the penalty that they deserve for their sin and rebellion. Then upon hearing that God the father turns and looks at this person, seeing them as redeemed and instead of judgment, showers them with gifts.

This image is very much what this passage here is talking about, Since Christ has come, since Christ has died and made atonement for sins sure for his people, he sits at the right hand of the father making intercession for us, therefore, as the passage says in verse 19 we may have boldness to enter into the Holiest part of the heavenly temple, not of our own merit, but solely upon the merit of Christ. Think upon this for a minute, because of what Christ has done, for YOU, individually, personally, and completely, we have access directly to the father but not only that, we have his mercy and his grace so therefore we can approach him not trembling, or full of fear and doubt, but boldly believing that he will keep his promises.

Outside of salvation itself I do not know much of a sweeter promise than this. That we may approach the throne, with boldness knowing that our King will listen, and he will act upon us with grace and mercy not only because of his love toward us through the Son, but also because through his grace and mercy given to us, he is also glorified. Having both the righteous requirements paid for by his son, and his mercy and love to apply it toward us making us his adopted children there is nothing more that can be done than to shower him with praise that while we were sinners, condemned, Christ died for us so that we may become his adopted children and heirs along with the Son who sits at his right hand in all of the promises.

And now being not only able, but that we can come boldly before him to approach him knowing that he loves us, and being his adopted children he is a gracious and wonderful father who wants what is best for his children. But we must also remember when we approach him, what we want and ask for is not always what is best for us. God being the sovereign and holy father that he is not only has our best interest in mind, he knows what is best for us, and sometimes what is best for us is not what we are asking him for.

Sometimes the relief or mercy we ask for, is not granted for it is better that we suffer a little while. Yes, I know those are hard words to hear sometimes. But it is obvious, for we often cry out to God for his deliverance and mercy.. and sometimes his answer is, no, you must endure...but my grace is sufficient for you to endure. Using myself as an example, having been diagnosed with a rare autoimmune disease, this is likely something that is going to be a part of my life for the rest of my life. There is always the threat of it flaring back up. Could God completely heal me of this? Of course he could. Will he? I don't know, but whether he does, or doesn't honestly is of little importance for through this journey he has shown me grace, mercy and love beyond any I have previously experienced, both spiritually and personally through the ministry of others in their love and support.

IF I had not gotten this disease, I would not have known Christ in the same way I do today. And I think that accounts greatly toward his purpose and reason even for suffering. For in our darkest hours, when we are our weakest, we can do no other than to turn to him for strength, and he is there to give us hope, to give all this that we must endure meaning and purpose. We may not always get the privilege to see it, we may not always get to understand why certain things work out the way that they do, but that is of little importance if we understand that it is God who is working these things out. The reality is, even though it would be nice to know the whys, and hows, it really isn't ours to know, it is ours to trust and obey, to lean upon, and rest upon him.

All things work for his glory, for his pleasure, and for his good will. So why does he allow us to struggle, why does he allow suffering, we may not know for months, or years after, or if ever. But we must know that it is all in God's hands and it serves his purpose and plan for our lives.

So now, when we do approach him, it is not through the church, it is not through a priest, but we may approach him directly, and boldly because Christ has prepared for us a new and living way as it says in verse 20. The old covenant is bound in death, for all things resulted in death, death upon the animals that were sacrificed daily, thousands upon thousands, but not only that, the law brought condemnation and death, not offering an escape from sin, but rather making sin more apparent, making sin more sinful for now there is no excuse for there is now the knowledge of God's holy character and his demands for holiness and righteousness. Through the law sin has become increasingly sinful. There is no life in the law, there is only condemnation and death. But Christ through his sacrifice and the new covenant in his blood he has prepared and new and living way.

It is new, for it has replaced the old, it has not just updated it as many would argue, it has now replaced it as we have seen going through this book of Hebrews. All of those shadows are gone, for the substance as come replacing them, and making the law of death obsolete, and replacing it with the promise of life. A life in Christ, covered by his blood, redeemed, and made holy so we may enter into that holiest of places, the eternal, heavenly temple.

If we look at verse 21 here, the Author is making another parallel, he says that this new and living way has been consecrated for us, through the veil, which is the flesh of Christ. So there are a few ways that this could be understood. The veil which was in the temple which was torn in 2 upon the event of Christ's death, is being referenced here but in the subject of Christ's body itself. So that means that there is something here that the Author is trying to convey, that is steeped in meaning, and tied into and supersedes and replaces the shadow given before.

One way this can be understood is that Christ himself is the veil as the passage says, that is his body. The veil served the purpose in the temple as a separation between God and man. In the holy of holies was the very presence of God, and the priest was only allowed to enter into it once, every year to offering intercession for himself and the people, if he did not follow God's requirements for this he would be struck dead. So this veil protected the people from God's wrath, but it also provided a way in which man could approach God. But the priest could not enter without blood, he needed to approach God with the blood of the sacrifice otherwise again, he would be struck dead.

So if we think about this, it is not hard to see Christ himself as the veil, being this one who stands between God's wrath upon mankind, and yet also the one in whom mankind enters into the very presence of God. It can also be seen that through Christ's shedding of blood, it is like the rending of the veil. The veil in the temple was torn in 2, opening the way between God and man, in much the same way that Christ's body was torn, and seemingly destroyed has now opened the way through to God. This further symbolizes the passing of such things, because of Christ's work there no longer is this veil between God and man, it has been taken down granting us access to God directly.

So since all of these things are true, since Christ has opened a new and living way as we said before we can now therefore enter into the holiest of places, in the very presence of God, and as it says in verse 21 and 22. "having such a high priest over the house of God let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith." Again this goes to the doubting of God's promises and his work. He has not died and made our redemption sure only so that we can doubt it. Once attained it will never be lost if we truly received it to begin with. But I think there is another element here that is related and it has to do with the going before the Throne of God with boldness.

Being a people who as verse 22 says, “having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.” We can have assurance of faith in all things toward God. We are his children, he our loving father who not only guides, but provides and whose love desires what is best for his children. This assurance of faith is not only of our salvation, but in the fact that God hears, and that God listens. The very veil that separated us from God has been torn asunder, there is no nothing that separates us from the very presence of the Lord.

If we feel separated from God, or if we feel that God is not listening it is not because we are or because he isn't...it is our own perceived notion, and according to all of scripture it is wrong. For all of scripture talks of this very thing, that we are in his hands, that we are given promises, that we are his children, his chosen nation, the apple of his eye, the ones he loves. Will God not hear those he loves? Will God abandon his promises? Of course not, for if he did he would not be God.

We must approach him boldly, with full assurance of faith for we are his children, and there is nothing that separates us from his love. If it seems that God does not love you, or is not hearing you, let me ask this. Did God not seek you out while you were yet his enemy? While you yet were against him, while your heart was wicked and only sought rebellion and sin? Did he not love you, with a special love to draw you to him, As the scripture says, he first loved us, so that we may love him. God does not stop loving us, God does not stop listening we must trust him, we must wait upon him, and remember that all things are in his time, and for his good pleasure.

Look at these following verses, verse 23 “Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works.” Again God is faithful, God's promises are sure, as I have said before. If God redeemed you, and adopted you as one of his own, he did not do so to discard you, but he did so, so that he may be glorified in providing and showing his grace, mercy, and love toward you.

And now that God has done such, what are we to do? Well, the Author says that we must consider one another, to stir up this Godly love, and good works among each other. Not only must we, but we also desire it. The fellowship in the faith is a unique and close fellowship that surpasses anything else in this life. By that I mean, God puts people together who without God would not be together. He makes friends out of those who have no common interest, he causes us to love one another for it is his love that works through us to do so.

And it is through this common love of the savior that we spur each other on to good works, and it is this love in which we fellowship and encourage, and even rebuke one another if need be. It is this attitude that should define the Christian, that we strive to be more like Christ. We come together so that we may remind each other, and bear witness before each other of God's work in our lives. We pray, we suffer, and we rejoice together in darkness and in light. Playing out this very thing the Author has been talking about, worshiping the one true God, and coming together in boldness to worship and praise him for all that he has done.

There is both the personal, and corporate aspect of this coming before God. For the bible says where 2 or more are gathered in his name, he is in their midst. Again, the separation between God and man has been torn asunder, we can approach God, and he also meets with us. In light of that it really brings to importance the final verse we are looking at this morning.

Since we are to consider one another, and stir up love and good works in each other, he says, “not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together as in the matter of some, but exhorting one another, and so much more as you see the day approaching.” How can we stir up love and good works within each other if we do not gather to worship and fellowship? And knowing that God gathers with his church as well, being in the very midst it is important that we are faithful to gather together, that we are faithful to be in the word and prayer together. God has not created us to be islands, God works through each other toward each other.

I am sure each and every person here understands that, seeing how over the years we have become so close, and as we jokingly even say, it is all God for who else would put this group together. Yet here we are, God's little group who gather and who worship him together, stirring up love and good works together, what else is there even to say? We are his, and he is ours, he is the everlasting, eternal, living great high priest who whispers into the Lords ear on our behalf.

Making intercession for us, having perfected us in him, and having predestined us and have known us before we were, even before the foundation of the world. This God who has chosen you, who has sent his Son to Die for you, who had planned your atonement and redemption from eternity past, will not fail, will not abandon, and will not leave you. Know that before this almighty sovereign creator of this world we have direct access into his very presence an we are told that we may enter boldly because we are not slaves, but his children and heirs to the kingdom. What glories, what promises, and what hope! Let us draw ever nearer to him, with hearts in full assurance of faith, having been sprinkled from our evil conscience, having been free from the bonds and curse of sin, having our sins not only forgiven but forgotten.