

# Hebrews

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Hebrews 10:19-25 – Let Us Draw Near

June 14, 2009

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- I. **Hebrews 10:19-25** . . . Therefore, brethren, **since** we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus, [20] by a new and living way which He inaugurated for us through the veil, that is, His flesh, [21] **and since** we have a great priest over the house of God, [22] **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. [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 stimulate one another to love and good deeds, [25] 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 drawing near.

## II. Prayer

## III. Let Us Draw Near

### A. **Since we have** . . .

1. **Since** we have confidence to enter the holy place – by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, and **since** we have a great priest over the house of God . . .
2. Under the Law, only the High priest, once a year, could enter the Holy of Holies. And even though his offering was accepted by God on that occasion, it did not make it possible for any lesser priest or common Israelite to ever enter the Holy of Holies. And though the offering was accepted by God, the High Priest was shut out of the Holy of Holies, just like every other Israelite, the rest of the year.
3. Jesus, born of a woman, being the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of God's nature (**Heb. 1:3**), made like us in all things (**Heb. 2:17**), tempted in all things as we are – yet without sin (**Heb. 4:15**), suffering the agony of the cross unto death and then raised from the dead by the power of God, is now seated at the right hand of God as our sacrificial Lamb and our High Priest. This Jesus so satisfied God's justice regarding sin that God opened the way for all who trust in Jesus for redemption from the penalty of sin and salvation from the power and practice of sin to confidently come into the presence of God – not one day a year, or for an hour or two each Sunday, but every day all day.

4. The confidence that we can enter into God's presence and live, is not based on anything we have done or have become or can become. Our confidence is based solely on Jesus Christ and the sacrifice of his life on our behalf. In other words, it is our faith, our utter trust, our unquestionable reliance on what Jesus has done, and only what he has done, that we have confidence for coming into the presence of God.

## **B. Let us draw near**

1. However, even though we have confidence to enter into God's presence – because of what Christ has done – the phrase “Let us draw near” strikes a more cautious or careful tone – which is definitely the opposite of being brazen or forward or presumptuous. Why? Why go from utter confidence to a bit of caution?
  - a. Because God is god and we aren't.
    - (1) In spite of the fact that our culture assumes that esteeming ourselves highly is the path to mental and emotional health;
    - (2) and even though it is culturally correct to assure each other that we are special and unique and important;
    - (3) and even though many churches teach – and many well-meaning Christians believe – that God is here to serve us rather than we being here to serve Him . . .
    - (4) The truth is, we are further beneath God – His glory, His holiness, His power, His wisdom, His love, His justice, His truth – than a mosquito is beneath us.
  - b. What this means is that though we have great confidence to enter into God's presence – and justifiably so – we nonetheless draw near reverently, respectfully, and above all humbly.
    - (1) Though God tells us we can come confidently and boldly into His presence, only the proud allow their confidence to rise above their humility before God and their reverence for God.
    - (2) In fact, the more you know and love God, the more you see how morally weak, how selfishly inclined, and how rebellious you have been to the point of feeling unworthy to be in God's presence. This sense of unworthiness is a mark of humility before God.
  - c. Let me say it this way – the grace of God – which has given us reason for confidence – that grace, when measured against an

honest view of ourselves makes God immeasurably worthy of heart-trembling awe and teary-eyed reverence – while making us all the more nothing in our own sight and therefore deeply humbled for having received this grace that we are unworthy to receive.

- d. What is my point? Christ gives us confidence in coming to God. Our humility compels us to be deeply reverent before God.
2. This brings us to an important truth that I want to make very clear today. How we see God and how we see ourselves in comparison to God is the most powerful influence in how we see and deal with all things related to God – including coming into His presence. For example:
- a. Referring to God as our good buddy or the man upstairs exposes our pride and promotes irreverence.
  - b. Thinking of ourselves as God's favorite or His special creation, or feeling worthy to come into His presence because we are more righteous than some people we know or because we know more about God than others seem to know or because our spiritual experience is a cut above what others are experiencing is a sign of arrogance and pride and self-love – all of which prohibit us from thinking highly of God and humbly of ourselves.
  - c. Being angry at God for allowing unwanted things to happen to us exposes our pride and unbelief while promoting irreverence.
  - d. Making jokes at God's expense feeds irreverence and a low view of God.
  - e. Talking about God as we might talk about someone who we feel has let us down reveals a low and dishonoring view of God.
  - f. You see – the principle works this way – the lower our view of God the harder it is to rise to a reverence for God and a humility before God that exalts Him to the place where we clearly see how unworthy we are to be in His presence.
  - g. How do you see God? How do you speak about God? How do you speak to God? Your view of God will determine whether you come to Him with humble confidence or some other, self-exalting way.
3. **LET** – This phrase “let us draw near” begins with the word **let**, which means to allow or permit. The point here is that because of our new birth and having been freed from the power and practice of sin and having been given the new, divine nature and having

received the indwelling Holy Spirit, it should be natural for us to draw near to God.

- a. If drawing near to God is not natural at this point in your Christian life, the fault is not with God, or with any of the things He has given you for living a life of intimate fellowship with Him.
- b. The fault is with you and all the things you do which stifle and starve and impede your new nature while at the same time feeding and encouraging your old nature so that you are not inclined to draw near or don't take the time to draw near—except when you want something.
- c. And when I speak of drawing near to God, I am not speaking of how the average husband with a full time job, three or four school-age children, a favorite hobby or two, and projects around the house that need taking care of draws near to his wife. I am speaking of how a young couple, newly in love and looking forward to marriage draw near to each other. Why they will stay up half the night talking and never complain about lost sleep. They will forsake things of personal interest or fun to just be together. Indeed, it is hard to keep young lovers apart. Such is the mindset and attitude of those who love God and because of their love want to draw near to Him.

### C. With a sincere heart in full assurance of faith

1. As I have tried to make clear today, it is because of what Christ has done for us that we confidently, yet humbly, come into the presence of God – not just for a few minutes here or there, but to live in His presence all the time – and while living there to eagerly pursue direct communion and companionship with God as often as life realistically allows.
2. And so we come to this next phrase in **Hebrews 10:22** . . . “*with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith.*” This phrase **implies three conditions on our part** for entering into, realistically recognizing, and personally enjoying communion and companionship with our heavenly Father.
3. **First**, to come with a sincere heart is to come, loving God for Himself and not for anything He will do for us or give us.
  - a. Those who love God for himself draw near because He is their treasure, because fellowship with Him is their reward, and because communion with Him is their highest satisfaction.

- b. What this means is that the sincere heart comes without duplicity, without a motive to use God for its own ends, or to seek fellowship with God for reasons other than God himself.
  - c. It is the **insincere** heart that is set on using God in its pursuit of treasure other than God or pleasure other than the joy of dwelling in the presence of God.
    - (1) It is the **insincere** heart that draws near or stays away on the basis of **wants** other than God and on the basis of how God responds to our **wants**.
    - (2) It is the **insincere** heart that keeps the relationship between us and God shallow, self-serving, and infrequent.
    - (3) How can we who are filled with the divine nature and who have received such great grace break God's heart this way?
  - d. And so I plead with you, guard your motives and desires in drawing near to God. Draw near with a heart that sincerely wants God for Himself – and with a heart that holds God to be your highest and most desired treasure.
4. **Second**, to come with a sincere heart is to come with a pure heart and a godly life. It seems God has put the emphasis here even though I have made this the second point. Why is this the case? The answer is found in the scripture following this statement about coming with a sincere heart.
- a. "... having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water."
  - b. I suspect the meaning of this statement is obvious to you so I won't labor the point. But let me say that "hearts sprinkled clean and bodies washed" speaks of inward and outward holiness – in that order.
  - c. This is an important point. Indeed, inward cleansing leading to outward cleansing is the only way to a sincere heart. Why?
    - (1) To change our behavior (thoughts, words, and deeds), we must change our allegiances, our treasures, our values, our beliefs, and our common day-to-day desires.
    - (2) We can dress up the outer person, but when our backs are to the wall or life turns against us or we are feeling like no one cares or we are longing for some pleasure – we will strip off the outer garments of religion or our current manifestations of godliness and put on the garments that accurately represent what is in our heart.

- d. Now it is true that we can hide an evil heart, selfish motives, ungodly values, and the longing for worldly treasures – but only for a time. Sooner or later, circumstances or people will motivate us to reveal what we are inside.
  - e. And it is this very thing – a failure to clean up the inside – that keeps us actively engaged in what the Bible calls besetting sins.
    - (1) Example: husband and wife who claim to love each other and manifest love in many marvelous ways, yet one or both of them cling to one or two besetting sins.
    - (2) You can spot these relationships by what the couple says about each other – jokingly most often, but with a bit of bite or sarcasm on occasion.
  - f. Therefore, cleaning up the inside is vital, for without cleansing the inside any outer cleansing is temporary at best and at worst, it is ineffective in bringing us to the place of having a sincere heart toward God.
5. **Third**, God speaks of drawing near in full assurance of faith.
- a. Faith is what convinces us that a recognizably intimate relationship of communion and companionship with God is possible.
  - b. Faith is what convinces us that in spite of our human frailty, God has and will continue to make it possible for us to change and mature to the place where we cherish drawing near to God so much that losing that nearness would be seen by us as the greatest tragedy to befall us.
  - c. And it is faith that drives us back to God's presence in spite of all the times we pull away through sinful choices and selfish actions.
  - d. Without question, faith that God wants you living in His presence, faith that Christ has made it possible to come confidently into God's presence, faith that God has made a way for you to come with a sincere heart into His presence, and faith that after sinning you can return to His presence, is vital to drawing near all day every day for the rest of your life.

IV. Christ made the way for us to confidently come into the presence of God. Humility is to be our attitude. Holiness of heart and behavior is to be our condition. May we hunger for God and love God to the degree that we come to God and dwell with God this way. If you do, you won't go back.