

Let Us Fellowship

Hebrews 10:19-25

(Special Message 10.18.26)

Intro

When I was in kindergarten, our elementary school had a bilingual program in which we were taught both *English* and *Spanish*...

- I remember learning the Spanish names for numbers and colors and for common things that you see everyday...

Unfortunately, the bilingual program was soon cancelled — (budget cuts, I guess) — and my education continued on, but only in English...

- In high school I took two years of Spanish but it was too little, too late to make much of a difference — I only remember a few things from those classes...

Now, if I really wanted to learn Spanish at this point in my life, I would need to immerse myself in it...

- I would need to consistently spend time in an environment where Spanish was spoken around me — so let's say I chose to move to Spain...

In that environment, I would begin to change — I would begin to understand Spanish and speak Spanish and think in Spanish...

You see, ***immersion is the key*** — and this is true in every area...

If you desire to truly grow as a musician, you must immerse yourself in an environment where there are other musicians who will challenge you...

- If you want to become a better athlete, you must immerse yourself in competitive environments where other athletes challenge you...

And the list goes on and on — if you want to grow in a skill or become a certain sort of person — ***immersion is the key...***

- Now, what is true for every other area of life is also true when it comes to *the subject of discipleship...*

If we are serious about the Lord Jesus' call to discipleship then we must seek to *immerse ourselves in fellowship with God and with other believers...*

This is the way forward into the life that Jesus calls us to...

Now, it may be that you feel like you were on the road of discipleship in the kindergarten days of your Christian life but for some reason the program got canceled...

Thankfully, you don't need to move to Spain to move forward in discipleship...

You can simply choose to commit to immersive fellowship with the triune God and with faithful believers who are pursuing a life of discipleship...

And with this as our introduction, we come to that passage we will consider today as we are in the midst of a little break from our verse-by verse study of the gospel of Matthew...

We will be moving through Hebrews 10:19-25 in a message I have entitled, *Let Us Fellowship...*

If you would, please follow along as I read our passage...

Hebrews 10:19-25

19 Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus,

20 by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh,

21 and having a High Priest over the house of God,

22 let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled 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 one another in order to stir up love and good works,

25 not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.

Let's move into our first section...

1) The Open Way (vs 19-21)

19 Therefore,

*In order to understand this **Therefore**, let's go back to the beginning of the chapter...*

Hebrews 10:1-18

1 For the law, having a shadow of the good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with these same sacrifices, which they offer continually year by year, make those who approach perfect.

2 For then would they not have ceased to be offered? For the worshipers, once purified, would have had no more consciousness of sins.

3 But in those sacrifices there is a reminder of sins every year.

4 For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins.

5 Therefore, when He came into the world, He said: “Sacrifice and offering You did not desire, But a body You have prepared for Me.

6 In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin You had no pleasure.

7 Then I said, ‘Behold, I have come— In the volume of the book it is written of Me— To do Your will, O God.’ ”

8 Previously saying, “Sacrifice and offering, burnt offerings, and offerings for sin You did not desire, nor had pleasure in them” (which are offered according to the law),

9 then He said, “Behold, I have come to do Your will, O God.” He takes away the first that He may establish the second.

10 By that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

11 And every priest stands ministering daily and offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins.

12 But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God,

13 from that time waiting till His enemies are made His footstool.

14 For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified.

15 But the Holy Spirit also witnesses to us; for after He had said before,

16 “This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, says the Lord: I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds I will write them,”

17 then He adds, “Their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more.”

18 Now where there is remission of these, there is no longer an offering for sin.

BIG IDEA — the Old Covenant sacrifices could never take away sins — but the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus does take away our sins — and now we can be immersed into fellowship with God!...

Continuing on in Hebrews 10:19...

Therefore brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest

brethren — *believers...*

boldness — *free and fearless confidence, cheerful courage, assurance...*

In context, this **boldness** is the courage that the ***believer*** has in coming into fellowship with God in fellowship — entering into God's **Holiest** Place in Heaven...

- And it is important to realize that this **boldness** is the ***present possession of the believer...***

This spiritual **boldness** is not something that we have to muster up or talk ourselves into — we did not earn it — *it is a gift of grace...*

- Now, if you are a believer and you do not currently have **boldness** in fellowship with God then something is wrong...

*And though there are many possible reasons for a lack of **boldness** in fellowship with God, in my experience the problem is most often one of two things...*

1) It could be that you are living in unrepentant sin and that is hindering your boldness...

If this is where you find yourself then please listen to what the Apostle John writes in...

1 John 1:9

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

- [expand on confessing and repenting — get right with God today!...]

Now, the second most common reason for a lack of boldness in fellowship with God is that...

2) You simply do not understand what the Word of God says about the bold access that believers possess...

If this describes you then I encourage you to study the Word of God — especially the NT epistles — and see the amazing **boldness** of access that you have as a believer...

- [expand — this boldness is a gift of grace — not anything that we have earned — it is an invitation to participation...]

Now, as we move on in Hebrews 10:19 we are reminded of the fact that a person can only enter the Holiest...

by the blood of Jesus,

In other words, the only way that a person can have bold access to God and His throne room is through the salvation that the Lord Jesus accomplished on the cross...

Paul put it this way in...

Romans 5:1-2

1 Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,

2 through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

Let's continue on in Hebrews 10 to vs...

20 by a new and living way

So, this bold access to God the Father is **new** in the sense that it is a *New Covenant* — this access is not through the Old Covenant...

- Now, the word **new** here in vs 20 is also used in the sense that this ***open way*** is *always fresh* — the **way** is always **new and living** — it remains continually open...

Please also notice in vs 20 that this access is...

a new and living way

way — *a path or road...*

This path is a **living way** because the Lord Jesus *remains alive forevermore...*

- [ex. trail that remains open because there is a caretaker of that trail...]

*For more on this **new and living way**, please turn to...*

John 14:1-6

1 “Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me.

2 In My Father’s house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.

4 And where I go you know, and the way you know.”

5 Thomas said to Him, “Lord, we do not know where You are going, and how can we know the way?”

6 Jesus said to him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

- [exhortation — the Lord Jesus is the ***only open way*** to access Heaven...]

Please turn back to Hebrews 10 as we continue on in vs 20...

by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh,

consecrated — *to dedicate, to initiate, to open...*

*In other words, through His death on the cross the Lord Jesus **opened the way to heaven...***

- Our Savior’s death on the cross — His body that was torn and blood that was shed as He paid the penalty for our sins — made the way for us to be saved...

God the Father graphically illustrated the truth that the way to Him was opened...

Mark 15:37-38

37 And Jesus cried out with a loud voice, and breathed His last.

38 Then the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom.

When Jesus died, God the Father tore the veil in the temple from top to bottom — bold access to God the Father was now open though the Lord Jesus Christ...

- [ex. The fall of the Berlin Wall...]

David Guzik highlights the fact that the veil was not folded up or raised up for later use — it was torn — it was irreparably damaged — it was now unusable...[expand]

Continuing on in Hebrews 10 to vs...

21 and having a High Priest over the house of God,

Once again we are reminded that the Lord Jesus is *the ultimate High Priest...*

- He is the priest over the actual **house of God**, He is the One who by His death on the Cross saves all those who belong to **the house of God...**

*Let's move now from **The Open Way** to our second section...*

2) Let Us Draw Near (vs 22)

22 let us draw near [*expand on **let us** — (call to believers)*]

draw near — *come to, approach...*

This is an exhortation to **draw near** to God in fellowship...

And it reminds me of what we read in...

James 4:8 (NKJV)

Draw near to God and He will draw near to you.

Continuing on in vs 22...

let us draw near with a true heart

true — *sincere, genuine...*

heart — *the inner life of a person...*

The idea is that we do not have to pretend — God knows the truth anyway — so we can come to Him honestly...

- And this ***drawing near*** in fellowship is possible because of all that the Lord Jesus *has done for us* and all that He *has given to us*...

Through the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus we have *freedom of access to fellowship, the radical privilege of being a child of God and the hope of a glorious future...*

Continuing on in vs 22 we read...

let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith,

This **full assurance of faith** stresses that the work of Christ — that His sacrifice for our sins — has given us ***full and free access to the Father...***

- In other words, we can draw near to God in fellowship because the Lord Jesus has made the way!...

With this in mind, if we are failing to **draw near in full assurance of faith** it may reveal *a failure to fully trust in the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ...*

- [expand — we cannot add anything to the finished work of Christ — He has made the way — He has paid it all...]

Moving on in Hebrews 10:22...

having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience

[expand on the effect of the blood of Christ on the believer's conscience — we are cleansed from all of our sins...]

and our bodies washed with pure water.

This reference has caused disagreement among commentators...

- Some see it as a reference to the ritual cleansing that the priests went through before serving the Lord...

Others see it as a reference to the water baptism of believers...

- If it refers to baptism then the focus is on the fact that baptism is an *outward sign of an inward cleansing*...

[expand on baptism being symbolic of dying, being buried and then resurrected with Christ...]

- Christians are cleansed ***within*** by the shed blood of the Lord Jesus and water baptism is an outward sign of this inward reality...

We move now from Let Us Draw Near to our third section...

3) Let Us Hold Fast (vs 23)

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

hold fast — *lit. "to hold down" — speaks of a firm hold which controls that which is held...*

- [ex. MMA submission hold...]

And please notice what it is that we are exhorted to hold fast...

Let us hold fast the confession

confession — *Gr. homologia — "to say the same thing" as another...*

Or to put it another way, the author of Hebrews is exhorting his readers to hold on to their confession of Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior — to keep saying what is true...

Continuing on in Hebrews 10:23...

Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering,

wavering — *Gr. aklinēs — not inclining, unmoved...*

And as believers are not to waver or incline away from Christ...

for He who promised is faithful.

One Bible commentator

“Christians can hold fast to their hope in this way because behind it is a God in whom they can have full confidence. God is thoroughly to be relied on. When he makes a promise, that promise will infallibly be kept. He has taken the initiative in making the promise, and he will fulfill his purposes in making it.”

So, as believers we are to **hold fast** to our **confession** — we are to **hold fast** to **our hope** — because Almighty God is *faithful* — He can be *trusted at all times...*

- ***And because He is faithful, we can continually fellowship with Him...***

We move now to our final exhortation...

4) Let Us Consider (vs 24-25)

24 And let us consider one another

consider — *speaks of attentive, continuous care; to consider attentively, fix one's eyes or mind upon...*

- [ex. Special forces soldiers keeping a close watch on one another — they seek to remain in constant communication — they are constantly considering one another...]

Now, as believers, the **one another** that we are to **consider** is the fellow believer....

- And the author here is speaking of a *mutual activity*, one in which ***individual believers*** encourage one another...

And in order for us to do this, we must be in fellowship with one another — we must be involved with one another...

*As we move on in vs 24 we see the **aim** of this mutual consideration...*

And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works,

stir up — *rousing to activity, provoking...*

- Now **stir up** or **provoke** is commonly used in a *negative sense* but here in a *positive sense*...

I believe the author of Hebrews is highlighting the fact that our *stirring up of one another will sometimes be uncomfortable* — but that's ok...

- This is how it should be in the church — if we are drifting off then we should be exhorted — we are in this together and we should challenge one another...

I love how the Apostle Paul put it in...

1 Corinthians 9:24-25

24 Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it.

25 And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown.

- [expand — Olympians put in so much work in for a perishable prize — how much more work should we put in for an eternal prize?...]

Let's look again at Hebrews 10:24...

And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works,

It is important to understand that the word **love** here is ***agape*** which is an *others-centered love* that is most completely revealed in the cross of Christ...

I love what the Apostle John wrote in...

1 John 4:10-11

10 In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

11 Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

One Bible scholar

“It is interesting that this kind of love is...a product of community activity, for it is a virtue that requires others for its exercise. One may practice faith or hope alone, but not love.”

Remember — love is a genuine inner readiness and longing to secure the good of others...

And the two greatest commandments focus on love and may only be obeyed as we are in fellowship with others...

1) Love the Lord your God with all your heart, mind, soul & strength...

2) Love you neighbor as yourself...

Both of these are only possible as we are in fellowship with God and our neighbor...

Continuing on in Hebrews 10:24...

And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works,

The idea is that as we rest in the salvation that Christ has accomplished for us, we are led to carry out **good works** in His name...

- [expand — we are ***working from salvation not for salvation...***]

Because this is such a fundamental truth, let's turn to a passage that clearly reveals this truth...

Ephesians 2:1-10 (NKJV)

1 And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins,

2 in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience,

3 among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others.

4 But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us,

5 even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved),

6 and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,

7 that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

8 For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God,

9 not of works, lest anyone should boast.

10 For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

Let's turn back to Hebrews 10 as we move into the final verse of our study...

25 not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some,

forsaking — *to separate connection with someone or something; abandon...*

- [expand — people were abandoning Christian fellowship — any number of reasons for this...]

Now, please notice the strong exhortation in vs 25 — believers are ***not*** to forsake the assembling of themselves together...

And I do not see any wiggle room here...

The fact is that it is ***impossible*** to live in obedience as a believer outside of regular Christian fellowship...

- You see, there is no way to **consider one another in order to stir up love and good works** if you abandon assembling together with other believers...

Continuing on in vs 25...

not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another,

exhorting — *to urge strongly, appeal to, encourage...*

- [ex. Long distance runners encouraging each other to finish the run...]

but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.

In other words, as believers we are to exhort one another more and more as we anticipate the **Day** that we will be with Christ...

- [expand — Kenneth Boa — two days on our calendar — **today** and **That Day!**...]
- Unfortunately, fellowshiping with other believers is often seen as an irritating inconvenience — just another thing on the to-do list...

And even though fellowshiping with redeemed sinners like us can be difficult, Hebrews 10:25 makes it clear that we are to fellowship more and more — not less and less — as we get closer to that **Day**...[expand]

Conclusion

So, as we close our time together I want to challenge you with 3 questions...

1) Are you drawing near to the Lord with a true heart in full assurance of faith — understanding that the Triune God wants you to live all of your life in immersive fellowship with Him?...

2) Are you holding fast the confession of your hope without wavering — understanding that the Lord Jesus Christ died for your sins so that you might live in full fellowship with Him?...

3) Are you considering one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of yourselves together — but continuing to fellowship until you see the Lord face to face on that Day?...

Let's pray...