

# HomeStudy 1/21/18

## Hebrews 10:19-25

“So then, my brothers and sisters, we have *boldness* to go into the sanctuary through the blood of Jesus. He has inaugurated a brand new, living path through the curtain (that is, his earthly body). We have a **high priest** who is over God’s house. So let us therefore come to **worship**, with a true heart, in complete assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

Let us hold on tightly to our *confession of hope*, without being diverted; the one who announced the message to us is trustworthy! Let us, as well, stir up one another’s minds to energetic effort *in love and good works*. We mustn’t do what some people have got into the habit of doing, neglecting to meet together. Instead, we must encourage one another, and all the more as you see the great day coming closer.”

-NT Wright’s Kingdom New Testament Translation (emphasis added)

## Background to Hebrews

As last week’s sermon laid out, the letter to the Hebrews was written (by an unknown author) to exhort Christians to persevere in the face of persecution. During this time, many Jews who had accepted Jesus as the Messiah were tempted to turn back to Judaism, because they were being persecuted by the Roman powers. To combat this temptation, Hebrews eloquently describes Christ’s role as mediator between God and humanity. It depicts Jesus as both exalted Son and high priest (after the order of Melchizedek). In this way, it is impossible to turn back to the old ways of life and still follow God. When you accept Jesus as Lord, it changes everything. Even in the face of persecution, the writer of Hebrews says that those who truly want to follow God must remain faithful to the Son who “...is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature” (Hebrews 1:3).

## Background to Hebrews 10:19-25

At this point in the letter, the Hebrews writer has set the stage for the emphatic message delivered here. Because Jesus is both exalted Son and high priest, we can now enter the sanctuary and worship God like never before. Because of Jesus, we can now worship God with (1) a true heart, (2) complete assurance of faith, (3) a clean conscience, and (4) purified bodies.

*A True Heart*- This phrase looks back to Jeremiah 31:33 “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.”

*Complete Assurance of Faith-* Faith isn't something your mind just creates through sheer willpower. It comes from looking hard at the object of your faith—Jesus—and living your life in a way that reflects his character and nature to the world around you. When you do that, you have complete assurance.

*A Clean Conscience-* The atoning sacrifice of Jesus releases us from whatever hangs heavy on our hearts and minds. It gives us confidence that we can have a genuine relationship with God. There is nothing that can separate us from his love, and there is nothing we cannot overcome by his power.

*Purified Bodies-* These are bodies that have been washed with the pure water of baptism. When we are baptized, we gain entry into God's renewed people. This gives us the ability to boldly enter the sanctuary and worship God as his disciple.

The Hebrews writer is convinced that authentic worship changes us from the inside out. As a result, we should not neglect being together in a context that glorifies God. Why? Because it *encourages* us. You can't be a Christian in a vacuum. You *need* community. You *need* other Christians in your life. As you are doing this HomeStudy, hopefully you are with someone else, whether it's your family, friends, or just a random person on the street. Be encouraged by the message of this text today, and be encouraged by sharing in it with those around you.

### **Discussion Questions**

-What hope does the Hebrews writer give us in the face of persecution? Why is that important?

-What does it mean for Jesus to be both exalted Son and high priest? How does that change our relationship with God?

-What does it mean for us to worship God with boldness? How do the four qualities listed above shape our boldness?

-Why is worship so important? What does it do for us? What does it do for others? Why do we need community? How does being surrounded by other followers of God affect our faith?

### **Guided Prayer**

Jesus didn't call the most qualified or most gifted people to be his disciples. What is most important in following Jesus is faithfulness, not perfection. As you close out your HomeStudy today, begin your prayer with these words, "Lord, help me trust you above all others. Give me boldness to worship you in your holy sanctuary. Let my life be a reflection of the exalted Son and high priest Jesus..."