

One Another

Lesson 11: Stir Up One Another; Do Not Forsake the Assembly -- Hebrews 10:19-25

Imagine standing at the foot of a thick curtain in the ancient temple, a heavy woven barrier that screamed one word over and over: stop. Behind it was the Most Holy Place, the very presence of God, and no ordinary worshiper could go in. Once a year, and only once, a single high priest passed through with blood and trembling. For everyone else the message was unmistakable: you cannot come near. Now imagine that curtain torn from top to bottom, hanging in ruins, and a voice saying, "Come in. The way is open. Draw near." That is exactly where the writer of Hebrews has brought us, and it changes everything about how we live together.

"Therefore, brothers and sisters, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body ... let us draw near." The curtain was his flesh, torn at the cross. The blood is his own. The way in is new because it had never existed before, and living because the one who opened it is alive forever to keep it open. For a Christian, the door into God's presence is not cracked open a little; it is thrown wide by the blood of our great High Priest.

Then comes a string of three invitations that begin with the same words, "let us." Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Three doors swing open: confident access to God, steadfast hope, and watchful care for one another. They belong together. People who have been washed and welcomed into God's presence do not then drift apart from each other.

And here the passage gets wonderfully specific and surprisingly firm. The way we spur one another on, the writer says, is "not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching." Some were already drifting away from the assembly, slipping out the back of the church family. The writer will not allow it. Faithful gathering is not a sentimental nicety; it is one of the central ways Christians love one another, and it grows more urgent, not less, as the day of Christ's return draws near. This lesson is about that gathered, stirred-up, mutually encouraging life, and why it matters so much that God commands it.

Group Discussion: Why do you think it is so easy, even for sincere Christians, to drift away from regularly meeting with the church family? What are the real reasons people give up the assembly, and how does Hebrews 10 speak to those reasons?

Personal Reflection: When you think about gathering with the church, is it mostly something you feel obligated to attend, or something you see as a way to love and stir up your brothers and sisters? What would change if you saw the assembly the way Hebrews 10 describes it?

Read Hebrews 10:19–25

Study Questions

1. The writer says we have “confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body.” What does this teach us about Christ as our great High Priest, and about how a sinner can now come near to a holy God?
2. The passage urges us to “draw near to God with a sincere heart and with the full assurance that faith brings.” Honestly, do you draw near to God with that kind of confident assurance, or do you still approach him as if the curtain were intact? What holds you back?
3. Verse 22 speaks of “having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water.” How does this language point us to what God did for us when we came to Christ, and to our cleansing in baptism?
4. The writer commands, “Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess.” Where in your life are you tempted to loosen your grip on that hope, and what would holding fast look like for you this week?
5. Paul, or the writer of Hebrews, tells us to “consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds.” What does it mean that we are to consider, to actually think carefully about, how to stir up our brothers and sisters, and why does love need stirring?

6. Be specific: whom has God placed in your life that you could deliberately spur on toward love and good deeds, and what is one way you could do that this week?
7. The command is “not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing.” Why does the writer treat faithful assembling not as an optional preference but as a binding part of how Christians love one another?
8. Examine your own habits of gathering with the church. Is faithful assembling something you guard and prioritize, or something that easily gives way to other things? What does your calendar reveal about what you truly treasure?
9. The writer urges all of this “all the more as you see the Day approaching.” What is “the Day,” why does its approach make faithful gathering and mutual encouragement more urgent, and how does the warning that follows in verses 26 and 27 underline the call to remain faithful?
10. Look back across Hebrews 10:19–25 as a whole: confident access through Christ’s blood, steadfast hope, hearts sprinkled and bodies washed, stirring one another up, and faithful gathering as the Day draws near. Name one specific way you sense Jesus forming you through this passage, and what you will do about it this week.

Now or Later

Reflect on these passages: Acts 20:7, where the disciples gathered on the first day of the week to break bread, showing the apostolic pattern of the assembly; Hebrews 3:12-14, where we are warned to take care that no one falls away and to encourage one another daily; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26, where the Lord's Supper proclaims the Lord's death until he comes; Hebrews 12:1-2, where we run with perseverance, fixing our eyes on Jesus; Psalm 122:1, where the worshiper rejoices to go to the house of the Lord.