

**Jesus, Our Great High Priest Forever  
(Week 18)  
Hebrews 10:1-25  
“Draw Near, Hold On, and Watch Out!”**

**Introduction**

Jesus is the ONLY way to God. Now, I know that in a society obsessed with the “politically correct” that statement would be deemed as “intolerant”, but... regardless of popular opinion, it remains an absolute truth. *The Old Testament* law was given as a “primary school”, in order to prepare the world for the “higher learning” that would one day come through Christ and His once-for-all atoning sacrifice for sin. Just as we send our children to kindergarten in the hopes that one day they will go off to college, *The Old Testament* was meant to be a starting point, so that one day all of it’s “students” would find their salvation in Jesus as the instructor of The New Covenant. Sadly, many Jews were unable to move beyond the shadows of the Old Covenant in order to accept the genuine realities of the new. The writer of *Hebrews* has given us a systematic defense of the Christian faith. Chapter by chapter, and line by line, he has demonstrated the validity of the testimony of Jesus Christ. One can hardly argue with his facts, that is, if they are truly able to hear them with an open mind. Still many today, sadly refuse to believe in the truth of Christ. But to those who will believe, the hope of their salvation is both assured and soon to be realized. Jesus is coming soon, and those who are waiting on His return will not be disappointed.

If the sacrifices of *The Old Testament* had been sufficient to cleanse the people of their sins, then not only would the cross have been unnecessary, but also, those sacrifices would not have been repeated year after year,

**“Since The Law has only a shadow of the good things to come, and not the reality itself of those things, it can never perfect the worshippers by the same sacrifices they continually offer year after year. Otherwise, wouldn’t the sacrifices have stopped being offered, since the worshippers, purified once and for all, would no longer have any consciousness of sins? But in the sacrifices there is a reminder of sins year after year. For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.”**  
**Hebrews 10:1-4**

So you see, all that *The Old Testament* sacrifices did was to serve as a REMINDER of the sin that is so prevalent in all of us! We were made completely aware of our disease by the Law of Moses. Now what we need is a cure, and that cure my friends is Christ! Shadow can never be made into substance, no matter how often it is reproduced. Let’s imagine for a moment that if we could all align ourselves in the sun’s light so that we could literally stack all of our shadows in one place. (I know its not possible, but humor me). If there were millions of people, who were able to put the shadows of their bodies one upon another, would those shadows ever become thick enough to become a literal body? Answer — NO! *The Old Testament* was just a shadow of the “body” of Christ! He is the substance. **He is The way, The truth and The life (John 14:6).**

Jesus was able in one day to do what no High Priest before Him could ever do. He made a way for ALL of us to enter The Holy of Holies, into the very presence of God. Remember on Yom Kippur (The Day of Atonement), when the High Priest was allowed to go through the veil of The Tabernacle and stand before the Mercy Seat? Well, he certainly would have never been allowed to take anyone else into that Holy Place, but Jesus... He made a way for us all to enter in. We no longer have to go through a veil to stand in God’s presence, we just go through Jesus!

**“...He has inaugurated for us a new and living way through the curtain (that is, through his flesh)”**  
**Hebrews 10:20**

Now believers, all we need to do to be taken instantly into the presence of God is to go to Him through Christ. He is our “veil” and our entry way to The Throne of God! What a privilege we have been given through Jesus Christ our Lord. In the **tenth chapter of Hebrews**, we are instructed to take full advantage of this privilege. Now, since Christ has so marvelously opened up the way, through His

obedience to God and the sacrifice of His very own body, to provide our once-and-for-all forgiveness of sin (**vs. 5-18**), we are told that there are three things that we must do: Draw Near, Hold On, and Watch Out! Please allow me to explain.

### **Draw Near (vs.19-22)**

**“Therefore, brothers and sisters, since we have boldness to enter the sanctuary through the blood of Jesus — He has inaugurated for us a new and living way through the curtain (that is through His flesh) — and since we have a great High priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed in pure water.”**  
**Hebrews 10:19-22**

Just as we discussed last week, Jesus’ blood has cleansed our sin and completely given us a clean conscience, so that we can now stand in the presence of a Holy God. Nothing else in the universe can do that for us. It is by the blood of Jesus that we are able not only to BE forgiven, but to feel absolutely no guilt whatsoever to drag us into despair. He has cleansed our *conscience*! Last week we spoke of the ashes of the “red heifer” that we mingled with pure water and sprinkled upon anyone who was declared ceremonially unclean. This “cleansing” was only a ceremonial cleansing, but the blood of Christ has truly made us clean, not just ceremonially clean mind you, but clean. We now can stand before God’s throne and be declared innocent. Jesus with His sacrifice upon the cross has done what the ashes of the red heifer only foreshadowed. We will never be dirty again, and the one who trusts in Christ will never be defeated by a guilty conscience, for they know that their sin is remembered no more! I love what the Apostle John says about the Child of God, whose conscience tries to condemn him after he has been born again:

**“This is how we know that we belong to the truth and will reassure our hearts before Him whenever our hearts condemn us; For God is greater than our hearts, and He knows all things.”** **1 John 3:19-21**

You see, it is oft times the trick of the devil to drag up our past sins and make us to feel ashamed and worthless in God’s sight. He does this in order to debilitate us, for if we continue to condemn ourselves after we have been forever cleansed, then we will shrink back from serving God. This is merely a trick of the enemy to disable the soldiers of Christ and keep them off the battlefield. Remember what we said last week? It is the clear conscience, cleansed with the blood of Jesus, that is able to **serve** God (**Hebrews 9:14**). If the devil can make you feel bad enough, then you will stop serving. He cannot take away the salvation from one who has been forever cleansed, so the very worst that he can do to is try to render us ineffective for the kingdom. But GOD, through His Holy Spirit, will assure the believer that they have been truly forgiven of all sin, and therefore, need not feel ashamed. We can serve with a clean conscience, because, quite frankly, God is now LORD of our consciences! *So don’t you let the devil rob you of your joy this morning! Draw near to God and KNOW that you are clean, thanks to the precious blood of Christ.*

It is this “drawing near” that Jesus speaks of in **John 15**, when He commands His followers to “abide in Him”. You see, Christ has provided the means for us to draw near to God. We do this by having a disciplined prayer life, combined with constant meditation upon The Word of God, as we live a worshipful life of obedience empowered by His Spirit. Every believer **MUST** do these things in order to survive in this darkened world. Thanks to Christ, we can approach God’s throne at any time throughout any day, so why is it that so many Christians have such an anemic prayer life? Think about this for a moment: The High Priest, the **single most “religious” person** in all of Israel, could only enter the Holy of Holies once a year, and now, Christ has made a way for us to enter any time we wish! Why, oh why, Christian, would we not take advantage of such a privilege? **“Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed in pure water.”** (**Hebrews 9:22**). So, how’s your prayer life? Draw near to God, if you really want to live the victorious, abundant life that Christ came to offer us all (**John 10:10**).

### **Hold On (vs. 23)**

**"Let us hold on to the confession of our hope without wavering, since He who promised is faithful."** **Hebrews 10:23**

One of my favorite all time quotes is by former minister and President of Wheaton College, Raymond Edmond, "Never doubt in the dark, what God has told you in the light." The writer of *Hebrews*, I believe, would have loved that quote as well. We, as believers, have been charged to hold on to what we believe. I once had a dear friend, who often struggled with depression and doubt. From time to time he would call me and express his concern that maybe he had not been truly born again. Many times we had this same conversation, but I will never forget the last time. I asked him if he truly believed that Jesus was in fact the Son of God, to which he replied a resounding, "Yes". Then I asked him if He had confessed his sin and asked Jesus to forgive that sin. Again, the answer was a resounding, "Yes". Then, I managed to work up the nerve to say something that I had never said to him before. "So... let me get this straight, you believe that Jesus, The Son of God is a liar then?" He was taken aback by that and finally answered, "Absolutely not!" Then, I followed up with, "So if you believe that Jesus always tells the truth, why not take Him at His word, when He says that 'if we will confess our sins, then He is faithful and righteous to forgive our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness?'" (**1 John 1:9**). "Either Jesus is honest, or He isn't, I personally believe that He is able to do exactly what He says He will do. So if you believe that, then stop calling Jesus a liar and hold on to your faith." After that, he never called me again to say that he was struggling with his salvation! I counted that as a breakthrough.

You see, when we have doubts, we are not saying that much about ourselves. What we are really saying is that God isn't trustworthy. Newsflash: God is the only thing in the entire universe that **IS** absolutely trustworthy! If He promises to forgive your sins by the blood of Jesus, then you can take it to the bank. The devil may try to make you doubt Him, my friend, but the devil doesn't have the power to make God out to be a liar. "Never doubt in the dark, what God has taught you in the light." You don't have to be a great theologian to become a believer, you just have to BELIEVE God to become a believer! It is called "faith", and without it, it is IMPOSSIBLE to please God (**Hebrews 11:6**). My all time favorite verse in all of scripture goes all the way back to Abraham in Genesis:

**"Abraham believed The LORD, and HE credited it to him as righteousness."** **Genesis 15:6**

Pretty much says it all doesn't it? Hold on to your faith. "Never doubt in the dark, that which God has taught you in the light!"

### **Watch Out (for one another vs. 24-25)**

**"And let us watch out for one another to provoke love and good works, not neglecting to gather together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging each other, and all the more, as you see the day approaching."** **Hebrews 10:24-25**

Have you ever invited someone to church only to hear them say, "I can worship God just as good out on the lake or up in the mountains"? Trust me, I have. Now let me say, first of all, that I believe that a true blood washed born again child of God can worship God anywhere. That being said, it is absolutely foolish to say that you can worship God "just as good" away from the fellowship of other believers. You can't. Why? Because God has created you for fellowship. And what's more, if you have truly been born again, then you will crave the company of other believers. If you don't love your church family, then you do not belong to God:

**"If anyone says, 'I love God' and yet hates his brother or sister, he is a liar. For the person who does not love his brother or sister, whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen."** **1 John 4:20**

The “brothers and sisters” that John is speaking of does not refer to “blood relatives” per say, but rather, he is speaking about our relatives that have been “washed in the blood”. There is a special bond forged in agape love that only believers can share. So you see, there is no possible way to despise the church and “worship God”, even in a setting as picturesque as the lake or the mountains. Jesus said that people would be able to “know” that we are Christians, because of our love for each other (**John 13:35**). To know Christ is to long to be with your church family. If you don’t have a desire for church, then there is something very wrong with your soul.

And another thing, most people believe that they should go to church for their own spiritual needs. While we all have a NEED to hear The Word and be in the presence of God and His people, there is another reason that believers should go to church that is just as important. To:

**“Watch out for one another...” (vs. 24)**

Most people never even stop to think that the reason that God wants us to regularly attend church is to be of encouragement to our brothers and sisters in Christ, to hold them accountable, and to help nurture those who are newer, or weaker, in the faith. We are supposed to be there FOR each other! If a church, any old church, ever got a good hold on this truth, then you would see a church that would truly make a difference in this wretched old world. God has called us to a fellowship of encouragement. Did you come to church today only to get your spiritual needs met, or are you here to help someone else who may be struggling? Let it be said of us, that when we gather together, it is because of our great love for God and our sincere desire to watch out for each other. And by the way, it **never** goes well for the people who, for whatever reason, become church dropouts. We should be on the look out for them, so they are not forgotten.

I love to go camping. I’m not as young as I once was, so the whole “sleeping on the ground thing” doesn’t bring me too much pleasure anymore, but I love to be out in the great outdoors. My favorite thing about camping? The campfire. Hands down. There’s nothing better than sitting in front of a fire, talking with friends, and eating something that you just cooked over the flames that’s no good for you! That is real living. One thing I’ve noticed about a fire. When it is burning good and has really hot coals, it can be a source of great comfort and warmth on a cold night. However, many times one of those burning coals will fall away from the others. At first it will continue to burn brightly, but after a few minutes of isolation in the cold night air, the once burning ember begins to cool down and eventually goes out. The only way to restore it back to flame is to move it back into the fire with its “brethren”. Burning coals don’t do well on their own.

In the same way, church members (a member is just an ember with an “m”) can’t remain on fire for God, when they are separated from their brothers and sisters in Christ. That is why we must look out for one another. Those who forsake the Church may think that they’ll be fine, but in reality they will not. Their spiritual flame will eventually die out, as they are exposed to more and more of this cold and sinful world. This is why the writer of *Hebrews* encourages us not to stop gathering together. He knows that if we do, the flame that makes our church relevant will die out. If we truly love our brothers and sisters in Christ, then we will do all that we possibly can to keep them in close fellowship to the flame.

So there you have it. Since Christ has sacrificed Himself, so that we can have complete access to God, then we must DRAW NEAR, HOLD ON, and WATCH OUT! Jesus is coming soon. Let us do all that He commands, so that we will be ready to meet Him when He comes. Why should it matter to us? Because it matters to God!

And **ALL** of God’s people said... **TRUTH!!!**