

## Devotional, Hebrews 10:19-25

May 17, 2020



We all miss meeting together. These are tough times to be the church. Sundays don't feel the same. But we need to remember that Sundays aren't "church", the people are the church. Not meeting together is perhaps challenging our sense of what it looks like to practice our faith, but it doesn't mean that the church fails to exist.

I've been studying the book of Hebrews in my personal Bible study time and want to share some thoughts on a passage from this book today.

Unlike other New Testament letters, the author of Hebrews does not identify themselves. We also don't really know who the original audience was, as there is no specific group nor even geographic detail mentioned. The name "Hebrews" was attached sometime after it was originally written. What we can know is that the letter or *epistle* was written to the church – whatever their background – and it was written to encourage them to "hold fast" to their faith.

Read Hebrews 10:19-25.

There are three exhortations for the church in today's passage:

- 1) "draw near" (v.22), this is a call to worship; to take full advantage of the privilege of being able to approach the creator of the universe. Jesus is our great High Priest, an intermediary, and has given us direct access to our Heavenly Father.

Paul says that we offer our bodies as living sacrifices, this is our true worship (Romans 12:1). This means that *how I live every day of the week* is worshipping God.

How might this understanding of worship change the way you think about work? About how you spend a "day off"? About daily routines?

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- 2) "hold fast" (v. 23), this theme runs throughout the New Testament. Early Christians knew persecution first-hand, and probably needed all the encouragement they could get to not to give-up their faith.

We may not be facing intense persecution like the early church, but many face challenges to their faith every day. What challenges your faith?

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What steps can you take to encourage yourself to “hold fast”?

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- 3) “consider one another” (v. 24), Jesus said that his disciples would be known by the way they demonstrated love to others. Unity, or harmony, and good deeds were hallmarks of first century believers. In Hebrews, they are encouraged to lift-up one another, do good for one another, and not abandon meeting together.

(note: Context is always important for understanding scripture. “Let us not give up meeting together”, or “let us not forsake assembling” is referring to Christians who had completely abandoned their faith in Jesus and turned-back to Judaism because of persecution. The meaning of this verse does not apply to occasionally missing a Sunday assembly, or services that are temporarily suspended.)

We may not be able to each other in person right now, but that doesn’t negate our obligation as a church family to encourage one another and to help one another any way we can.

How can you demonstrate concern for members of my church family? For neighbors, family, others? List as many ideas as you can, then choose at least two to put into action this week.

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Close with a prayer asking God to help you draw near to Him, to remain faithful through difficult circumstances, and to show you how you can express your love for others through actions.