



**CALVARY**  
TUSCALOOSA

**TEACHING PLAN**  
AUGUST 13, 2017

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HEBREWS 10:19-25

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## PREPARATION

- > Spend the week reading through and studying Hebrews 10:19-25. Consult the commentary provided and any additional study tools (such as a concordance or Bible dictionary) to enhance your preparation.
- > Determine which discussion points and questions will work best with your group.
- > Pray for our pastor, the upcoming group meeting, your teaching, your group members, and their receptivity to the study.

## HIGHLIGHTS

**BIBLICAL EMPHASIS:** Meeting with one another and developing the community of Christ is commanded and commended throughout the Scriptures.

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**TEACHING AIM:** Our devotion to Jesus fuels our devotion to one another.

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**GOSPEL CONNECTION:** John 13:34-35

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## INTRODUCTION

*As your group time begins, use this section to help get the conversation going.*

- 1 What is your favorite hobby? Why do you love it so much?
- 2 How do common interests build community?
- 3 What benefits do you receive when you share your hobby with other people?

### Additional Introduction Option

On a whiteboard or large tear sheet, brainstorm two lists with your group. For the first list, brainstorm all of the benefits of developing community within the church. For the second list, brainstorm stories or passages of Scripture that instruct us to be a part of Christian community. Take the time to discuss each list.

Some experiences just aren't the same when you can't share them with other people. Even those hobbies that we do on our own are not as enjoyable if we can't talk about them with others. Your daily walk with God is one of those things. When the Holy Spirit came upon the disciples at Pentecost, they immediately devoted themselves to doing certain things together: hearing God's Word taught, fellowshiping, praying, and giving generously to one another (Acts 2:42-47). Through the example of the early church, we see that community is absolutely essential both to our individual spiritual growth and the growth of the church. When Christians identify with and commit to the church, they find a source of love, encouragement, and accountability. Without such fellowship, believers would be joyless and ineffective, and the church's mission would stagnate.

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## UNDERSTANDING

*Unpack the biblical text to discover what Scripture says or means about a particular topic.*

> Have a volunteer read Hebrews 10:19-25.

*<sup>19</sup> Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, <sup>20</sup> by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body, <sup>21</sup> and since we have a great priest over the house of God, <sup>22</sup> let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water. <sup>23</sup> Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. <sup>24</sup> And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. <sup>25</sup> Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.*

The Letter to the Hebrews was written to a group of Jewish Christians, possibly in Rome, going through a time of trial. Their circumstances pressing against them, many were tempted to convert back to their old Jewish way of life. The author of Hebrews, unknown to us, wrote to them to explain the superiority of Jesus Christ to all other people or things. In the verses directly before these, the author made a case that Jesus had made a unique, one-time sacrifice that makes us clean and grants us access to God. In these verses, he wrote about how that truth should shape our community with other Christians.

- What is so significant about the statement, “We have confidence to enter the holy places” (v. 19)?

### Confidence (v. 19)

Confidence (*parresia*) also appears in 4:16. It describes boldness gained from our new freedom in relationship to God. Christians can approach God with a freedom of expression and a release from fear. This confidence allows believers to approach God with a hopefulness previously limited to the priests.

- How does your understanding of community change when you think of it as something you gain access to only through Jesus' sacrifice?
- As we seek to live in community with other believers, why must we remember that we are saved by grace through faith and not by our good works?

We are able to enter God's presence only because of the blood of Jesus. In Hebrews 9, Jesus' sacrifice is compared to the high priest who would enter the Tabernacle through the sacrifice of "goats and calves" (9:12). Jesus, in contrast to the high priest, entered the "Tabernacle" and made a "once for all" sacrifice for sins that secured an "eternal redemption" (9:12-13). It is also important to note that Jesus did not merely die to redeem individuals to Himself—He died to redeem to Himself a people, a church. He redeems us to live in community with Him and with one another. When we recognize that it is Jesus, and not our good works, who enables us to enter God's presence, we will see the church as a place where we serve rather than a place we go to be served (Mark 10:45).

- What three commands arise out of having confidence to enter God's presence through the blood of Jesus (vv. 22-24)? Where do you see these commands at work in the people of Calvary?
- If we took these commands seriously, what would change in our lives?

### Curtain (v. 20)

The curtain mentioned here divided the Holy Place of the tabernacle from the Most Holy Place. This curtain symbolized the body or flesh of Christ. The author of Hebrews was probably relating this curtain to the incident in Matthew 27:51, which involved the tearing of the curtain of the Temple at the time of Jesus' crucifixion. This act symbolized the provision of direct access to God because of Jesus' death. The offering of Jesus' body in obedience to God has opened a new and living way to God's presence.

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The writer of Hebrews refers to Jesus as our “great high priest,” meaning that He is the one who has made full atonement for our sins. When we recognize that Jesus shed His blood to restore us to a right relationship with the Father, we will draw near to God (v. 21), “hold unswervingly to the hope we possess” (v. 23), and “consider how we may spur one another on to love and good deeds” (v. 24).

Notes:

Trusting in Christ’s sacrifice on the cross enables us to draw near to God because, through His death and resurrection, Jesus has cleansed us of *all* our sin. This reality allows us to remain firm in our commitment to God, because Christ’s sacrifice was the ultimate act of faithfulness. Finally, Christ’s sacrifice demonstrates the manner in which we are to encourage and serve one another, as Jesus set aside the glory due Him in order to meet our deepest need (Phil. 2:5-11).

- How might participating faithfully in the community at our church and in our group help you more clearly see the areas in your life that need to grow or change?

The writer of Hebrews says, “let us . . .” in each of the three commands that he gives in verses 22-24. This tells us something important about how God intends for us to mature. God saves each of us individually, but He also calls us to grow in community. Our sin nature keeps us from having an accurate view of ourselves, but when we commit to biblical community, we surround ourselves with people who can help us begin to see ourselves the way God sees us. Living in community also helps us see the way we might generously give of ourselves to help others pursue Christ. Our church is a gift from God, which He intends to leverage to help us seek Him, remain firm in Him, and help others seek Him, too.

- What does it look like to “spur one another on to love and good deeds” (vv. 24-25)?
- What are some practical ways that we might demonstrate generosity in the way we live in community with one another?

The writer of Hebrews gives us two ways we might spur each other on to love and good deeds. First, we must not neglect to meet together; second, we must actively encourage one another. In other words, fellowship with believers requires faithful commitment and intentionality. If we hope to cultivate relationships that lead to growth with each other, then we must take the time necessary to build meaningful relationships with one another so that we might learn how to encourage, pray for, and hold each other accountable.

- Why did the writer of Hebrews remind his readers that “the Day” is “drawing near” (v. 25)?
- What is taking place in our world today that causes us to take this seriously?

The “Day” that is drawing near is the return of Christ, which is the foundation of all Christian hope. Together, we should long to see that day come, and when it comes, we want to be found working diligently with our hand to the plow (Luke 9:62). Much about our world and our culture is uncertain, but we have a firm and unshakable hope that Jesus will return and fully redeem a people for Himself. We experience a shadow of that community in the fellowship of believers in the church.

### Spur (v. 24)

Spur (*paroxusmos*) is a word which describes the act of stirring up something. It can be used in the negative sense of stirring up disagreements (see Acts 15:39). Hebrews 10 uses it in the positive sense of urging the readers to consider how they could stimulate their Christian friends to produce love and good deeds. We must make it our object to nudge fellow Christians forward in love, service, and obedience.

### The Day (v. 25)

The New Testament makes many references to the Day of the Lord (1 Thess. 5:2; 2 Pet. 3:10). The term is used here in Hebrews as a reference to a day of reckoning (Rom. 2:16), or the time of Jesus’ return in the second coming. An awareness of the nearness of the time of Jesus’ return would prod Christians to wholehearted obedience (see 2 Pet. 3:11). Knowing that Jesus will return gives believers an eagerness to prepare for him by godly living.

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## APPLICATION

*Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.*

Notes:

- 1 How has your life been blessed by meeting regularly with others in community? Why is this essential for our spiritual health?
- 2 Having studied this passage of Scripture, is there any area where you think we could grow to better love and support one another? What steps can we take to see that growth occur?
- 3 Is there anyone you know who is not connected to this type of community? How can you help them get connected?

## PRAY

Praise God for the community He has established in the church. Ask that Calvary would be a place where people feel welcomed as family and connected to the mission of God.

## MEMORIZE

Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.  
- Hebrews 10:25



## HEBREWS 10:19-25

10:19. We experience Christ's power by drawing near to God, maintaining our faith, and loving other believers. "Therefore" emphasizes that in view of what Jesus has done, believers can approach God with confidence. "Confidence" describes a boldness believers have because of our new relationship to God. "The Most Holy Place" was that part of the sanctuary which symbolized the presence of God. This verse uses the term not for the tabernacle but for the presence of God. All believers can come to God's presence. This privilege is no longer limited to the priesthood. Believers can approach God because of the blood of Jesus. Not animal sacrifice but Jesus' sacrifice of Himself has opened the door. All who have found a new relationship to God through Jesus can experience this privilege.

Notes:

10:20-21. We have the boldness to enter into the holiest place because Jesus has opened for us a new and living way. He serves as our great priest to encourage us to enter God's presence. Christ's way to the Father is new because he opened it by his death. The resurrection of the sacrificed One has made the way living, or effective and enduring. "Curtain" refers to the veil that stood between the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place. In Hebrews it becomes a symbol of Jesus' human life. As a human being, Jesus opened up a new way to God. Jesus presented his human life to God to bring us to him. Jesus' human life and sacrificial death have made the Most Holy Place wide open so believers can enter directly into God's presence. This was part of Jesus' high priestly service.

10:22. We can now approach God and have the mercy and grace of our High Priest standing over us. How? First, we are to come with a sincere heart. This calls for genuine devotion rather than hypocrisy. Second, we are to come in full assurance of faith. This demands a bold confidence that God has

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provided full access to his presence through Christ alone. Third, we are to have our hearts sprinkled from a guilty conscience. This demands constant confession of our sins and openness to God. Finally we are to have our bodies washed with pure water. This may be a reference to baptism as an outward commitment to Christ, or it might be symbolic as is the previous reference to hearts sprinkled with blood. If it is symbolic, the hearts sprinkled from a guilty conscience would picture our salvation, and our bodies washed would symbolize a righteous lifestyle. In this new state of purity made possible by Jesus, believers can come boldly to God and claim his grace and mercy.

Notes:

10:23. This exhortation appeals to us to maintain spiritual consistency. We are urged to hold firmly to the hope we profess. This hope offers glory which beamed more brightly than the glories of the old order. “Unswervingly” denotes an object which stands absolutely straight, not departing from the perpendicular. We are to lay hold of Christ and never let go, even in the slightest. No persecution, real or feared, was to lessen the ardor of these believers for Christ.

10:24-25. This exhortation calls us to responsibility to one another. The appeal to consider demands concentrated attention. The goal of this attention was to spur one another on toward love and good deeds. As Christians we have a corporate responsibility. We must help others who stumble and falter. We must concentrate on the needs of others and not on our individual salvation only. To spur other believers forward in the Christian life, followers of Christ must meet together. Some of the readers of Hebrews were neglecting to meet together for worship, and this limited their ability to give and receive encouragement toward good works. Christians who meet together with the aim of promoting godliness and love for one another can be remarkably successful in their ventures.