

**Let Us Draw Near to God
Hebrews 10:19-22**

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Unfortunately however, there are many born again Christians who are not experiencing this kind of life. Or in other words:

Rather than living joyful lives they are living joyless lives.

Rather than living satisfied lives they are living unsatisfied lives.

Rather than living victorious lives they are living defeated lives.

And why is this? Why are they not experiencing what Christ promised? They are not experiencing what Christ has promised because they are failing to draw near to God or in other words they are failing to live in the presence of God. But all this can quickly change if they would be willing to do what? Draw near to God!

And hopefully this thought will be driven home this morning as we continue in our study of the Book of Hebrews.

So what have we learned so far about this book? The book of Hebrews was written to a group of struggling Hebrew believers, living in Rome, who under a great persecution, were in danger of turning away from Christ and returning back to Judaism.

And how did the author of this book counter this danger? The author countered this danger by focusing on Christ's superiority.

He first of all focused on Christ's superiority to prophets, then to Moses, then to angels and finally he focused on the superiority of Christ's priesthood over all other priesthoods, which concluded with a section that emphasized Christ's superior sacrifice.

So now having just completed this section what will the author do next? The author based on Christ's superior priesthood as well as His superior sacrifice,

will now string together in **Hebrews 10:19-25** three different exhortations. These three exhortations, not only serve as a capstone for what he had just said about Christ's superior priesthood and His superior sacrifice but also as a point of transition from the former doctrinal emphasis of this epistle to a more practical emphasis. So what is the first of these three exhortations?

MESSAGE

The first of these three exhortations is: Let us draw near (Hebrews 10:19-22). So let me now read for you **Hebrews 10:19-22** and see if this is not so: **“Therefore brethren since we (In light of everything that was said to you in Hebrews 5:1-10:18 about Christ's superior priesthood and sacrifice) have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus, (20) by a new and living way which He inaugurated for us through the veil, that is, His flesh, (21) and since we have a great priest over the house of God, (22) LET US DRAW NEAR with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.”**

So based on these verses, and more specifically **verse 22**, what is the first of these three exhortations that this author strung together in **Hebrews 10:19-25**? The answer would be **“Let us draw near.”** This is the first of the three exhortations and this exhortation is the key, not only for receiving life but also for enjoying the abundance of that life.

So as we look at this exhortation for **“us”** to draw near to God in **verse 22**, who are the **“us?”** The **“us”** would have included his readers, those struggling Hebrew Christians that this epistle had been written to, as well as the author himself, and by extrapolation to all believers in general. And who are all Christians being exhorted to draw near to? They are being exhorted to draw near to God or in other words to God the Father. Why?

Just because we, as Christians, may have gained access to God the Father through faith in God the Son or in other words through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, this does not mean that having gained that access that we will from that day forward, be continuously taking advantage of that access. And this should be very apparent to us in light of this exhortation.

So is this the first time that we have seen this exhortation in this epistle? No! We have seen this very same exhortation earlier in **Hebrews 4:16**. So let me read this verse for you and see if this is not so.

And this is what it says, **“Therefore let us (What?) draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in the time of need.”** So based on this verse, had this exhortation to **“draw near”** already appeared in this epistle or in other words prior to **Hebrews 10:22**? Yes! It had. It had already appeared earlier in **Hebrews 4:16**.

The only difference between these two occurrences is that in **Hebrews 4:16** the author took the time to explain why it was so important for truly born again believers to heed this exhortation to draw near. And what was the reason he gave? It was this, **“so that you (or in other words truly born again Christians) may receive mercy and find grace to help in the time of need.”**

And how often are truly born again believers in need of God's grace to live the Christian life as God intended and to experience this life as God intended? We are continuously in need of God's grace but it is also true that there will be certain moments in our lives, such as when we are experiencing a spiritual crisis, such as these readers were experiencing, that the need for God's grace will be particularly critical and what must we do in order to receive this grace when we are in the midst of one of these more critical moments? We must draw near to God. And how should we be drawing near to God in those particular times according to **Hebrews 4:16** as well as **Hebrews 10:19**? We need do be drawing near to God in those particular moments with confidence!

And what should this confidence be based on if we truly are in fact born again Christians? Our confidence should be based on the superior priesthood and sacrifice of Christ, the very priesthood and sacrifice, which this author had just extensively covered in **Hebrews 5:1-10:18**. And this is why it should not be surprising to us that this author placed the first exhortation to draw near to God with confidence just prior to this particular section in **Hebrews 4:16** and the second exhortation to draw near to God with confidence just subsequent to this particular section in **Hebrews 10:19-22**

where the author now succinctly summarizes what he said earlier about Christ's superior priesthood and sacrifice, which will provide this author the opportunity to once again reiterate the basic reasons why any true born again believer can draw near to God with confidence and find the grace that they so desperately need to live the Christian life as it was intended to be lived as well as experienced.

So as we begin to look at this succinct summary, what was the first reason that this author put forward in **verse 19** for why he believed that his readers in the time of their need could draw near to God with confidence?

The first and primary reason why this author believed that his readers could draw near to God with confidence was the "**blood of Jesus**" (Hebrews 10:19 cf. Hebrews 10:4). Let me read for you **verse 19** and see if this is not so, **"Therefore, brethren, since we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus..."**

So based on this verse, was the first and primary reason why this author believed that his readers could draw near to God with confidence or in other words could **"enter the holy place"** with confidence the blood of Jesus? Yes!

Unlike the Levitical priests, Jesus offered His own blood which was a superior sacrifice. And why was His blood a superior sacrifice? The author told us in **Hebrews 10:14**, **"For by one offering (or in other words the blood that Christ shed on the cross of Calvary) he perfected forever those who are sanctified (Or in other words he perfected forever all those who have place their faith and trust in Jesus Christ alone for their salvation)."**

So if we are here today and have placed our faith and trust in Jesus Christ alone for our salvation what can we be confident of? We can be confident of this: We can at any time in our lives draw near to God and receive His grace, knowing that we through faith in Christ have been **"perfected"** or in words have been made **"acceptable"** to God **"forever"** in Christ.

So how did this author describe this way that Christ opened to God through His blood?

Let me now read for you the beginning of **verse 20** and what does it say? It says this, **“by a new and living way...”** So why did this author refer to this way that Christ opened to God through His blood as the **“new and living way?”**

The word “new” (PROSPHATOS) originally meant, “freshly slaughtered.” So how does this help us to understand this phrase? The Levitical priests offered up or in words "slaughtered" the same sacrifices year after year but these various Old Covenant slaughtered sacrifices did not open up a way to God or in other words to "life." But Christ's sacrifice, the **"new"** or in other words the **“freshly slaughtered sacrifice”** did open up a way to God and therefore to life. And this is why this author referred to this pathway that was opened to God through Christ's superior blood sacrifice as the **“new and living way.”**

So what else did this author tell us about this way that has been opened up to God through Christ's superior blood sacrifice?

He also told us according to **verse 20** that this **“new and living”** way **“was inaugurated for us through the veil, that is His flesh.”** So what does this mean?

This is what I believe it means: The veil was a reference to the literal veil in the Old Covenant tabernacle that separated the people of God from the presence of God and in this verse this author is comparing Christ's flesh to that Old Covenant tabernacle veil; not His dead flesh but His living flesh, for as long as Christ's flesh was living or was in essence was still intact, people would be blocked from entering the presence of God, just as the priests of Israel representing the people of Israel were blocked by the veil in the Old Covenant Tabernacle that separated the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies where the presence of God was visibly manifested.

But when Christ's flesh was torn through crucifixion and He died, His flesh or in other words His living flesh no longer acted like a veil to keep people from God. The tearing of the veil of Christ's flesh so that a way to God could be opened was dramatically portrayed for us in **Matthew 27:51** when at the death of Christ the veil in the temple was torn into two pieces from top to bottom.

So what was the first and primary reason why this author believed that his readers could draw near to God with confidence? The first reason and primary reason why this author believed that his readers could draw near to God with confidence was the “**blood of Jesus**” or in other words we could say the death of Jesus.

So what was the second reason why this author believed that his readers could draw near to God with confidence? The second reason why this author believed that his readers could draw near to God with confidence was because of their **great high priest** (Hebrews 10:21 cf. Hebrews 7:28). This was made clear to us in **verse 21**. Let me now read this verse or you. And what does it say? It says this, “**and since we have a great priest over the house of God...**”

Do we have a great high priest that serves over the house of God? Absolutely! This was very much detailed for us already in **Hebrews 3:1-6** when this author made the point that though Moses was faithful “**in the House of God**” Christ was faithful “**over the House of God.**” This of course puts Christ our great high priest in a position of power and authority.

This means that if we have accepted Christ by grace through faith as our Lord and Savior and we are now a part of His house of which He is over, then we need to do what He wants us to do. And what did this author believe that Christ our great high priest would want us to do based on this twice-repeated exhortation? Obviously, this author based on this twice-repeated exhortation believed that Christ would want us to draw near to His Father with confidence so that we might receive the grace to live the Christian life and to experience the Christian life as God intended, which of course would be what kind of life? It would be an abundant life.

So can we based on the death of Jesus, symbolized by Christ's shed blood and the crucifixion of His fleshly body and also based on our great high priest's desire for us, as those under His charge to draw near to God, actually draw near to God with **confidence**? Absolutely!

But this confident approach is conditioned on something very important based on **verse 22**. Those seeking to draw near to God need a **sincere heart** (Hebrews 10:22). So what does this mean?

The word “sincere” (ALETHINE) speaks of a heart that is “real, genuine, loyal” therefore if we draw near to God we must do so with hearts genuinely **committed** to Him.

Yes, there is a way that Christ has opened for us to God through His shed blood and through His crucified flesh and Christ, our great heavenly high priest, very much wants us to take advantage of what He has done for us but this should not communicate to us that we can enter His Father's presence unbowed or in other words while we are still serving other masters.

We must turn away from all other masters so that we might be bowed before God and God alone.

And in order to do this bowing something else needs to be present in conjunction with it. So what is this something else? This something else is also made clear to us at the beginning of **verse 22**.

Those seeking to draw near to God also need to do so in **full assurance of faith** (Hebrews 10:22). So what does this mean? Isn't this exactly what the beginning of **verse 22** tells us, "**Let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith...**"

The word translated “full assurance” (PLEROPHORIA) can also be translated “full conviction” or “full certainty.”

Bowing before God and doing so in full assurance of faith are two sides of the same coin. We can't do one without the other.

But both are certainly both within our reach. How do we do this? Let us continue to read **verse 22**, “**having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.**” So what does this mean?

Both terms having our “**hearts sprinkled**” as well as our “**bodies washed**” must be understood against the backdrop of the Old Covenant purification rituals which ultimately, in this context, must be seen as pointing to Christ's sacrifice with its far better and eternal effects, which we in fact experienced when we have true genuine faith in Christ. Thus making the drawing near to

God in confidence with sincere hearts in full assurance of faith well within our reach. All we have to do is decide to do it.

CONCLUSION

Christ in **John 10:10** told a group of Jewish listeners that He had come to give life and life abundant. And this is the truth. So therefore if we accept Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior, by grace through faith, this is exactly what we should expect, not just life but an abundant life.

Unfortunately however, there are many born again Christians who are not experiencing this kind of life. Or in other words:

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And why is this? Why are they not experiencing what Christ promised? They are not experiencing what Christ has promised because they are failing to draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith.

So where are we living this morning? Are we with a sincere heart and full-assurance of faith living in the presence of God? If we are what will we be experiencing? As far as we know we will be living a life pleasing to God in every respect avoiding those things we believe He does not want us to do and pursuing those things we believe He wants us to do.

And what will be the by-product of this? We will find ourselves living the life He promised as we are filled with the abundance of His life.

May we choose to continually and confidently **draw near** to God so that we through His grace might live a life pleasing to Him and filled with His abundance.