

Hebrews 10: 19-25

I don't know what kind of morning that you had as you prepared to go to church. I know that in my family many times Sunday mornings can be a time of crisis. Of all mornings of the week - things can tend to go badly. It is the morning that the breakfast gets burnt, you can't find your Sunday jacket, someone in the family wakes up deathly ill. It is the morning that you are at odds with(与...争吵) your spouse. Many times you arrive at church feeling frazzled (疲惫的) and tired - and NOT very prepared to worship. I am convinced that Satan works overtime to try and discourage us from worshipping on Sundays!

Our passage this morning speaks about the importance of worshipping together as God's people. VERSE 25 says →*Let us not forsake the assembling of ourselves together as is the manner of some.*

Evidently in the time of the NT this was already a problem in the early church.

- There were those who were not doing this. They were becoming spiritually lazy.
- In the verses immediately following - in verse 26 and following we see one of the strongest warnings in Scripture about . READ 26. When we harden in our sin.
- When reject God's call. When we don't see the need for the institution of the church - there will be serious consequence

If you are a professing Christian - you need other Christians for your own spiritual good.

- You need to interact with those who think and believe and live like you. You need to be a part of a church AND you need to attend that church REGULARLY.
- You can't live as an island. Because the reality is you can't survive on your own.

When you look at the statistics (统计数据)

of church attendance in NA today.... there are a lot of people who are evidently feeling discouraged about going to church.

- Over 40% of people in the States claim to be churchgoers (down from over 60%) less than 20 years ago.
- But the reality is that less than 20% actually go regularly.
- One report - a poll was done of pastors and they said that between 40-60% of their members actually show up regularly to church activities.

So the question that I want to look at with you today is this - WHY is coming together as GOD's people so essential for the Christian?

2 Things

- 1) The reason that we worship God
- 2) The purpose that God has for us in worship.

When we go back to the beginning of this chapter we see that the discussion is about the place of animal sacrifices (献祭) in the OT. You may know that the whole of the book of Hebrews explains the relation b/w the OT and NT. The relation between the sacrificial system and the sacrifice of Christ on the cross. Chapter 10:1-4 says: READ

The rest of the chapter continues to explain this - that not only was it not possible for the price of sin to be paid, but all those sacrifices were looking forward to JC -Right?

This is what JC accomplished on the cross in His death. He paid the price for OUR sins - your sins and mine. Those sacrifices that were repeated time after time throughout the OT- they were just shadows of the things that were to come. The people of God were looking forward to what Christ would do. (Even if they didn't fully understand it) They know that a Saviour was coming who WOULD come and save his people from their sins.

When we come to verse 19 we see the result of what Christ has done, when it comes to our relationship and worship of GOD. It says - we have BOLDNESS. (Now boldness can be a good thing and it can be a bad thing right....explain)

→READ19

--here it is explaining that we can be bold - but for a particular reason.

Children, you remember what the holy of holies was right? (inner sanctuary, high priest, once a year) **What happened when Christ died on the cross?** (top to bottom,

Now, we can all go into God's very presence - with CONFIDENCE. **Heb 4:16** says: *Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace that we may obtain mercy and find grace.*

EG/ Justin Trudeau is our prime minister. Now kids if I were to decide one day...I want to see the Prime Minister....I have something to talk with him about....

This the amazing thing about our relationship with God →we don't need to be afraid to go into his presence.

--We don't need to be timid. We don't need to wonder if God will accept us. --We know that HE WILL.

--We know that Christ has paid the price for our sins....

That is the reason that we worship as God's people.

--If God has done all that for us of course we want to go to him.

--We want to be in His presence. We want to feel his nearness.

--We want to praise him for all that he has done for us!!!

--We to be close to the God that we love

Psalm 84 - *"My soul longs, yes even faints for the courts of the Lord. My flesh and my heart cry out for the living God"*

This is what verse 21&22 says so beautifully. →READ

--There are two reasons we have assurance (确据)

1) Because of the work of JC on the cross

2) Because JC is our great high priest (intercessor 代求者, cares for the church)

[Sometimes what can happen is that we begin to forget this. You have heard the phrase "familiarity breeds contempt" (熟识导致相互轻视 , 日久生厌). (sometimes this can happen in the church)]

When we come to church on Sundays and meet together as God's people we are entering the presence of God....

The thing that we don't want to forget is who it is that we coming to meet with.

- He is the ALL-POWERFUL.... ALL-KNOWING... creator of the universe.
- It is HE who is calling us into his presence....inviting us....
- To come to know him more intimately...
- That is something that we can take for granted. What a great and amazing privilege that is!!

(so this - first of all - is the reason that we worship - that we desire to come into God's presence- because of the work of Christ in our lives)

The SECOND thing (that I want you to see) is the purpose that God has for us to meet together as His people in worship.

→READ vs 23

Every true believer feels this way doesn't he?

--He wants to hold fast...he wants to be faithful to this hope... to run the race...

--he doesn't want to throw in the towel 认输... shipwreck...

--God IS faithful. (that is a wonderful truth on which to build our lives)

What does that tangibly look like? How can this be accomplished?

--B & S - God does not talk in abstracts...

--he doesn't leave us on our own...he gives us others to help us in living for his glory.

--look at verse 24 →READ

It is a little confusing the way this is translated. (NIV - better **24** And let us consider how we may spur one another on 相互激励 toward love and good deeds)

--as one comes to be a part of a church...

--what happens? These aren't just folks that you sit beside....superficial

--they become your friends...people that you care about...have your back...

--EG/ Mexico "You care about people"

This why the concept of the "family of God" is so beautiful!

--the X wants the best for his brother...see him grow...

--he will spur him on....in a healthy church that is what happens....

--"TIGHT" - people who know you well enough to speak into your life.

--sharpen you to do better (love and good works)

Verse 24 says we are not to neglect worshipping together...BUT to exhort one another...

--One commentator said of this verse "One of the first indications of a lack of love toward God is for a Christian to stay away from worship services. He forsakes the communal obligations of attending these meetings and displays the symptoms of selfishness and self-centredness.

--I don't know about you, but MANY people have said to me....

What happens when we stop going to church?

1) We stop hearing the exhortation of God (through the preaching of the Word).

- Even though it doesn't directly mention what goes on...clear from other Scripture
- God speaks to us...we need that....

2) We don't have the benefit of worshipping with God's people.

- Singing, and prayer are also a part...
- Edifying to the soul - given for our good..

3) We remove ourselves from the God given protection of being a part of the body of Christ.

- As I mentioned at the outset (开始) ...God has not created us to live in isolation
- When we step outside of God's covenant people....we have no one to watch our back...
- Openly rejecting the place of God's security and safeguard...(us and our family)

B&S....When a person arrives at that point → You know what has happened???

- That person has lost site of the very reason for his/her existence...
- He has forgotten about.... "THAT..... DAY....."
- It says "We are to exhort each other -AND SO MUCH THE MORE, as you see that day approaching."

One day JC is going to return on the clouds of glory...both as a KING and as a JUDGE.

--those who are not his children from those who are not....

--those who love Jesus Christ from those who do not...

--those who loved to worship with God's people from those who do not...

For those whom Christ will judge....(books opened) it will be a day of weeping and sadness....

But for those who love Christ...who love to worship him....WHAT A DAY it will be!!!

- Heb. 9:28→ "bring salvation to those who are eagerly waiting for him."

It will be a day →when we will see our Saviour face to face.....

→ When we will worship in absolute perfection..... (no fights, problems☺)

→ When we will sing at the top of our lungs...harmony

→ where we will be surrounded not by, 100, 1000, millions....

→ We will be a part of THAT GREAT ASSEMBLY.

Let me ask you....Are you looking forward to that day? (Because at times we can lose sight of it can't we. Of what heaven is going to be like?)

EG/ Book - "Forever...why you can't live without it" That is the whole theme.....

As we close this _____ Let me say this to you simply.

Make church a priority - Enjoy the worship of your God with all the saints → for it is there that we are given a taste of what awaits us in all of eternity.

LETS CLOSE IN A WORD OF PRAYER