This Is How We Finish the Race January 3, 2021

*Hebrews 10:19-25*

Community ... means people who have to learn how to care for each other. – Eugene Peterson

Intro: Many are sitting out this race.

1. Draw near to God in confidence because the door is open
2. Sin had closed God’s door

v. 20 *through the curtain*

Hebrews 9:3 *Behind the second curtain was a second section called the Most Holy Place …*

1. Jesus opened the door

v. 20 *by the new and living way that he opened for us*

v. 20 *through the curtain, that is, through his flesh*

v. 21 *we have a great priest over the house of God*

1. Go to God in confidence because of Jesus

v. 19 *we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus*

v. 22 *draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith*

v. 22 *with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water*

* How surprised are you to hear that almost 1 in 5 practicing Christians haven’t ‘attended church’ in-person or digitally since the pandemic began? What do you think the reasons might be?
* Why were the Jewish Christians addressed in this passage tempted to pull back from Christian fellowship?
* Why was it important for them to remember their “confidence”? Why is it important for us?

1. Hold fast to God in hope because Jesus is faithful
2. This isn’t it yet

v. 23 *Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering …*

1 Corinthians 15:19 *If in Christ we have hope in this life only, we are of all people most to be pitied.*

Romans 8:24 *For in this hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees?*

1. Jesus’ faithfulness fuels our hope

v. 23 *for he who promised is faithful*

Hebrews 11:11 *By faith Sarah herself received power to conceive, even when she was past the age, since she considered him faithful who had promised.*

* Why is hope crucial to a Christian’s contentment?
* What gives you hope when life is hard?
* How does Jesus’ faithfulness fuel our hope?
* What convinces you that Jesus is faithful?

1. Encourage one another in love because time is short
2. Meeting together has always been a priority of God’s people

v. 25 *not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some*

1. Meeting together is more than just sitting together

v. 24 *let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works*

v. 25 *but encouraging one another*

Hebrews 3:13-14 *But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called “today,” that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. For we have come to share in Christ, if indeed we hold our original confidence firm to the end.*

1. The Day is drawing near

v. 25 *all the more as you see the Day drawing near*

* Tuning in to “Home Worship” isn’t the same as attending a worship service. What makes it hard for you? What have you found has helped make the most of it for you?
* What do you think we’re being asked to do when it says, “consider how to stir up one another to love and good works”? When have you ever done something like that?
* When did church first become more than ‘attendance’ to you?
* What are some ways that you see this encourage-one-another dynamic in your group?
* What are some ways that we could encourage others outside of the group?

Study ahead: Next week, we’ll study Psalm 57.

Notes