



Grace and Determination – Part 1

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Hebrews 10:19-25

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¹⁹ Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, ²⁰ by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh, ²¹ and since we have a great priest over the house of God, ²² let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. ²³ Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. ²⁴ And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, ²⁵ not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

(Pastor prays)

What do you do when you feel like you're at the end of your rope? What do you do when what you have tried has failed miserably, maybe even publicly? What do you do when there's a fog in front of you and you're not exactly sure you can see a way forward? I think this text speaks to that, to a re-calibrating, a re-dreaming of the future that God has laid out for you! In front of us is one long sentence in Greek as the preacher calls and encourages his people to hang onto grace and a determination to get up.

He's given us almost 10 chapters of Christian apologetics, telling us why Christ is better and the reasons we should be joyfully satisfied in the Lord. And in Chapter 10:9, he turns the corner. See that word "therefore." And in the rest of

this passage he's going to tell us what to do with what we already know to be true. How do we take our Christianity and live joyfully in a world that is so hard and flawed and sad? How do we take the power of the cross and resurrection and turn it into true joy in the life we live right now? I think it's grace and determination. Today I'm going to ask you to...

Soak Up God's Grace and Live with Determination

I have two points, two sermons, and one builds on the other. The first one is foundational and the second one is practical.

Don't forget you are part of a family

Let's look at verse 19. *Therefore, brothers.* These are brothers and sisters in the same family. They are bound together by the blood of Jesus at the cross. They are equally forgiven and joyfully brought together as a church. They are partners in the same enterprise of worship, sanctification and mission. They are soldiers in the same army, fighting sin and not each other. They are players on the same team, musicians in the same orchestra, part of the same band. They are singing in the same choir, rowing the same boat. God has given you a family to care for, to love, to extend grace to and to support. He has given you a family to pray for flourishing, to celebrate with when things are good, and to walk beside when things are bad, and to always bring each other to the healing, saving cross of Christ. Don't forget you are part of a family.

Don't forget the freedom of being in Christ

Let's go back to verse 19: *since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus.* Jesus, now we are getting into the very heart of Christianity. Take the sentence in verse 19 and work backward. By the blood of Jesus at the cross. We cannot lose blood language in Christianity. It is the very blood of Jesus that separates the sheep from the goats, the saved from the lost and the living from the dead. It is the bloody death of Jesus in our place, as our substitute, that grants us the right to enter the holy place with

confidence or boldness, without shame or qualm, fear or boredom. This truth is what prompted the depressive William Cowper to write, “there is a fountain filled with blood drawn from Emanuel’s veins, and sinners plunged beneath that flood lose all their guilty stains.” The blood of Jesus grants us the right to enter the holy place without guilt or hindrance because of what Christ has done. You have the grace-given right to go to God with whatever you have and to be strengthened for the task at hand. Don’t forget you are part of a family. Don’t forget the freedom of being in Christ.

Don’t forget the miracle of grace

Let’s read verse 20 together. ²⁰*by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh.* Again, take this sentence backward. Read it from left to right but let’s interpret it from right to left. Through His flesh He opened for us through the curtain by the new and living way. Through the curtain, that is through His flesh. The writer takes the two cataclysmic events that happened simultaneously and brings them together to show us the power of God in salvation. Through His flesh. That is Jesus on the cross with His hands and feet nailed and the soldier piercing His flesh with the sword so that the blood and water came out. Jesus cries out, it is finished” and the veil in the temple is separated and the walled off section of the presence of God was torn from top to bottom.

This is more than the Berlin Wall coming down. This is free and complete access to God through the cross of Jesus. The curtain being torn, and His flesh being pierced have created for us a new and living way He opened for us. This is grace. Isn’t this what John says in John 14:6 when Jesus said to doubting Thomas, “*I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the father except through me*” or said another way, free access to God almighty is given to all who will enter the new and living way in Jesus.

Here is a good place to explain the Gospel in explicit terms.

The Bible teaches that God is a holy creator and created all of us in His image. You are created in the image of God. It’s why you deserve respect and have

dignity. But the image of God in you has been disfigured by sin. Sin hasn't just made it so that you sort of strayed far away from God. Our sin makes it so that we are enemies of God and are under condemnation. The Bible says we're dead in sin and we are so separated from God that what we all deserve is the wrath of God. That's what the Bible teaches. But God is not just judging, God is love. God loves us in such a way that He sends Jesus, fully God and fully man. He lives the perfect life in the way that we can't. He keeps all the commandments and fulfills all the law and earns righteousness. Then, here comes the great exchange: He goes to the cross. Why did He die on the cross? At the cross, God takes the wrath that He has saved for sinners and put every bit of the punishment that you deserve on Jesus. And, at the cross, Jesus gives you His righteousness! So when God looks at you, He sees the perfection of His son Jesus. So, if you will receive Christ, that is how you're saved. Don't forget this miracle of grace and one more way to draw strength from God.

Don't forget God is in control

Since we have a great priest over the House of God this little burst right here gives me tremendous peace of mind. It even gives me real hope in this world. Take a look at it with me in verse 21. *21 and since we have a great priest over the house of God.* Great priest. We have talked a lot about that. I want you to see what this great priest does and is doing. He is over the House of God. It is a household, a family, it's the church and church members, it's me and you. Here is the lordship of Jesus, Christ over His church. Here is the headship of Jesus Christ to this family. Here is the kingship over His realm and His congregation. And as the king He wields the scepter and the sword at His own discretion and according to His own pleasure. I want you to think deeply with me on this. I have really been encouraged by this verse this week. I want to explain it by giving four words to help us drill down on this one verse's meaning. If you are His, this promise is yours.

Here is the first word. **Sovereign.** He is over-ruling. He is directing your path. He is healing your pain and forgiving your sin. He isn't writing your story right

now; He has written it before time immemorial. Isn't that what Paul meant in Ephesians 2:10? *For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.* He has this church generally and you specifically right where He wants you for His own good pleasure and glory and for your flourishing. Get sovereignty in your mind and heart and vocabulary.

Salvation. He is a great priest over the House of God; the church, church members, you and me. This is for everyone who struggles with doubt. If you are not sure you are saved let me tell you what Jesus said about saving you in John 6:37. *All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out.* One of the ways Jesus describes His followers is as a gift from God that He will hold forever. It's even the way salvation is depicted in verse 20: Jesus is the new and living way that He opened for us.

Sanctification. If you are His then you are truly His possession and, as His bought possession, He is using every single event, thing, person, pain, frustration, failure and every offense against you. He is using every dark night and every panic attack. God is using that to sand you down and smooth you out and polish you up in order to present us to God or as Paul says in Ephesians 5:27, *so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish.* God is not done with you as He uses the bad week you had last week to humble your heart before Him so that you might be without blemish. Sovereignty. Salvation. Sanctification.

Security and safety. Here is the House of God, the people of God, secure and safe. There is a general sense of dread about the world as it is right now especially for Christians. But that is nothing new. Persecution and exclusion and ridicule and being maligned and misunderstood, that's home for us. That's a natural thing. The world is dark but light shines in the darkness. We are told to let our light shine before people in such a way that they will see our life and give glory to our father in heaven. What did he say? "In this world you have many troubles, take heart, I have overcome the world."

Let's end our time with a prayer and invitation to soak up God's grace and live with determination. Don't forget you are part of a family. Don't forget the freedom of being in Christ. Don't forget the miracle of grace. Don't forget God is in control.

(Pastor prays)