"CHRISTIAN ESSENTIALS"

(New Testament Necessities)

Hebrews 10:19-25

6/30/04

Introduction:

***Let us not neglect our New Covenant Essentials of the Christian life.**

I. *"Let us <u>draw near</u>"*

in _____GOD IN_____ (v. 19-22)

II. *"Let us <u>hold fast</u>"*

in _____OF_____ (v. 23)

III. *"Let us <u>consider one another</u>"*

in _____WITH THE_____ (v. 24-25)

Conclusion:

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Introduction:

Some things are <u>essentials</u> in life.

V. 19

"Therefore" - The Lord now makes a practical application based on previously stated truth and precious promises.

In Verses 22-24, the writer of Hebrews uses three cohortatory subjunctive verbs (with imperatival force) to rouse believers to action.

Note: The three-fold repetition of the phrase ***"<u>Let us</u>"*** (v. 22, 23, 24). (Whether or not you like salad, this is the "lettuce" passage of God's Word!)

***Let us not neglect our New Covenant Essentials of the Christian life.**

I. *"Let us <u>draw near</u>"*
in <u>APPROACHING GOD IN PRAYER</u> (v. 19-22)

V. 19

"Brethren" - <u>Believers</u> qualify to approach God.

"Boldness" = confidence, assurance that something is okay (permissible).

EX: The kings of the Old Testament could not be approached without being summoned (EX: King Ahasuerus & Esther).

Even today, one cannot gain audience with a president, prime minister, or king without an invitation or special permission. Yet we have the awesome privilege of going to the King of kings and Lord of lords any time, anywhere, under any circumstances, with any burden, with any request.

"The holiest" - "the innermost sanctuary of the Holy of holies into which, under the old dispensation, the people were forbidden to enter." (Rienecker, p. 702).

What gives us the right to approach God with such boldness? We can approach God's Holy throne because:

1.Christ shed his ***"blood"*** (v. 19)

2.Christ is the ***"veil"*** (we go through) (v. 20)

3.Christ is our ***"High Priest"*** (v. 21)

4.Christ has cleansed us (purified us) (v. 22)

Note: Four key elements were connected to entering the Old Testament Holy of Holies --

1) sacrificial blood; 2) the veil of the temple 3) one High Priest
4) a ceremonial cleansing

Just as the High Priest could not enter the Holy of Holies without a blood sacrifice (which he would sprinkle on the mercy seat), so our Savior entered Heaven having shed His blood. Because of His blood, we have access to the throne room of God.

V. 20

"New" **-** fresh, not old and stale

"Living" **-** not dead and ritualistic (fellowship is with a living person)

"Consecrated" **-** dedicated (EX: how Solomon inaugurated the Old Testament temple with sacrifices)

Just as the Old Testament High Priest had to walk through a curtain to approach God, so we have to go through a person to approach God. This person is Jesus Christ; who allowed his flesh to be ripped open at Calvary, to obtain our access into God's presence. Now we pray "in the name of Christ" - we approach God through Him.

V. 21

"An high Priest" **=** singular; our only mediator (I Tim. 2:5)

"Over the house of God" **-** Jesus is in charge; in command of Heaven.

V. 22

"Draw near" **-** to come close; to approach (cp. Heb. 4:16).

"With a true heart" **-** with sincere motives; without pretention; religious hypocrisy.

When you pray, don't impress God with your ornate prayers ("thee's" and "thou's")

Talk to Him with a genuine heart.

"In full assurance" - the key krux of the book of Hebrews surrounds the <u>assurance</u> or <u>confidence</u> believers can have in the sufficient person and work of Jesus Christ (who is "better" than what the Old Testament offered).

"Hearts sprinkled" - something the Old Testament hyssop sprinklings of blood could not do. Those sprinklings never could reach the heart.

"Bodies washed" - Alluding to the Old Testament ceremonial washings for purification.

*Both inside (heart) and outside (bodies) have been cleansed by God.

II. *"Let us <u>hold fast</u>"*
in <u>ASSURANCE OF SALVATION</u> (v. 23)

"Hold fast" - to <u>tightly cling</u> to God's promises.

"Profession" - *homologia* - to confess or agree with God.

To say the same thing in your heart that God says in His Word.

Salvation involves not mere lip profession, but inner agreement with God - "You said it, I agree with it, and that settles it!"

"Without wavering" - to not swerve or drift of the course.

To not veer off in our confidence, but to stay right on track.

"For he is faithful" - our security is solely based on God's faithfulness to His promises. What He promises, He performs (Rom. 4:21).

Definition: The Hebrew word for faithfulness literally refers to the firmness or stability of God. The Greek word means to be trustworthy; believable; reliable; dependable.

God's faithfulness is an extension of His truthfulness. It is called "transitive truth". In the same way that God's righteousness is His holiness in action, God's faithfulness is His truthfulness in action.

When we say God is faithful, we are saying "God is worthy of my faith" or "I can have full faith in

Him."

The Bible describes God as a God of trustworthiness.

"He abideth faithful" (II Tim. 2:13); "He cannot lie" (Tit. 1:2); and "His Word is truth" (Jn. 17:17).

Paul had confidence in the trustworthiness of God when he said to Timothy "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I've committed unto Him against that day" (II Tim. 1:12).

Assurance is as simple as 1, 2, 3!

1.I am saved because I BELIEVE
(Acts 16:31; John 3:16, 36; 5:24; 6:37)

2.I am safe because of the BLOOD
(Heb. 9:22-28; 10:10-14)

3.I am sure because of the BOOK
(Titus 1:2; I Jn. 5:13; II Tim. 3:15-16)

Many times we trust man more than God!
We trust forecasters to predict accurately.
We trust airplanes not to crash.
We trust elevator cables not to snap
We trust social security to provide for retirement.
We trust the U.S. military to protect our country.

"The Lord . . . forsaketh not His saints; they are preserved forever" (Ps. 37:28).

(1)God's salvation comes with an irrevocable promise - Titus 1:2 - "In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began;" (cp. Heb. 6:12-20).

(2)God's salvation comes with an unconditional guarantee - I Cor. 1:8, 9 (v. 8 - "confirm" = guarantee).

God does not say, "I will keep you saved if you do . . ." Our security is not dependent upon our faithfulness to Him (this would be works salvation) but on His faithfulness to us.

Some might twist this blessed truth, to then say: "This means I can live anyway I want." No.

Because God is faithful to us (since we are His children by the new birth), He will be faithful in disciplining us (heb. 12) so that we will not be able to live anyway we want. Also, because of what He did for us, we will not want to live anyway we want.

Unlike the unfaithfulness prevalent (in marriages etc) in our society today, God will never be unfaithful to His Bride. He promises, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee" (Heb. 13:5).

Do you have on the "helmet of salvation"? Knowing you are saved is a vital prerequisite to victorious

living!

Our "Knowing" is based primarily on God's promises

Did you:
"receive" [Jn. 1:12]
"believe" [Jn. 3:16; Acts 16:31]
"come" [Jn. 6:37]
"call" [Rom. 10:13]

III. *"Let us consider one another"*
in ASSEMBLING WITH THE SAINTS (v. 24-25)

"Consider" = to pay careful attention to one another; to focus our thoughts on the needs of others; to take interest in one another; being thoughtful or considerate of others is the idea.

"To provoke" - a strong word, meaning to incite (EX; of a mob); to spur on (EX: of a horse); to stimulate a response; to stir up to action; to irritate; to push someone or practically compel them into doing something.

NOTE: The word order is not "good works and love" but "love and good works." Why? Because good works flow out of an attitude of love. Love is the motivation to good works.

"To love" - an agape love toward God and man (Mt. 22:37-39); having such love will fulfill every law! (v. 40 - cp. Rom. 13:8 ["Owe no man anything, but to love on another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law"]; and Gal. 5:14 ["For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself"]).
True love may confront and love may rebuke, but true love never neglects.

--Passive Christianity is unBiblical!

--Laissez faire ("hands off") Christianity is sin!

--Being an isolationist, or spiritual hermit or monk is a violation of Heb. 10:24
After the exhortation of V. 24, the question now is: "How can we provoke one another?" "In what setting does this mutual encouragement take place?"

Answer: In the assembly (v. 25)

When a believer becomes lax in his assembling with God's people, other believers are to speak to him about it and provoke him to do what is right.

A.We have an important WARNING to assemble (v. 25a)

"Forsake" = to leave behind; to neglect something or forget about it.

Just as Christ will never abandon His bride (Heb. 13:5), so we should never abandon our brothers.

To forsake the assembly is to be inconsiderate of others (Note: the participle *"not forsaking"* is modifying the verb consider [v. 24]).

"The assembling" = the gathering together ("epi-sunagoga"). This word points to a specific gathering; and an organized gathering.

"As the manner of some is" - Skipping church is not merely a contemporary problem, but has been a frustration to pastors throughout church history.

"Manner" = habit or custom, a pattern of life

"Of some" = thank God not every believer has this problem; just "some"

The best habit any believer could have is to be faithful to at least each of the main services of their church.

Why do people forsake the assembly?

1.Because they are not saved

I Jn. 2:19 - "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us."

2.Because of sin

a.Laziness
b.Worldliness
c.Embarrassment (to face their friends after they became unfaithful)
d.Because of ignorance (of the importance of church attendance or of God's command)

A Christian who says he worships God every Sunday morning on the golf course is really worshipping golf on God's course!

Prepare for Sunday on Saturday. Beware: the devil begins working on Saturday to disrupt your Sunday!

Excuses that keep believers from church:
1.Headaches, muscle aches (SEE: Green ILL. #171)
2.Visitors at home
3.Inadequate clothing
4.Common colds
5. The weather (too cold, hot, rainy)
6.Too tired
7.Children have the sniffles

Let's declare next Sunday a "No-excuse-to-stay-home" Sunday!

What do you miss when you miss?
--You miss out on perhaps hearing the very message you needed to hear

--You miss out on being a blessing to someone else, by your words of encouragement or by simply the encouragement that your presence brings (ILLUS: the Empty Restaurant)

Never minimize the importance of your presence
Ask yourself, "Is my example of faithfulness to my Christian brothers a stepping stone, or a stumbling block?"

B.We have an important REASON to assemble (v. 25b)

"Exhorting" - a word intended to convey the opposite of forsaking. Rather than forsaking one another, we should be exhorting one another.

The main purpose of church is exhortation! That is, encouragement and comfort that comes from the public preaching of God's Word!

Such exhortation is God's way of equipping each church member to serve Him (SEE: Eph. 4:11-12)

"Most people think of the church as a drama, with the minister as the chief actor, God as the prompter, and the laity as the critic. What is actually the case is that the congregation is the chief actor, the minister is the prompter, and God is the critic" (James Kennedy).

We all need exhortation! Heb. 3:13 - "But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin."

"It is interesting to note that the emphasis here is not on what a believer gets from the assembly, but rather on what he can contribute (give) to the assembly" (Wiersbe, p. 115)

So many people today are not looking for a place to serve but for a place to be served.

There is strength in knowing we are not alone. We have the greatest support group available! We are a co-dependent and unified body!

C.We have an important TIME to assemble (v. 25c)

"And so much the more" = And all the more

The Lord is telling us that assembling will be all the more important, as ye see the day approaching.

What is meant by the phrase ***"the Day?"***

ANSWER: "The Day of the Lord"

The phrase "the day" is a technical phrase when it occurs without an antecedent, pointing to a most momentous Day; a great and awesome Day; a vitally important Day - namely, The Day of Christ's return (Rapture) and the wrath of God which follows.

"The Day" = the Day of Christ's return (SEE: heb. 10:37)

Rom. 13:11-12 - *"And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light."*

II Thes. 2:2 - *"That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand."*

Phil. 1:6, 10; 2:16 - *"Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ" . . . That ye may approve things that are excellent, that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ . . . Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice int eh day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither labored in vain."*

"Ye see the day approaching" - The mention of us "seeing" the time of Christ's return drawing near is indicative of the fact that there will be clear, visible indications that Christ's coming is near; yea, even prophetic fulfillments which will precede the Day of the Rapture.

SEE: II Thes. 2:1-3. Two definite signs that will transpire before the Day of Christ are:

1)Apostasy (v. 3a; cp. I Tim. 4:1_

II Tim. 3:1-4 - "But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God"

2)Antichrist's appearance (v. 3b)

If there was ever a time when assembling together was important, it is today! The day is approaching! Apostasy is on the horizon; the greatest onslaught of the devil's deceit and destruction is yet ahead. You need to learn God's Word! Be faithful to its proclamation. Arm yourself for what lies ahead!

ILLUS: of the fireplace (Green #170)