

Making much of Jesus

present-day lessons from the letter to the Hebrews

Although written to Jews who had trusted in Jesus, and although drawing regularly on Old Testament references, the letter to the Hebrews has a very pressing contemporary significance.

This series of studies is intended to stir in our hearts both a deepening delight and a growing confidence in all that Jesus is and has done, imparting to us the fortitude and strength we need to serve Him faithfully in today's world.

You can find the background to this short series [here](#).

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12. Confidence (Heb.10.19-39)

[w/b Sunday 17th November 2019]

“.. spur one another on ..”

The writer moves at this point into the final stage of his letter with a series of exhortations addressed to his readers. In all that he has been explaining his intent has been to buttress his readers' confidence in God, so that they press on in their faith.

As the introduction to this final section of the letter the writer therefore first summarises the truths he's been expounding, and then translates them into 3 basic exhortations.

[Before attending your Community Group try to consider all 7 questions - even though your Group may not have time for them all. Key questions in this study are probably 3, 5 and 7. As always try to leave good time for shared prayer!]

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1. **Read Hebrews 10.19-39.** The writer of the letter now starts to apply what he's been saying in the previous chapters (note the *“Therefore..”* with which the passage starts).

Does this passage inspire you, or challenge you - or both?

If you were the writer, how would you have applied the truths you'd been explaining in the previous chapters (Jesus as our high priest [7.1-8.6], the new covenant [8.7-9.28], and the single sacrifice of Jesus [10.1-18])?

2. Read Hebrews 10.19-21. In these opening verses the writer summarises for his readers the privileges which have been secured for His people by Jesus.

What are the privileges to which the writer refers here?

From what you've learned over the previous chapters, what's so great about having "*a great high priest over the house of God*"?

3. Read Hebrews 10.22. This is the first of three exhortations addressed to the recipients of the letter [NB: the word translated 'confidence' (v.19) has the idea of a boldness in speaking].

Do you find it hard to 'draw near to God' like this? If so can you pinpoint why?

Think back over the previous chapters: in what ways (if any) has an understanding of them helped you in your relationship with God?

A '*guilty conscience*' can often keep us from drawing near to God: how can that be remedied?

4. **Read Hebrews 10.23.** Here's the second way in which what the writer has been underlining is now applied to his readers: he insists that we are a people characterized by hope.

How would you describe the content of '*the hope we profess*' to which the writer is pointing his readers?

Why is it important for the Christian to keep that in view?

What does the writer say enables us to hold firmly to that hope?

5. **Read Hebrews 10.24-25.** The final exhortation really occupies the rest of the chapter - an indication perhaps of how important it is, and perhaps, too, of how easily we can omit it.

How have you been 'spurred on' like this by others in a Christian fellowship?

In what ways does our 'meeting together' help to 'spur us on' as we follow Jesus?

Are there ways in which we might maximize those times, to this end, when we meet together as God's people?

Why is an awareness of the 'approaching Day' important?

6. Read Hebrews 10.26-31. In the remainder of the chapter the writer expands on what he means by exhorting us to 'encourage one another': here's the first form that encouragement will take.

In what sense can the sobering message of these verses be seen as a means of the writer's 'encouraging' his readers?

What does the writer mean by saying that 'it is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God' (v.31)?

7. Read Hebrews 10.32-39. These next verses provide a more positive sort of encouragement, as the writer reminds his readers of what lay behind their earlier commitment.

Think back to what would constitute 'those earlier days' for *you* as a believer: what characterized your living then?

What had enabled these followers of Jesus to endure in the past?