

What You Believe Impacts How You Live

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Preacher: Aaron Hoak

[0:00] Good morning. For those of you that don't know, I'm Aaron Hoke. I think most of you probably know that. I was a pastor here once, about six years ago.

And it's a real joy and a delight to be back and to have the opportunity to teach and preach this morning. Well, you can turn this morning in your Bibles to Hebrews chapter 10. Hebrews 10. What you believe affects how you live. What you think affects what you do. And it has to be that way. It's true sort of at an obvious level. If you believe that the water out of the tap in Mexico is going to give you Montezuma's revenge, then when you go to Mexico, you won't drink the water. Right? You believe a certain thing, and so it causes you to act in a certain way. You won't brush your teeth with the water because you think something about that water. If you believe that the world is going to end tomorrow, I think that you're really wise to be here in God's house today. But you might also do some really crazy things with your time and your money if you think that the world's going to end tomorrow. If you believe that this book is God's word to men and that we need that truth, then you'll read it.

[1:19] You'll study it. If you believe that Jesus has satisfied the wrath of God against your sin and that he's interceding for you, you'll gladly draw near to him. What we believe affects what we do.

It's never just sterile, cold doctrine over here that has no effect on the rest of life. At least it should not be that way. And as you read through especially the New Testament letters, you'll find Paul and others doing this repeatedly.

They expound doctrine. They explain what we should believe about Christ and who he is and what he's done. And then they say, here is how you should live because of that. When you read one of Paul's letters, don't say, well, here's doctrine and here's some exhortation on how to live.

There's a connection between the two. What you believe affects how you live. And down in Warsaw, we've been going through the book of Hebrews. And whoever the author of Hebrews is, we don't know for sure.

There's lots of good guesses. We're not going to talk about that this morning. But it's sort of frustrating because sometimes you want to say Paul says when you're talking about the author. And there's no short way to do that with Hebrews. Hebrews. The author of Hebrews says.

[2:26] Because we don't know who the author is. So the author of Hebrews, see, does that. He gives us exposition. He explains doctrine. He quotes the Old Testament.

And then he explains that. And then he says, and he gives us exhortation. This is how you should live. Exposition, exhortation. And Hebrews goes back and forth. And you can really pretty clearly identify and divide up Hebrews that way.

Some of it's explaining and some of it is exhorting. Doctrine, explanation. And they're always connected. And so theology should never be dry and irrelevant.

What we believe always affects what we do. So in Sunday school this morning, I want to point us to one of those sections of exhortation. He's given a long exposition.

He's been explaining who Christ is. He's been explaining his priesthood. He's been explaining how Jesus fulfills the Old Testament sacrificial system. And then he comes here in chapter 10 and he says, this is what that means for you.

[3:27] This is how you should live. Big picture in Hebrews. If you want a really short summary of what the book of Hebrews is about, you'd say Jesus is better.

Right? It seems like there's this group of early Jewish Christians. That's who the letter is written to. That's what it looks like. A group of early Jewish Christians. They had put their faith in Christ. They had followed him. But now they were being tempted to turn away. To give up their faith in Christ and to go back to the old way. This new way. There weren't physical sacrifices.

And there wasn't a physical temple. And they missed that tangible taste, touch, feel, smell religion of the Old Testament. And they were thinking about going back. And so the author of Hebrews says, no, don't go back.

Jesus is better than whatever you're thinking about going back to. So he goes through Jesus is better than the prophets. Jesus is better than the angels. Jesus is better than Moses. Jesus is better than Aaron.

[4:24] And the whole sacrificial system. Jesus is better. And if that's the case, don't go back. Don't grow weary in well-doing. Faith that perseveres is faith that perseveres to the very end.

And so if you quit now. If you say, I'm not real sure anymore about this faith in Jesus thing. I'm going to go back. And I'm going to go back to my Judaism. That's apostasy.

And you will die. If you don't persevere to the end. Sober. That's why there's such hard. If you read through Hebrews, you've seen these hard warnings in Hebrews.

Really sobering stuff. So what he wants to say is that Jesus is better. Don't go back. And so we're going to look at verses 19 through 25. And we're not going to have nearly enough time.

That's okay. See, I've been preaching Hebrews for months. And you could just get to preaching the whole book instead of the passage in front of you. So he's been explaining who Jesus is.

[5:28] Explaining Jesus as our great high priest. So we don't need any more priests. Jesus as the once for all sacrifice. So we don't need any more sacrifices.

And he gets done with all of that in chapter 10 and verse 18. And then he says this in verses 19 through 21. And as we read these 19 to 25, we're going to read these verses. 19 through 21 are sort of a summary of everything he's just said.

And you'll see that since we have is what he says. Since we have. And he says, it talks about two things that we have. And then he gives us the upshot of it in 22 to 25.

Three exhortations that begin with let us. See if you spot those as we read them. Three times he says, let us do something. So a little summary. Verses 19 to 21.

And then three exhortations in 22 to 25. Right? So this is the word of God. Hebrews 10, 19.

Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain that is through his flesh.

[6:35] And since we have a great high priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart and full assurance of faith with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering. For he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works.

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. Right? The passage, these verses outline themselves.

Since we have. There's two of those. And let us. There's three of those. Right? So we start with the since we have. And I want to focus on the let us, the exhortation this morning.

We're not going to do all of the exposition that he does, but we'll just note what he says in that first section. So first, since we have. What's the first thing he identifies that we have? It's not a trick question.

[7:36] It's an easy one. It's right in the verse. Since we have. What's the first thing? Confidence. Right. Since we have confidence. And what do we have confidence to do? We have confidence to draw near.

Right? Since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus. In Old Testament, Israel, only the high priest could go one time a year by the blood of an animal into the most holy place.

And that was it. But Jesus, by his own blood, not the blood of an animal, by his own blood, has entered that most holy place, not just for himself, but for all of us.

He has opened that way so that it's no longer closed to his people. He entered heaven itself, and at his death, the veil was torn asunder in the temple, symbolizing our access to the most holy place through his flesh, which was torn asunder for us, just like that veil.

So through Christ, both when we die and in this life, we have access to God. When we die, we have access into heaven because Jesus has made the way there through his blood, through his flesh being broken for us.

[8:48] And in this life, also, we have confident access to the throne of God, into the most holy place, because our hope is anchored there in Christ. He's there interceding for us.

Hebrews has been talking about that all the way along. Jesus opened that way, and Jesus sits in heaven now, and so you have access to heaven because Jesus is there for you. He is there praying for you, interceding for you.

He has anchored your hope there in heaven. And so when we die, we have confident access into heaven, and in this life, before we ever physically get to heaven, we have access to that holy place. It's a new, it's a living way. I'm not going to talk about all that, the old order of priests, the old covenant, the old sacrifice, the old ceremony, the law are no more, and we have a new way in Christ. It's a living way. It's life-giving.

It's full of hope, unlike the old way, which was perpetually ineffective. The way to glory through Christ is the new and living way, and we have it. Not wishful thinking. It's not future.

[9:48] It's open right now at this moment. You can come into the presence of God. That's what we do when we gather and worship together. You can do it in the privacy of your home as you pray and seek God's face in Scripture.

You can enter right into his presence. Pretty different from Israel, who were kept at a distance from God's presence. Only the high priest could get behind that curtain, and only once a year, and only with the blood of an animal.

Jesus, by his own blood, has gone there and opened the way for us to go. See how rich we are. We have confidence to come into God's presence. If an Israelite had tried to get behind the...

You can bet that if there was some Israelite that wanted to get into the most holy place behind the curtain in the temple, even if somebody had been foolish enough to have tried it, knowing everything that they knew, their knees would have been knocking.

Rebel as they were to try to do something like that, they would have been terrified. Uncertainable lightning strike. What's going to happen to me? We have confident, free access into the presence of God.

[10:53] That's our great privilege. And so you're going to see in a minute, one of the let us let us draw near. Okay? What we believe always affects how we live. So if we believe we have this confident access, what should we do with it?

Draw near. Don't stay at a distance. Come into that presence. What we believe affects how we live. So one of the things, since we have a great high priest, I know that I am flying through this.

And I'm sorry, I brought way too much material with me this morning. But since we have confidence, what's the second thing that he says since we have? What's the other thing? A high priest.

You have a high priest over the house of God. God doesn't gather us together to himself and leave us to ourselves. His son is on the throne as king and priest interceding for us, ruling over all things for us.

He's head of the church. He's high priest over the house of God. Not just over you as an individual, but over the house of God. That will be important. With him as priest, we don't need an earthly priest to regulate access to God.

[12:03] Jesus gives us free access. Earlier he said in Hebrews 3.6, Christ is faithful over God's house as a son. Here he says he's faithful over God's house as a priest.

So we have this glorious Christ. What should we do? All right? That's a really brief look at what we believe. And if you want to dig into Hebrews, those verses really summarize from Hebrews 4 and verse 14, I think, up through chapter 10 and verse 18.

Then he gives you a recap in verses 19 through 21. And now, so what? All right. We believe these things to be true.

That must always affect how we live. So, how should we live? Now, there's a lot more than what's in these verses, but let's focus on these. These three let us commands. The first one is let us draw near.

In verse 22. Let us draw near with a true heart and full assurance of faith with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience. Our bodies washed with pure water. So, again, you see how this follows.

[13:06] We have confidence. We have this new and living way into the presence of God. What should we do? We'll make use of it. Draw near. Do it with a sincere heart.

Not an evil, unbelieving heart. Come owning your sin in full dependence on the work of Christ. God knows all about your sin. Don't try to cover it up to see him coming to the presence.

Oh, I'm pretty good. I can come to... No, no, no. Come with a sincere heart. Lord, I'm a sinner. I can't come unless Christ washes me clean. Come with a sincere heart.

With full assurance of faith. Draw near. Confident. Not because of who we are, but because of who Christ is. We have full assurance because that assurance of faith is rooted in Christ and not in us.

If it was rooted in us, it would be a really wobbly assurance. Or no assurance at all, but it's not. It's rooted in Christ. So it's full assurance. We draw near knowing we won't be consumed, but that we'll be received because of Jesus.

[14:02] Because he's opened the way through his flesh and blood. Our faith has an unshakable object. And that's Jesus. With hearts sprinkled and bodies washed, we come as those who have been washed clean through the work of Christ.

We don't have time to dig into that. Just let me say this. We think of blood as something that stains. Blood stain, right? My kids rip up their arms and legs and everything else when they're out playing. And sometimes that means they get blood stains on their clothes. Blood stains. In God's economy, blood is something that washes us clean. So that might be washed as white as snow in the blood of Christ.

That sounds okay to us because we're so used to it. But think about it. Blood doesn't wash anything clean. It stains. That's the beauty of what God has done for us in Christ. The blood of Christ really does wash us clean.

And so we can draw near because of what Christ has done for us. These exhortations, drawing near requires cleansing through Christ. So these exhortations, let us draw near, they're built on the truth that we've seen about the work of Christ.

[15:10] If we didn't have a high priest who'd washed us with his blood, if we didn't have the perfect sacrifice, if we didn't have Jesus, we couldn't draw near. What you believe affects how you live.

If we draw near dirty and in our sin without Christ, we'll be cast out. So let us draw near. You had said this back in chapter 4 and verse 16.

We draw near with confidence and find mercy and grace to help in time of need. So draw near. What do you think that means? What are some ways that we can draw near? That's neat. Draw near to Christ.

What does that mean? How do we do that? You all help me out. Help each other out. Pray. Pray. Confession. Okay, let's start with pray. Who said pray? Pray. Do you want to expand on that at all? You don't have to. No? So you're right. Prayer. That's perhaps the first and most obvious thing. When we pray, we're coming to God.

[16:07] Okay? So I might, there might be more of my notes about that. But I think I heard Mark. Confession? Is that what you said? You want to give us any more on that? You confess our sins.

He's faithful and just to forgive us and cleanse us. Amen. All of righteousness. Amen. 1 John 1.9 And so we do.

And we come near. And we, again, we come with a sincere heart. Lord, I'm a sinner. But I come through the merits of Christ. Please receive me. So, yes. Confession. Prayer.

Think about that. You have access to the almighty creator of the universe. You look at these big problems and you think, how am I ever going to get through this? And we sit and we stew and we want.

You have access into the presence of the one who created you. The one who is sovereign over that problem. Don't you think we should draw near by praying and asking you for help?

[17:10] Draw near through prayer. Why wouldn't we? I was convicted this week. We were down at a conference for Reformed Baptist Network.

And your pastors were there. And one of the speakers talked about praying. And one of the reasons that we don't pray, most likely, if we're honest, is because we don't really think we need to.

And I'm sure prayer does something. But I have to deal with it. So I'm going to deal with it. And we put it all in. It's self-sufficiency. It's pride. It's all sorts of things. But do you really feel like you need to pray? If you don't, you won't.

We're too proud. Or we think, well, prayer is just a, I know I'm supposed to do it. I know it's part of it. But like, God's sovereign anyway. It's not going to do anything.

So why should I pray? We don't think we need to, so we don't. But we can draw near. What's another way? Prayer, confession, what's another way we draw near to God? In worship. Yes. That's what we do in the next hour.

[18:06] We come into God's presence as God's people. And we worship. A great privilege. Again, in some ways, the Israelites were kept at a distance from the presence of God. And we are invited into his presence on his day with his people.

And if we're missing that, we're missing one of the great privileges of the Christian faith. If we're not drawing near, listen to this. Remember, what you believe affects the way you live.

Flip that around. The way you live shows what you believe. And so if we're not drawing near, we should wonder whether or not we've experienced the work of Christ.

What you believe affects how you live. The way you live will show what you believe. And so if you're not drawing near, you don't pray, you don't worship, you don't want to be with God's people. I know I'm preaching to the choir. You guys are here. It's good.

If we don't draw near, we should wonder whether we've experienced the work of Christ. The realities are that closely linked. The next let us is hold fast.

[19:10] In verse 23, let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering. For you promised us faithful. Love the balance of the New Testament. For all of the completeness of Christ's finished work on our behalf.

And the comfort and the peace that we enjoy because of that. It's never portrayed as a license for us to sit back and to do nothing and to coast to glory. Jesus died for me. My sins are forgiven. So I can just kind of coast and do whatever I want.

And his work is finished and it's perfect. It's complete. We can't add anything to it. But again, it's not licensed for us to just not do anything. No, we are to hold fast to this glorious truth that we've received.

Don't let it go. Don't get lazy and fail to study and enjoy God's truth. Hold fast to our confession of hope. That's what the Hebrews needed. They had come to Christ, but they were thinking of turning away.

And they needed to hold fast. And the author says, if you don't, you will die. Hold fast. It's that important. The warnings in Hebrew are that strong.

[20:10] But he doesn't just say, hey Hebrews. He doesn't just start the letter. Dear Hebrews, I'm not going to tell you who I am. Anonymous. He said, hold fast. Hold fast. You guys are thinking about leading Christ.

You need to hold fast. End of letter. That's sort of like how we want to counsel people sometimes. Stop it. And instead, we need to show here's what we believe. And therefore, here's how we should live.

Listen, Hebrews. You're thinking about abandoning the one person that can deliver your soul safely to heaven. Let me tell you about how Jesus is better than the prophets, than the angels, than Moses.

Hard for a Hebrew to hear that maybe? Moses. Right? Better than Moses. Better than Aaron. Better than your sacrifices. Better than your priests.

Therefore, hold fast. You've confessed faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Don't let go. Hold fast. What you believe affects how you live. So, that's the whole book of Hebrews.

[21:16] Like, I hope you go home and read Hebrews now. And maybe you understand a little bit about why he's saying some of the things that he's saying. Maybe some of those stern warnings make a little bit more sense. But we've confessed faith in Christ.

To confess is literally to say the same thing. We must say about Jesus what God says. We must say what Scripture says.

We confess that Christ is our Savior and Lord. And that the Word of God is God's truth about Jesus. And it really is a confession of hope. There's so much.

I want to talk about hope. Read the end of Hebrews 6. You know what? I'm going to read it. The end of Hebrews 6. We have this as a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul. You know that?

Language. A sure and steadfast anchor of the soul. A hope that enters into the inner place behind the curtain where Jesus has gone. As a forerunner on our behalf having become a priest.

[22:11] High priest forever after the order of Melchizedek. Our hope is anchored in heaven. Because Jesus is there and he went there on our behalf. And so our hope is not. When some

people cling to hope and they're hoping against hope.

Our hope is not like that. Like oh I really hope that this happens. No, no, no. Our hope is sure. It's certain. Our hope is a confident expectation. Because Jesus is there.

My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness. On Christ the solid rock I stand. All other ground is sinking sand. That's not just oh I really hope.

I really hope that we get to do. No, that's confident expectation. And so our confession of faith in Christ is one of hope. We're certain of what he has done and will do for us.

And so we're to cling to that confession without wavering. Which is what the Hebrews were doing. They were wavering. And I know it seems like your faith and your hope can falter. But we can hold fast by God's grace with certainty and surety.

[23:11] You know why it can be unwavering? Because the object of our hope and faith is unwavering. We stand on the solid rock that's not going anywhere. The one who promised he says is faithful.

Again, what we believe affects what we do. If we don't believe God is faithful we won't hold fast. But he is faithful. Keeps his promises. How do you think we can go about that?

What are some ways to hold fast? Hold fast is neat. You keep doing this thing with your hands. I don't know how to do that with a rope. But how do I hold fast to a confession of faith? Do I need to just have a really tight grip on my Bible?

How do we do that? How do we hold fast? Yes, Roger. You stay in the Word. You read the Word. Just holding fast. It's the same way that hope.

The hope that we have is not the hope of the world. But holding fast is not the holy fast of the world either. In 1 Corinthians 1.8 it says, He will keep you strong to the end so that you will be blameless for the day of the Lord Jesus.

[24:16] It's not like we're doing this on our own. We have got such powerful backup that we will hold fast. God's people will hold fast. Amen. And as you said, we need to stay in the Word to believe that.

Meditate on it. Memorize it. Read it. Study it. Come and hear it preached. Reminding yourself of the truth will help you to hold fast to it. And I appreciate what you said there.

You guys sing the song, He will hold me fast. You sing that here. When I fear my faith will fail, He will hold me fast. Beautiful that Scripture teaches us both.

That nothing can snatch us out of God's hand. And yet it still calls us to fast. And then in that sense then, it's not our hold on God, it's God's hold on us.

Amen. Yeah. He will hold me fast. That's right. Amen. Good. Chuck. Our life will have integrity with the hope. So we'll show that it will be a real hope instead of just a thought and a line.

[25:19] Hmm. Hmm. Amen. It'll show the way we did it. Not just, yeah, saying that we have faith, but it's actually evident that we're holding fast. You look at people in this room going through deep trials, you can see that they're holding fast.

My God's pretty smart. Staying close to God's people. Hmm. Yes. Yes. Yes. So that when we're down, there's one there to encourage us and pick us up to make sure we don't wander off.

Like the author of Hebrews did for them. Came alongside of them. Yes. Close fellowship. Being with God's people. That's part of the next exhortation too. They all hang together. Steve.

When I sin, I confess and repent and run to Christ rather than run away from Him. Mm-hmm. Yes. Not staying in our sin, but bringing that sin to the light, bringing it to Christ.

Because the more we continue in our sin and don't deal with it, the further we drift, the looser our grip gets. Good. Any other ideas on holding fast?

[26:24] It's a moment-by-moment thing. It's something that you have to conscientiously choose to do. Amen.

Moment-by-moment. It is an act of the will. Be aware of false teaching that's out there. It's easy to be led astray.

Guard your heart against that. Test what you hear against Scripture so that you're not led astray.

We've talked about one anothering, challenging those who are wandering away. Dear people, don't think that this will be easy.

In a world where we are swimming upstream against the culture, in a place where a string of lawsuits and court decisions and executive declarations and laws point to a restricting of religious liberty in our land, don't expect that holding fast will be easy.

I'm not a big the sky is falling kind of guy, but we'd also be foolish to ignore the very real fact that the views that we hold about sexuality and other things as Christians are very far out of the mainstream.

[27 : 37] And you're not just viewed as being a little bit different. You're viewed as being bigoted and hateful for the things that you hold true. And it will be hard to hold fast when everything in culture, even government, is against you.

Hold fast. These Hebrews knew what it was to suffer. Look down at verse 32. But recall the former days when after you were enlightened, you endured a hard struggle with sufferings. They had sufferings.

Sometimes being publicly exposed to reproach and affliction and sometimes being partners with those so treated. If you had compassion on those in prison, you joyfully accepted the plundering of your property since you knew that you yourselves had a better possession and an abiding one. And so he goes on. Verse 35, don't throw away your confidence. You see this? Drum beat. Don't go back. Don't throw away your confidence. Verse 36, you have need of endurance. Verse 39, we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who have faith and preserve their souls.

We must persevere to the end. Our confession is that Jesus is Lord, and as long as he is on the throne, we don't need to be afraid of everything going on in our own nation and the nations around the world.

[28 : 45] But make no mistake, it may be very difficult in days to come to hold fast. Well, the last let us, you guys still stop at 10, 15?

All right, good. Some things never change. Although your evening service time changed. That's different. We have a 5 o'clock evening service, too.

So some things do change, I guess. All right, last one, verses 24 and 25. Let us consider. Let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works.

Literally, I really like this. You read the Greek, and you see some interesting things sometimes.

Literally, we are to consider one another. It says consider one another for the purpose of stirring up to love and good works.

But we're to think about each other. Not just think about how to stir up each other, but to think about each other. And here's where, you see how this is related to what some brothers and sisters said already about holding fast.

[29 : 44] It's a community effort. We need to be close to God's people. People who are thinking about you. And you are thinking about them. Think about each other with the purpose of stirring them up to love and good deeds.

You do that. Do you think about particular people in this congregation and how you might be able to help and encourage them and stir them up? And admittedly, this gets messy. You might consider your brother or sister and get disgusted.

We are not always terribly lovable people, are we? And when you're tempted to think that way, you're thinking, I think about so-and-so. I can't believe the way he does this.

That he still hasn't conquered that sin. That she is still this way. You get disgusted. I don't want to think about them because then I get mad about it. And then I'm not stirring them up to love and good works.

I'm just getting mad. Well, when you're tempted to think that way, be humble enough to understand that there are things in your own life and mine that could easily stir up the same reaction from someone else if they were to think about you.

[30 : 45] It's so easy to look down on others. Instead, Hebrew says, consider them. Think about them. Think. Think. How could you be a blessing to that person or that group of people? How can you be a blessing to the children in this church?

Or to the elderly? Or to the singles? Or to those who have suffered infertility and miscarriage? Or to those who are struggling financially? Or to those who are trying to figure out how to raise their children?

To those who are running a business? Consider. Think about people. Groups of people. Because I don't have anything in common with them. They're so different from me. Their parenting philosophy is so different from mine.

And theirs is wrong and mine is right. And they love sports. And I don't know the difference between a baseball and a football. And I'm more spiritual than they are. I can't really relate to somebody that worldly.

I don't know how to stir them up. They're too involved in their kids' stuff. That's too important to them. So I can't relate. I don't know. He doesn't care about evangelism like that. They listen to music that I don't like.

[31 : 44] And it really is wrong. And a thousand other differences. Churches. And that's why we have to consider one another. The church is a beautiful amalgamation of people that are really different from each other.

Who have Christ in common. And who have this in common that we want to grow in love and good works. John Calvin wrote something about this that could have been written yesterday.

Today. He says, As individuals would gladly make churches for themselves. If they could. For they find it so difficult to accommodate themselves to the ways and habits of others.

It's really sad. And it's true. And some people do that. Like, well, there's no church out there that fits me. Where everybody lines up in these days. They call it church.

It's not. People would do that. And yeah, we bond together around the common things that we believe. But man, this is a diverse group of people gathered in this room this morning. And I praise God for that.

[32 : 48] That's a wonderful thing. But that means there's some differences that will have to be worked through. But it shouldn't stop us from considering each other for the purpose of stirring up each other to love and good works.

The word has some sharpness. The stir up word. It's provoke. Probably good at provoking each other to anger. Instead, we should be provoking one another to love and good deeds.

How can you do that? How can you encourage the people around you to love and good deeds? To a greater love for God. Worship. Amazement. Who he is and what he's done. And a greater love for neighbor. Do some considering together out loud with me this morning.

How can you stir one another up to love and good deeds? Yes. Maybe. You have to interact with people and be with them.

So you need to invite them into your home. Or invite them to have lunch with you. Or have some way to meet with people. Amen. You have to be with them.

[33 : 50] To stir them up. Hospitality. Opening your home. Getting together with them. Good. Excellent. How else can you stir one another up to love and good deeds? Small group.

Meeting together. Okay. Gathering together as a small group. Encouraging one another. Good. How else? Setting an example of what it looks like on a daily basis.

And how might be things applied. An example. Did you know that people are watching you? Set a good example.

Of what faithful, call it plotting, looks like. No shame in plotting. One step at a time. And maybe your example can be an encouragement to this person over here that's barely struggling to be able to get out of bed to plot.

And that can encourage them. Good example. Good. What else? Jeff. Carry up at the difficult place. Like what? How do you do it with that thing that you're struggling with?

[34 : 55] Yeah. In particular. And then come back to them a week later and say, I've prayed for you. How's it going now? And a week after that. Yeah. Ask the hard questions. Not just the, how are you?

And be content with the fine. And how are you? Fine. And we move on. And we've sort of expressed concern for one another. Yeah. Get a little more pointed. Just the words that you use when you gather together and talk in the foyer in between church and Sunday school or after church or before.

Maybe talking about how God has strengthened your weary hands in the last week would be profitable for a brother who is weary or a sister who is languishing.

Demonstrating love. Organizing opportunities to show love to others who need it. Lots of ways to provoke. But if we delight in our privilege in Christ, we have to understand that we enjoy those privileges not in isolation but in community.

Jesus is the great high priest over the house of God. Not just over you. You see that? Remember back in verse 21? Since we have a great high priest over the house of God.

[36:02] It's all of God's people. Not just you. And so we're going to need to stir up one another. We'll want to grow in the knowledge of Christ and the worship of God and service to neighbors and to help others do that. And one of the ways, the way that the author points out here, is not neglecting to meet together.

We'll want to be together as the body of Christ. Christ is over the house of God. So as the family of God, we must not neglect to be together in his house on his day with his people.

If you're not together, it's hard to stir each other up. So tell me some of the things that you would miss. Or some of the things that you do miss when you don't gather together. What are you missing out on if you're not together with God's people?

Will. Yes. Yes. Yes. Companionship. Fellowship. Encouragement that comes from that. Good. What else? Christy. Genuine joy.

Yeah. You know what I love about getting together with God's people? I'm psyched. I think I'm going to sit in the front this morning. I'll have my family with me. I'm going to camp in the front. You know what I'm going to do? I'm going to listen to you sing.

[37:08] If you don't get together with God's people, I'll sing too. If you don't get together with God's people, you miss that. Encouragement that. Enjoy it. It's expressed in singing in other ways. Yeah. Good.

Community. The community of the church. Yes. Yes. He's high priest over the house of God. The whole thing. And if you don't do that, you miss that community. You miss that fellowship.

What else? Steve? The unique presence of God when his people gather. Yes. Yes. The blessing of the special presence of God, of Christ with his people and gathered worship.

Okay. I'm just going to buzz through my list of things that you'll miss. And some of them are things you've already said. If you're not here when the saints gather for worship, your singing won't encourage your downhearted brother.

Your smiling face won't lift up the spirit of your sister. Your challenging word won't stop that young man in his sin. Your comforting hug and sweet reminder of God's truth won't encourage the one who is in grief and mourning.

[38:14] We'll miss that special presence of Christ with his gathered people for worship. We'll miss the privilege of praying together. Of bearing one another's burdens. Praying together. All of our hearts joined together in one prayer to which we can say our amen.

Praying for the spread of the gospel here and at the ends of the earth. Prayer is the heavy lifting hard work of building the church. We need to be joining our hearts together as we pray. We miss that. If we don't gather together, we'll miss the privilege of hearing God's word preached.

We will miss the sacraments which are a means of grace from God to us. And so when we gather together then, we're to encourage one another.

We're to exhort, challenge one another. You talked about that earlier in chapter 3. And to be able to do that, you'll have to have done some considering beforehand. Think before you ever get here.

Think about it. Consider one another. And before you ever get to church, think, how can I be an encouragement to that person today? Who can I think of that has been discouraged lately? And what can I say to them that will be an encouragement?

[39:16] Consider that. Think about it. Before you ever get here, don't just come with no plan.

Right? Come to church with a plan. You're going to gather together with God's people. Think about it before you get here. And how you can be a blessing to this person or to that person.

The New Testament doesn't know anything about a lone ranger sort of Christian. Me and my Bible and my favorite internet preacher divorced from the corporate gathering of God's people. We need each other. Don't forsake that privilege and responsibility.

You do it to your own peril. You're depriving the body of the blessing that you could be. And you're depriving yourself of the blessing that the body could be to you. If you don't gather together.

And all the more as you see the day drawing here. I don't know when Jesus is coming back. I don't know how close it is. But the closer it gets, the more we need this. Not less. As many grow hostile towards Christ, we who love Christ must band closely together.

Right? So, since we have this great high priest. Since we have confidence. Since there's a danger of falling away. Let's think about what we believe always affects the way that we live.

[40:25] If you've fallen short in these things, like all of us have, there's fresh forgiveness to be found through Christ. You go find grace. And there's strength in him to continue to help us to carry

on.

So, may God work these things in us. Thank you for your patience, your time. It's sort of, you got kind of a fire hose of Hebrews this morning. But we're going to get a little bit more, Lord willing, in the morning worship.

But I pray that God uses it to stir us up to love and good deeds. Amen. We're dismissed. Amen.