

# Hebrew 10:19-25 “A Family of Faith”

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[ 0 : 0 0 ] You are listening to a message from Southwood Presbyterian Church in Huntsville, Alabama. Our passion is to experience and express grace. Join us.

This morning, if you would turn with me into your Bibles to Hebrews chapter 10, verses 19 through 25. This morning, we are not part of a series, kind of a one-off.

We'll be essentially helicoptering in or, you know, parachuting into a short passage out of the book of Hebrews. Let's take a look at it and remind ourselves about the greatness of Jesus and how that thing that drives us, that moves us, that motivates us, that changes us, that Jesus draws us to each other.

And so this, just as a short reminder, the book of Hebrews is written, unknown author, written to Jewish converts. It's essentially sermonic.

It's a sermon written so that people are encouraged in order to persevere, to be faithful to Christ in all the things that go on in their lives, whether good, bad or ugly, that they would remain faithful to Jesus.

[ 1 : 1 4 ] And they would see the greatness of Jesus above everything else, no matter what they see, no matter what they face, no matter what they're tempted to do, they would see Jesus as greater. But this morning, before we get started with our sermon, I'm going to ask you guys a question.

How do you handle critique? How do you handle criticism? If you're like me, yeah, I grit my teeth almost immediately.

I tense up a little bit. Thank you for that. It's so helpful. How about this? It's a necessity.

Oftentimes, I need people to tell me if I'm doing something wrong. There's a saying that I had with my friends that friends tell each other when they have spinach in their teeth, enemies let it ride.

You know, like if you've got a hot date and your friend is going on a hot date and they have spinach in your teeth, you want to help them because you love them. You're your friend. But that's like, hey, dude, something's wrong. And so any sort of critique or criticism, often we just get tense and we don't like it and we hate it and we don't want anybody to tell us what we're doing wrong.

[ 2 : 3 3 ] We don't like it. We just don't. What about encouragement? How many of us have ever felt awkward when someone has said, hey, man, you did a great job? Oh, that feeling of someone else seeing something good that you've done.

For a lot of us, it's really helpful and good. But a lot of us feels really awkward at times. I don't know how to I don't know how to receive a compliment often. What about how do you handle helping someone?

How do you approach them? How do you go to them? What about receiving help? How do you ask for help? Have you ever considered these things? Right.

The idea is that there's this necessity for someone outside of ourselves to help us, for us to help someone else. Right.

And as we look at this passage today, as we try and remember who we are and what we're here for and what we're called to do. I want us to think about what we are called to do as we serve one another, as we love one another, because we belong to something bigger.

[ 3 : 4 2 ] Right. The title of my sermon is A Family of Faith. We belong. And I've said it several times already in our worship service. We belong to a family. We belong to something bigger, a community.

The church is something more than us just doing this Christian life by ourselves. And so we belong to something bigger. So let's pause there as you think about, think about the way you hear people speaking into your lives.

Let's hear from the word of God so that we might think rightly about it. Let's, if you, in your Bibles, we're going to read Hebrews chapter 10, verses 19 to 25.

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. And since we have a great high priest over the house of God, 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.

[ 4 : 49 ] 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 the habit of some, but encouraging one another.

And all the more, as you see the day drawing near. This is God's word. Let's pray. Father, would you help us to see your word rightly? Help us to be changed and transformed and made more like Christ, to be sanctified, Lord.

Would we find ourselves more and more in love with you, more and more changed by your word? Father, we thank you for all that you have done.

We thank you that this is a reminder, that this is a summary of the good news of the gospel. And we pray that we would see it that way today. We love you and we pray this in Jesus' name.

Amen. All right, this morning, I want us to take a moment and see that we are a family of faith. And immediately, if you read in chapter 10, right here in verse 19, I don't know if you've got a pew Bible.

[ 6 : 02 ] It says, therefore, brothers, and then there's a note. And if you look down and you have magnifying glass or you can see this, it says, or brothers and sisters. Right, there's this Greek word that tells us that this is not just to the men of the church, the Hebrew men.

This is to God's people, all of God's people. It's a reminder, in many ways, of us, the reality of family within the church. A lot of us don't want to think this way.

I understand. A lot of us come from families with brokenness, with hurt, with baggage. And no one, we don't want to think about this as a family affair.

We don't want to think about this. But in reality, even though there are hard and bad things that happen in families, there are tough realities to being in a family. There is good, bad, and ugly. Even though that's true, it doesn't mean we should throw it away. It means that it should help change us when we look at it and we see it in the Bible. When we see it in the scriptures, it's language of tenderness and care and love that we need, that we need to be reminded of too.

[ 7 : 15 ] And so we need to be reminded that this is not just something that we've come to attend on Sunday morning from 930 to 1045, maybe 1030 today since the youth pastor's preaching. You know, it's not something that we've, it's not just something we attend.

It's not something that we just do. It's something we belong to because we belong to the God of the universe. And so this is something that has to help change us.

And it doesn't just change us. It changes our posture. It changes how we relate to one another, right? It doesn't just change us in kind of practical ways. But even though we know families are complicated, even when we know families are broken, even when we know the goal of this communication is to influence us, influence me, influence the reader, the original audience to remember that we belong to each other.

That there's this family element to following Jesus, to being a part of it. And look, we all have different family issues, but we want to focus on the ideals in this moment, right?

In an ideal world, though we know of everything that goes on, a family is a place of love, care, nurture, unity, beauty.

[ 8 : 33 ] It's a good and wonderful place. A family as it's meant to be is this amazing place where mothers and fathers love each other.

Children are raised in beautiful to become these adult, perfect, great versions of themselves. Though some of us here struggle with that, including myself.

We're called to be a family of faith. And immediately as we read this passage, we see this reality that we're called to be family.

It's not the only time in the Bible this is mentioned. So this is why we can trust it. We can trust this kind of language is because it's not in isolation. Right. The Apostle Paul talks about adoption as sons.

The Apostle Paul tells us that we have a spirit given to us that we cry out, Abba, Father. We have this reality that God is our father. And then if you go back further into the Old Testament, you see this language from Jeremiah where the prophet's talking about the God of the universe.

[ 9 : 41 ] He says, for I'm a father to Israel. Isaiah says, O Lord, thou art our father. Throughout the Old Testament, even, there's this language of God as our father in this familial language.

And so we are called to remember that. I am. I don't. I'm a human being. I view things much more transactional than I should.

I don't look often enough at people and say, oh, this is like my family. I often look at, is this something someone can give me or get me or what do I have to give to someone to get what I need?

And don't even ask about the sins of a pastor where you're like much more looking at the church in a transactional way than you could ever imagine.

The struggle against that is real. And yet, as we pause today, we must remember that we belong to one another in a family.

[ 10 : 49 ] The family of God. And that family has definitive characteristics. It has beautiful characteristics.

It's not a family that's just kind of randomly made up. It's hopefully as a church, we're a family that's been changed by Christ. A family that's been made new.

See, in this passage in Hebrews, the writer, who we don't know, right? There's lots of assumptions, lots of things we can think about it. Lots of ways that we can point, but we don't know. He says this. He said, 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, and our bodies washed with pure water.

There is a previous state that we were in. We have been washed. We have been cleansed. We have been changed. We are no longer the people we were.

[ 11 : 49 ] We now belong. We are cleansed and made right by the work of Jesus, by the blood of Jesus, by the cross and his resurrection. We're a family that's marked by change and transformation by the power of the gospel.

And we have to remember that we're all changed by Jesus. That those of us who are part of God's people is that we are cleansed and made holy by Jesus himself.

Not something we've done. Not something we can do. Not something we can work to achieve. We can't level up as a Christian. We can't make this our next goal for next year. Is that I'll just be a better, just a better Christian than the person next to me.

I'll just, I'll keep, our goal is that we would worship the Lord because we, he is the one who's changed us. And this identifies us.

This gives us an identifying marker. One of the things that we talk about in our youth ministry, when I hire summer interns, when I hire full-time staff, is, I don't, I don't try and put a biblical spin on it, but it's true in a sense, in a lot of ways, there are scripture that remind us of this, is that we have to remember that we are all on the same team.

[ 13 : 07 ] As one of the things. So, so when I make you mad, when I, which I inevitably do because I'm a sinner. And also, I just know my personality and know who I am. I'm very aware, I think.

The reality is I would, as I make you mad, remember that we're on the same team. And I try and remind all of our staff and all of our people that work with us.

Hey, we all serve the same Jesus. We all belong to the same family. We belong to the same people.

We've all been changed by Jesus. And this is the, one of the markers of this family we belong to. And, and, and the beauty of this is, is that it's not something that we've done, right?

We haven't done this. I haven't made this happen, right? Because the Bible talks about how the, how people don't have this ability innately. We don't just make ourselves good and make ourselves right and make ourselves holy.

[ 14 : 07 ] Right? People are sinful since. Genesis. Jeremiah talks about how our hearts are deceitful above all things and desperately wicked.

The Apostle Paul reminds us that in Romans chapter three, that all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. So something must have happened to change us. Something must have transformed us.

Something has made us new creations in Christ. And it was Jesus. This, this whole portion of, of chapter 10 of Hebrews is, is, is we kind of end it in the later verses of chapters, verses 24 and 25. With like exhortation to do, to love one another, to care for one another. So to live as that family. But he doesn't leave the summary of, he doesn't leave the, this exhortation with no reminder of the beauty of the gospel.

He's reminding us that we've been made clean. He's been reminding us that we, he's, he's taking his whole argument for the first nine plus chapters of Hebrews and saying, here's a little summary of what I've already said.

[ 15 : 22 ] Remember Jesus, our great high priest. Remember you've been cleansed by Jesus. Remember how good he is. Remember, cling to this goodness, this truth, so that you might love one another as Christ has loved us.

And so we're a family of changed people. Not because of us, but because, as 2 Corinthians 5 verse 21 puts it, God made him who had no sin to be sin for us.

So that in him, we might become the righteousness of God. And it's because of Jesus, this is why this is such a wild passage.

Like this is a, this is truly a wild passage. Like, and again, like this, I don't know how engineers talk about certain things because it's an engine, but I know how like pastors talk about the Bible. Like this is wild.

And y'all are like, it's a Bible passage. But the reality of what this means, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, something that we could not do, we could not enter the holy places.

[ 16 : 25 ] Only the priest, the great, the high priest could do it. By a new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is through his flesh, that his death achieved for us. His flesh, meaning that his death allows us this, this access to the God of the universe.

And since we have a great high priest over the house of God, let us draw near. We get to draw near to the God of the universe. As God's people, we've been changed.

And that change allows us access to God. It's a transformation that will trump anything we try and achieve this next year.

As you wake up tomorrow and you look at your list of things you're going to do, there is no change greater than what Christ has done for his people. By giving them access to the very God of the universe.

And so we're a family that's been changed, but we have to place our confidence in things. There are lots of things that we can place our confidence in. You know, we live in a world full of great things.

[ 17 : 33 ] Money, power, our reputation. I can put my confidence in anything in the world that I really want to. I can create my own little space where I'm living in with confidence.

I could put it in my reputation of just being a pastor. But our confidence in what we do and how we live in this world, whether we are interacting with Christians or not, our confidence must be in Jesus and his sacrifice.

I'm confident because he's the high priest over the house of God. See, he's been given a title that I could never achieve.

And I can be confident in him. I can trust him because of what he has done. I can tell you that I would not walk into a lawyer's office and be confident in asking them to fix a sickness.

And in the same way, I wouldn't walk into a doctor's office and be confident in their ability to handle my lawsuit. And in the same way, I wouldn't walk into an accountant's office and say, do you know how to translate Spanish really well?

[ 18 : 54 ] Okay. Like there are people who have these expertise and these titles and these realities. And what we see with Jesus is we can place all of our confidence in our interactions with one another as a family, good, bad, or ugly, because he is the great high priest.

Not me. Not something I've done. But because of him. And not only that, we can see a little bit of his character as well.

Though we know Jesus as the son of God, the lamb who was slain, the king of kings, lord of lords, the high priest of the new covenant, the one who changes people. We can remember that he is faithful.

He is faithful to his people. Let us hold fast the confession of our hope. Let us hold fast to what we have spoken as truth, that Jesus is Lord.

Without wavering for he who promised this, his work, he is faithful. If we were to sit here and I could list a million times where I have failed.

[ 20 : 11 ] I'm sure all of us could, to some degree, sit here and just, if we just wrote notes today and just said, these are the times that I have failed. But then we sat down and we wrote down, how has Jesus failed?

We couldn't. Jesus, the perfect son of God. Jesus, without sin. Jesus, the one who we can put our confidence in.

Not just because we see it in his sinless life, but because we see it by the power of his resurrection. His death changes us.

And his resurrection is a reminder of the confidence we have in the life eternal. And so we are, we're seeing that, that we're a family, right?

We're a family. We're defined by certain things. We're changed. We're, we're, we're changed by Christ. We're confident in Christ. Christ. But there's a reason for our confidence.

[ 21 : 12 ] And, and it's pretty much an overlapping point to some degree when you're trying to remember this, that we're confident in Christ, but we're anchored by Christ. And the reason why I want to do this, because there's just, again, this moment where you, when you study things and you read, and, and I want to point out in verse two, verse 20 of chapter 10, it says, I'll read the whole thing for just a second.

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 us through the curtain, that Jesus has given us a new and living way, the access to God, ways to be in relationship and connection and contact with him.

This new and living way is translated differently. Right? We, we see it here in our English versions as, as new and living, and we can kind of talk through that, but it means permanent.

A permanent way. It's an open way that is never closed to his people. It's an ongoing, never ending access to the God of the universe.

And if you just say, oh, it's a, you know, it's a living plant. We understand that the plant will die one day. And if we just kind of use our regular kind of way of talking about the word living, it's, it's alive.

[ 22 : 32 ] but the emphasis of these words in the Greek are meant to remind us that it's this never ending. You cannot stop.

When you are in Christ, you have this ongoing forever access to the Father, access to God in a way that we had never had before. And the great high priest who has gone before us has made this possible.

Jesus has opened this door and allowed us in and you forever have access. You have forever VIP access to the God of the universe. And there is no end to it in sight.

Because one day when we do leave this world, when we pass away, we still have access. And so this is a great anchor to us is that it's ongoing forever and never ends.

This Jesus who is faithful has given us this great anchor and it's a reminder even if you, I use this word simply because in chapter 6 of Hebrews, he talks about Jesus and this promise of Jesus being the anchor to our soul.

[ 23 : 38 ] And this idea that Jesus is greater than anything, everything that you can imagine, whatever religion, idol, or whatever you could place, he is still greater.

And so Jesus anchors us, he holds us, he allows us this opportunity that never ends. And it's more than just living, it's eternal.

And so as people, as a family of God that we're called to one another, we're meant to be connected to one another. We're meant to be more than just passers-by in this room.

So we've been changed by Christ, we've been anchored to Christ, we're called to point each other to Christ.

And I want us to go back to this idea of family and the ideal that we're trying to hope for. And listen, I often fail miserably.

[ 24 : 50 ] I know my nature to a degree or at least I'm willing to admit this part of my nature. I really want to be right in an argument.

I love it. I just do. I think a lot of us do. If not all of us. We really, when we're in a disagreement or in, whether it's deeply sinful or just trying to remind someone that, you know, someone played this

character in a movie and you're like, I remember the actor was that, you just want to be right. Whatever it is, you love it. And we are called to point each other to Christ and it is rooted in this idea of family, right?

In verses 24 and 25, let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together as the habit of some, but encouraging one another and all the more as you see the day drawing near, the day of Jesus' return.

And so we have an end date for this relationship, this thing we're supposed to do together as God's people. When Jesus returns, and so until then, so we've got this, because we don't know, we've got this vision for this day that we don't yet know.

[ 26 : 08 ] That we're called to meet together, to encourage one another, to point one another to Christ. Christ. But I often want to do that so I can tell you, it's not about pointing you to Christ, it's about telling you where you're wrong, where I've caught you, ha ha, I got you, you're wrong, because I like being right more than anything.

But what the writer of Hebrews is trying to tell us is that our posture as a family of God is one that is called to encourage and love and care for one another.

That we're called to lean in towards one another. What do we do with all this great information that we've been given about Jesus, that he is our savior, that he has cleansed us, that he has made us holy, that he has brought us out of darkness into light, out of death into life.

What are we supposed to do with all this good information and it's supposed to draw us to one another? It's supposed to bring us together. Christianity is not a lone ranger game.

The things we do, this is not about just you and Jesus. Yes, there is this individual relationship between you and the Lord, but there is this community that you are called to. And it is a delightfully weird and awesome, amazing, and broken community that we are called to.

[ 27 : 39 ] we are called to each other. And I love that we as a church are committed to things like grace groups and the things that small groups and in the youth ministry we have them and our adults have them and we're called to connect with one another and be a part of each other's lives.

But we're called to do so in order that we might honor the one who's called us. We're called to each other to love.

We're called to each other in order that we might love each other well. And listen, there are hard things that have to be said at times. There are hard words that have to be spoken. Hard, not meaning just mean but difficult and loving.

Consider how to stir one another to love and good works. not neglecting to meet together that we are called to stir one another up to honor the Lord.

Why? Why? Because this Jesus has made us new because this Jesus has transformed us because this Jesus has brought us into life with him.

[ 28 : 57 ] And so we do this until he returns. We're called to offer faithful scripture led sanctifying care for one another.

And oftentimes because of this, this is why I ask this question when you like criticism, like we often interpret someone walking with us in our lives, walking with us with the sins that we struggle with, walking with us in the hardships, the brokenness, the hurt, the pain.

we don't want to receive, we just, oh, it's your just, why are you being so critical? Why are you telling me what to do with my life? We get this place where we get more defensive.

And so there's kind of two sides of the coin. It's not just that we need to be people who receive sanctification and the love of our brothers and sisters in Christ.

It's not that we just receive that well. That's true, but we also need to give it well. Because there's also this call for us to love one another well. Love and good, to stir one another up to love and good works, encouraging one another.

[ 30 : 14 ] Our hearts have to be transformed by Jesus in order that we might pour out into other people. We cannot do this by ourselves. I'm not led to walk with someone in their life lovingly, with care, on my own.

This is why we have to be a family rooted in the gospel. We have to be a family rooted in change that's done by Christ, because if we aren't, what we will be are people who just like to give really good advice about what it looks like to be holy.

It might look like, oh, this looks good. You do that. But when our hearts are transformed, when we've been made new by Jesus, we are able to interact with people, interact with our brothers and

sisters in Christ in a way that looks at them with care and compassion and humility, humility, so that we might love them well and point them to Jesus.

We have this great Savior, and so we are motivated and moved to love one another by the love that he has poured out on us. Jesus has given us a living way, a way that we might know life and life eternally.

love one and we are called to walk with one another and love one another and point them to that way. I know a lot of us, including myself, have had seasons of struggle and loneliness, times where we felt alone and isolated, unloved, hurt, uncared for.

[ 31 : 52 ] someone pointed out to me this couple of lines from the Harry Potter movies, which, sorry, there's a wonderful, one of my favorite things is that there's this article you can find online, if you go Google Jesus and Christianity and Harry Potter, there's an article where she, J.K.

Rowling's interviewed about the themes of her books and how the boy who lived and the resurrection and all these things of redemption and evil being defeated, all these things are pointed out and she has a background, having grown up in church, I'm not saying I support everything she does, I just want to make sure I draw a line right there real quick, but there's a line in the movie where Harry is interacting with Luna Lovegood, listen, it would take me another half hour to try to explain who these characters are, thank you, yes, but there's just this beauty of what she's saying to Harry, Luna says, we believe you by the way, she's talking about how the main evil character is back, we believe you by the way that he who must not be named is back and you fought him and the ministry and the prophet are conspiring against you and

Dumbledore, and so this is Harry interacting with someone who believes him that the main bad guy is back, thanks, seems you're about the only ones that do, and then Luna says, I don't think that's true, but I suppose that's how he, Voldemort, he wants you to feel, what do you mean?

Says Harry, well if I were Voldemort, I'd want you to feel cut off from everyone else because if you're just alone, you're not as much of a threat.

If I were you know who, if I were the devil, if I were the world, if I were sin, I'd want you to feel cut off from everyone else because if you're alone, you're not as much of a threat.

[ 34 : 13 ] But you are not alone. Christ has called you as his people to himself, but he has called you to a body of people who delight in the Lord Jesus and delight to walk together in this life in order that we might know Jesus and point each other to the Christ, to point each other to him, the one who changes us, the one who is our anchor, the one whom we can trust.

Let's pray. Father, we're grateful for this time, this morning to be together. May we remember, Lord, that you are faithful to us, you are good to us, you care for us, you have us in mind even now as you, Jesus, as you sit on the right hand of God the Father, you are advocating even now for us.

Father, help us to remember that we are not alone, that we have Jesus, that we have the Holy Spirit and he has given us his people so that we might be together, be a community, that is called to you, that is worshiping you and will be with you both now and forever.

I pray this in Jesus' name. Amen. For more information, visit us online at [southwood.org](http://southwood.org).