

BUMC Weekly Bible and Sermon Study

Sermon: “The Power of Us” from the “Anchored” sermon series

Scripture: Hebrews 10:19-25

Key take-aways from the Scripture

- In this section of the Book of Hebrews, we are continuing our study into what it takes for us to maintain stamina and perseverance in our faith. In these verses, we are specifically looking at why we need to be close to God and encourage one another.
- In verse 19-20, we read: “...since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, by a new living way opened for us through the curtain...” This beginning part of chapter 10 harkens to the earlier sections of Hebrews by discussing the idea of Jesus as the High Priest and the Old and New Covenant. Jesus offered full access to his followers in the heavenly Most Holy Place (4:16, 6:20).” We are no separated from God and have a personal relationship with our Lord.
- Verses 21-22 highlights how we need to draw closer to God with faith and sincerity. When we draw closer to God “with the full assurance that faith brings...” we live in confidence and assurance and are made “clean” in order to be in the presence of God
- Verse 23 says, “Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful.” Whereas the author of Hebrews’ first concern is faith, this verse speaks to the need for hope. This hope allows us, as followers of Christ, to endure trials and temptations and follow in the path of righteousness.
- Verse 24 says, “And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds...”. This third issue raised by the author speaks of the importance of encouraging one another in love and good deeds to draw closer to God. We must always consider what love requires of us and how we can help others in this pursuit.
- Verse 25 says, “...not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another-and all the more as you see the Day approaching.”

Key take-aways from the Sermon

- In today's Scripture text, the writer moves from the theology we have read in the previous sermons to practice. Every sermon needs a "so what" or "what must we do" section!
 - Whenever a text begins with a "therefore", you can expect to see a point of application being raised.
 - It is helpful to think of the previous ten chapters of Hebrews as the "whereas" text, and beginning with chapter 10, "therefore".
- Now that we understand this section of Hebrews as a "call to action", there are three admonitions to consider from today's reading: (1) "Let us approach God with a sincere heart in full assurance of *faith*." (v. 22); (2) "Let us hold fast to the confession of our *hope*, without wavering." (v. 23); and (3) "Let us consider how to provoke one another to *love* and good deeds." (v. 24).
 - Notice each of the italicized words: faith, hope and love. This call to action involves our core values and harkens to 1 Cor 13.
 - Also, notice the pronouns in each of these admonitions: *us*. It is not singular personal, rather plural personal. It serves as a reminder that faith is not just a personal experience but a communal/collective experience. Also, see v.19 "brothers and sisters..." We cannot be disciples in isolation!
- Us vs. Them: the us and them mentality stems from the human need to belong to a group. We are all social creatures with a need to belong, however, we can sometimes devalue others when we surround ourselves with "our group". This ultimately dehumanizes us!
 - The Great Commandment (Matt 22:37-39) and the Great Commission (Matt 28:19). The church is a *we* proposition and not *us vs. them*!
- In verse 24 (the third admonition from above), we see the idea of "provoking" one another. Sometimes we get on each other's nerves and this term is normally defined in these terms. In this context, think of this as a "prodding" or to be made better.
- As we grow and develop throughout our life, we are called to awareness of a greater joy and purpose. We will find our greater joy in Jesus and fix our anchor in a High Priest, who gives us full access to the Father. Also, anchored to the communion of the saints, who will love us and support us in our journey through life.
- We find our joy at the table with a Host who *gets* us. All of us!

Questions for Personal Reflection or Group Discussion

- What were your key take-aways from the sermon? How can you apply this to your everyday life?
- Reflect on a time in your life where someone encouraged you in your faith. Now, reflect on when you were a source of encouragement to someone in their faith.
- Why do you think it is important to be active in a small group in church?
- In what ways should our faith be a communal/collective experience rather than an individual one? Why is this important?
- How can we avoid living in a *us vs. them* mindset?
- In what ways can we *provoke* one another to good deeds within the church/society?

