

Hold onto the Faith We Profess in Christ: Part 3
With God Helping Us
 Sunday, 7/2/17

Text: Hebrews 10:26-39

Review:

In part one of our message, on Sunday, June 11, we considered the question: **What do we profess?** I wonder how many of us know what we believe and confess. The invitation for us is to *keep a firm grip on the promises that keep us going. He always keeps his word (Hebrews 10:23 MSG)*. We want to know what we profess and we want to get in active obedience to what the Lord says. It is not enough simply to believe; our beliefs call us to action.

There are promises from the Lord that keep us going. And, we have to accept the challenges associated with those promises that help us keep a firm grip on what we believe in the Lord. It is not enough simply to believe; our beliefs call us to action. *With God helping us, we live into the actions the Lord has for our lives.*

From Hebrews 10:19-25, I believe that the Lord issues 5 challenges to us.

1. Make time to draw near to God through spiritual practices on a regular basis. What are your regular spiritual practices?
2. Choose to confess and hold onto your hope in the Lord because he keeps his promises. What are you confessing and believing? What is the Lord asking you to live into?
3. Find ways to provoke one another on toward love and good deeds. In what ways are you provoking others to love well and to serve faithfully?
4. Prioritize meeting together to worship the Lord, to minister to and serve one another, and to get equipped and resourced. What are you prioritizing on your calendar?
5. Choose to encourage and build up one another. What are you saying and doing to promote others?

In Part 2 of our message on Sunday, June 18, we considered our corporate identity and the implications for us as a body of Christ. It is important for us to *Recognize Our Corporate Identity*. Five times in Hebrews 10:19-25, the Scripture says, *“Let us....”* It is a challenge for Westerners to get present to our corporate identity assumed in this passage.

1. We are created to be unique individuals who do life together in community.
2. The principle of differentiation helps us understand how to live as a unique individual in the midst of community.

Then, we talked a little about **Living from and into Our Story**. We spent some time thinking about our story together in the Lord and as part of the Joshua Generation.

Each of us needs our own experiences with the Lord. And, our congregation as a whole needs to experience more of the Lord together.

Here is what I believe. As we follow the Lord, I believe that we are about to step into a new season of seeing and experiencing the signs and wonders of the Lord. I believe we will experience the breakthroughs of God. I believe that we will experience new levels of joy that comes from partnering with the Lord to take new territory for the King of Glory.

Illustration: Share about the Lord meeting the youth and giving them experiences with him at camp (June 19-23, power encounters), and Life House (June 28, worshiped in his presence until 11:00pm).

Today, pay attention to what gets stirred up in you. Pay attention to what the Lord highlights or puts his finger on. Pay attention to the promptings, to the hope, and to the invitation of the Lord.

Message for today:

1. **Let us embrace the life Jesus came to give us by living worthy of the Lord (26).**
 - a. *If we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, no sacrifice for sins is left, 27 but only a fearful expectation of judgment and of raging fire that will consume the enemies of God. 28 Anyone who rejected the law of Moses died without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. How much more severely do you think a man deserves to be punished who has trampled the Son of God under foot, who has treated as an unholy thing the blood of the covenant that sanctified him, and who has insulted the Spirit of grace? (Hebrews 10:26-29).* (Note: Verse 29 goes on to identify the “three witnesses.”)
 - b. Let us say “no” to willful sin (26).
 - i. To “deliberately keep on sinning” is to “*sin willfully—This is not an isolated failure resulting from weakness or ignorance, but a continual commission of sin by a person who has a full awareness of what he is doing (New Commentary on the Whole Bible– NT).*”
 - c. Those who say “yes” to Jesus are rescued from the fiery judgment reserved for those who choose to war against God (27).
 - d. Jesus said, if you love me, you will obey me (John 14:15, 23-24).
 - i. When we choose to sin willfully, deliberately, and “ongoingly,” we are not just rejecting a law code like what was given to Moses; rather, we are rejecting the mercy of the Lord Jesus Christ (28).
 - e. Notes on 10:26-39 *Warnings against Shrinking Back*. The author warns of the impending judgment upon those who willfully reject the faith. Yet his purpose is to exhort the readers in their faith, a faith that he affirms based on their past perseverance. (Shared from PocketBible for Windows <http://www.laridian.com>.)
 - f. Notes on 10:26-27
 - i. *sinning deliberately*. Willfully sinning and refusing to repent.

- ii. *after receiving*. The author refers especially to people within the Christian community, who have thus heard the truth. The fact that they “go on sinning deliberately even after receiving knowledge of the truth” indicates that the people in view are not (and never were) genuine believers; that is, these are people who have never genuinely embraced the gospel in a way that has resulted in a life of faith, obedience, and the bearing of fruit. no longer remains a sacrifice for sins. This could refer to the inability of willful, unrepentant sinners to be restored (see 6:4-6), **or more likely to the fact that there is no place for them to turn for forgiveness outside of Christ's sacrifice—which they have rejected.**
 - iii. *judgment*. All people face judgment (see 9:27-28), and apart from Christ's sacrifice his adversaries receive eternal damnation.
 - iv. **These verses, then, function as a means used by God to call genuine Christians to faith, obedience, and perseverance; and, if there is no evidence of fruit in one's life, to challenge such people to give fearful consideration as to whether they are in fact genuine believers.** (Shared from PocketBible for Windows <http://www.laridian.com>.)
 - g. With God helping us, let us embrace the life Jesus came to give us by living worthy of the Lord.
2. **Let us honor with exaltation the Son of God and his sacrifice (29).**
- a. *How much more severely do you think a man deserves to be punished who has trampled the Son of God under foot, who has treated as an unholy thing the blood of the covenant that sanctified him, and who has insulted the Spirit of grace? (Hebrews 10:29).*
 - b. To trample under foot is an intentional act of rejecting Jesus and disdainng him.
 - c. With God helping us, let us honor with exaltation the Son of God and his sacrifice.
3. **Let us treat as holy the life, death, sacrifice, and resurrection of Jesus and his blood (29).**
- a. *...who has treated as an unholy thing the blood of the covenant that sanctified him...*
 - b. To count Jesus' blood as common is to consider Jesus' death a common death.
 - c. With God helping us...
4. **Let us honor and bless the revealing work of the Holy Spirit (29).**
- a. *... and who has insulted the Spirit of grace...*
 - b. To reject the crucified One is to insult the Spirit of grace, who reveals him.
 - c. Zachariah 12:10. God gives the Spirit of grace to the Jews to enable them to recognize and weep for the pierced One—i.e., Jesus the crucified.
 - d. With God helping us...
5. **Let us develop a holy respect for the Righteous Judge of heaven and earth (30 - 31).**

- a. *For we know him who said, "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," and again, "The Lord will judge his people." 31 It is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God (Hebrews 10:30-31).*
 - b. Whether judgment is fearful or not depends upon the individual involved. Standing before the Lord would not be a bad experience for those who love God, but it would be the worst thing that could happen to those who reject Jesus.
 - c. Many people in our day tend to react in the opposite way to the way people used to think about God. Today, we don't want to imagine God being angry with anyone.
 - i. Note on Heb. 10:26-31. We are probably as greatly deceived as were those in earlier centuries who treated these passages as a warning not so much against sinning as against baptism.
 - ii. It is absolutely basic to both Judaism and Christianity that there will come a time when the living God will bring his just and wise rule to bear fully and finally on the world. On that day those who willfully stand out against his rule, live a life which scorns the standards which emerge in creation itself and in God's good intention for it, and spurn all attempts at reformation or renewal, will face a punishment of destruction. We who have got as far at least as reading Hebrews, and trying to see what it might mean for us, should be all the more eager that there will never come a time when we might turn our backs wholesale on God in this way. (Shared from PocketBible for Windows <http://www.laridian.com>. N.T. Wright.)
 - d. With God helping us...
6. **Let us stand our ground in the face of hard times (32-34).**
- a. *Remember those earlier days after you had received the light, when you stood your ground in a great contest in the face of suffering. 33 Sometimes you were publicly exposed to insult and persecution; at other times you stood side by side with those who were so treated. 34 You sympathized with those in prison and joyfully accepted the confiscation of your property, because you knew that you yourselves had better and lasting possessions. (Hebrews 10:32-34).*
 - b. Even when we experience public insult and persecution (33).
 - c. Even when we suffer for standing up for the poor, the marginalized, and those in need (33-34).
 - d. Even when we lose possessions or public standing because of systemic injustice, because we know that God repays, rewards, and keeps his promises of a better future (34).
 - e. With God helping us...
7. **Let us hold onto our confidence in the reward because God is a rewarder of those who seek him (35).**
- a. *So do not throw away your confidence; it will be richly rewarded (35).*
 - b. *And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him (Hebrews 11:6).*
 - c. With God helping us...

8. **Let us persevere and overcome by the grace of the Lord and do our part, because he will do his part and keep his promises to come to us (36).**
 - a. *You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what he has promised (Hebrews 10:36).*
 - b. With God helping us...

9. **Let us stand up as believers and refuse to give up or give in (37 - 39).**
 - a. *For in just a very little while, "He who is coming will come and will not delay. 38 But my righteous one will live by faith. And if he shrinks back, I will not be pleased with him." 39 But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who believe and are saved (Hebrews 10:37-39).*
 - b. If you don't quit, you win.
 - c. He who stands to the end and who doesn't give up wins.
 - d. And, we stand in the grace of the Lord and by the power of his might.
 - e. With God helping us...

Application

1. What got stirred up in you?
2. What did the Lord highlight or put his finger on?
3. What were the promptings of the Lord, the hope he wanted to impart, or the invitation the Lord gave to you?
4. **Let this be our confession: *With the Lord helping me, I will....***

Lord's Supper