

Hebrews 10:19-25

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[0 : 00] Now let's turn to that passage that we read in Hebrews chapter 10, and especially the verses from verse 19 to 25.

But we'll select the word from verse 22, the beginning of verse 22, as our main text. Let us draw near to God. Let us draw near to God.

Down through the centuries, and all over the world, people have been trying to find their way to God, or find their way to ultimate reality.

And so few people seem to have found what they're looking for. And those who have claimed to have found it seem to give conflicting answers as to what ultimate reality is, or who God is.

And so often the human race becomes frustrated and seems to abandon the idea of the search for God, or the search for ultimate reality.

[1 : 25] And we have been living through such a time in the 20th century, when people have become frustrated because of all the conflicting ideas about it.

So many people just give up hope of their being some kind of answer or some kind of absolute reality. But because of that, there then comes what has been called a spiritual vacuum.

In other words, people trying simply to get on with living everyday life, and being satisfied with that, and forgetting about the big questions. It isn't really a stable condition.

It's like a vacuum, and you know, a vacuum tries to pull things into it. Because a vacuum is nothingness. And nature hates a vacuum.

It hates nothing. And everything tries to get in there to fill that vacuum. Well, again, that's what's happening at the present time. And people are again turning to some kind of spiritual search, and looking to all kinds of religions and philosophies for answers.

[2 : 34] Well, the Christian Gospel speaks to us about the way to God. And because of that, of course, many people view the Christian Gospel as just another one of all these religions or views or philosophies by which people search for God.

The Bible talks about drawing near to God, as we have it in this verse. But the difference is that this is not just one more futile search on the part of the human race for ultimate reality.

It is totally different in nature. This is presented to us in the Bible as the only way.

Not just our way, but the only way. Jesus said, I am the way, the truth, and the life. Now, you might say, well, other people make these kind of exclusive claims.

The prophet Muhammad says that he is the true prophet of God. And millions of his followers claim that even fanatically today.

[3 : 51] But there is another difference. Not only does Jesus say he is the unique way, but also this way is presented to us not as a human effort or initiative at all.

It is presented to us as the initiative and the achievement of God. The important thing ultimately is not whether we are searching for God, but whether God is searching for us.

And the Christian gospel tells us that God in Christ has come to search for us and to find us. And so when we read here about drawing near to God, this is not something that we do just of our own initiative.

It is on the basis of what has just been said in the previous verses about what God has done. You see, all human attempts to discover God or to discover ultimate reality, they are all spoiled.

And they are all frustrated by human sin and human ignorance. So that in our own unaided efforts, we cannot find the ultimate truth.

[5 : 14] Because our own vision is bent or twisted by sin, by our own self-centeredness, so that even although the answer is staring us in the face, in the creation around us, yet because of our distorted vision, we cannot see it.

And that's why all these efforts, well-meaning and sincere so they may be, are doomed to failure. But the Christian message is that God has done something in Jesus Christ that gets around this problem because it deals with the very problem itself, the problem of sin.

So then, I want to look with you at some of the things suggested in these verses on this theme. And the first one is this. Why we should draw near to God in this way that he has appointed.

Our text is, Let us draw near to God. Well, why should we draw near to God according to the teaching of the Bible?

Well, we're told in verses 19 to 21 the answers to that question. Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the most holy place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near to God.

[6 : 52] You see, all of what goes before is the preparation for this statement, let us draw near to God, this encouragement to come and to draw near to God.

The reasons there are given beforehand. It's described as a new and living way. Now, sometimes we present the Christian message, and rightly so, as something that is old.

Because the Christian message is not something that just started up yesterday or started up with this particular branch of the church or that particular branch of the church.

Always be wary of groups that come along to you and say that they, suddenly, in the last few years, have discovered really what God is saying to the world, and they can't trace back in history what God has been doing.

The Christian church, the true, historic Christian church, under whatever label it may go today, traces back through history, right back into the New Testament, and right back into the Old Testament what God has been doing.

[8 : 05] You see, the Christian message is an old one. It is based in history, sometimes remote history, right back into the Old Testament, right back into what today is called prehistory, because it is before the time when we have any other written records apart from what the Bible itself tells us about these days.

But most importantly, it goes right back to that great historical time that is right in the face of known history, the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ in the time of the Roman Empire.

And you see, the Christian message is firmly founded on what happened in the past, approximately 2,000 years ago. So, it is something old.

It is something ancient. It is something established over long centuries. But, the Bible also describes this message this way as something new.

Even in the Old Testament, it was promised that there would be a new covenant made. And that, of course, was the New Testament. That was the cross-afar Westore that was the Arrived under Great