

HOPE IN GOD ABOVE ALL                      HEB 10:11-25  
25TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST      SUN NOV 15, '15

<sup>11</sup> And every priest stands daily at his service, offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. <sup>12</sup> But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God, <sup>13</sup> waiting from that time until his enemies should be made a footstool for his feet. <sup>14</sup> For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified.

<sup>15</sup> And the Holy Spirit also bears witness to us; for after saying,

<sup>16</sup> "This is the covenant that I will make with them  
after those days, declares the Lord:

I will put my laws on their hearts, and write them on their minds,"

<sup>17</sup> then he adds,

"I will remember their sins and their lawless deeds no more."

<sup>18</sup> Where there is forgiveness of these, there is no longer any offering for sin.

<sup>19</sup> Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, <sup>20</sup> by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh, <sup>21</sup> and since we have a great priest over the house of God, <sup>22</sup> 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.

<sup>23</sup> Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. <sup>24</sup> And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, <sup>25</sup> 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.

Yesterday I saw person with Christmas lights strung on bushes.

What struck me about it was they were wearing shorts.

This illustrates human compulsion to focus on

what is coming up that I am looking forward to.

Another word for this expectation of something good is hope.

I have learned people cannot live without hope.

If person owes more on house or car than it will be worth,

will they keep putting money into it? Why bother?

Student struggling in school - without hope they will finish,  
graduate, it will pay off in life - will quit trying

Someone poor, unemployed - without hope of good job,  
getting out of debt - will just do nothing.

Someone experiencing anger or apathy in marriage-  
without hope of reconciliation & love - won't bother trying.

Why do anything if there is no hope of ever doing enough?

Text reminds us because of Christ we do have hope  
therefore there are things we do.

And we make plans for good things we look forward to doing  
because without a plan we still tend to do nothing.  
This is why today we make plans for spiritual life, because:

WE HAVE HOPE IN JESUS' COMPLETE CLEANSING  
WE HELP EACH OTHER LIVE IN LOVE TOGETHER  
WE HOLD ON TO GOD'S FAITHFUL PROMISES

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If you had busy day yesterday, raking leaves, washing windows,  
cleaning house, shopping,

what did you look forward to doing? Sit down & put feet up.

This is what text pictures Jesus doing in v. 12,

in contrast to O.T. priests in v 11 constantly standing up,

because he kept offering same sacrifices over and over,

with no hope of ever being done cleaning up mess of sin.

But Jesus sits down at right hand of God.

This is sign he is all done because his one sacrifice of self  
on cross was enough to take away all sin forever.

We hope in God above all things because

even if no guarantee things will ever improve in this world,

no guarantee our work will ever accomplish anything,

we always live and work with confident hope of the good

God himself is doing because of what Jesus has done.

Text shows that while work is finished, results keep going on.

v. 13 says Jesus puts his feet up, even while still waiting

for all his enemies to be put under his feet.

This world is still full of sin, suffering, sickness, death,  
but because of what Jesus has finished doing,  
they are all coming to an end.

Satan may keep kicking but it is futile, he is already pinned.

No matter how he shakes fist, he only rattles his chains.

In our own personal lives are ongoing results of Jesus' deed.

v. 14 says we have been made perfect forever by grace  
but are still being sanctified in our behavior.

Jesus has taken away all the thistles our sins with forgiveness

but this forgiveness is still working to take away  
the scars of sin and seeds that continue to sprout

as long as we live in this body.

You might say the operation is a success

but now we continue rehabilitation therapy.

So v. 16 says, he puts his laws on our hearts and minds

because he remembers our lawless deeds no more.

Since Jesus has finished keeping whole law for us

we are free from burden & punishment of the law

It is because of the hope of freedom this gives us

that now obeying God is on our hearts and minds

which means we freely desire and choose to do it.

Instead of hopeless despair that says,

“Why try if we are doomed anyway?”

or foolish false faith which says,

“Why bother if we are forgiven anyway?”

Confident hope says, as Paul wrote to the Corinthians,

“thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus

Christ. Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable,

always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the

Lord your labor is not in vain.” (1 Cor. 15:57f)

It is because of this hope that

## WE HELP EACH OTHER LIVE IN LOVE TOGETHER

<sup>24</sup> And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, <sup>25</sup> 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.

The day is drawing near. That is not talking about

how many shopping days until Christmas

but about Jesus coming again to fulfill all our hopes.

Without hope, we can't manage to do anything.

When we have hope in God, it fuels energetic activity  
even more productive than putting up Christmas lights  
in mid November.

Having plan & to-do list helps make activity productive,  
not just running in circles.

Take out spiritual life plan if you brought it with you.

If not, take one from end of pew & pen from rack in pew.

One things we do is stir one another up, encourage each other.

Who do you know that can use encouragement  
and reminder of hope we have?

How often do you yourself benefit from encouragement?

Make note of how you plan to be involved in fellowship.

Beside those who can use encouragement there are those  
who don't yet realize the hope we have  
because of what Jesus has done for us.

How many people do you know that you might hope  
would learn more about this, maybe through you.

Few weeks ago we considered importance of proclaiming  
God above all things.

Make note of who you can plan to witness to.

An important part of our witness is the way we live our life.

Few weeks ago we considered importance of loving God  
above all thing and how this leads to our loving others.

v. 24 says we are to stir up one another to love.

Our sanctification therapy is still work in progress.

How does our relationship with others need strengthening?

Make note of how you plan to grow in Christian behavior.

One part of our behavior that flows from hope in God is service.

v. 24 goes on: stir up one another to good works.

What works of service to others has God  
equipped and empowered you to do,

knowing that your labor in the Lord is not in vain?

Make note of what you plan to do in service to others.

v. 25 says as we do this, we don't neglect to meet together.

An important part of our hope is that we are not all alone  
and on our own but are in this together.

Everyone who is part of a group has an important role  
in guiding, suggesting, supervising or supporting.

As part of the group of this church, how is God giving you  
abilities and opportunities to be a positive influence?

as voter, maybe teacher, board member,

leader in society, organizer of new activity.

Make note of how you can be involved in leadership.

It would be easy to be thinking already,

“I don’t know if I can really hope to do this.”

We can’t - if we are putting our hope in ourselves.

This is why we need to hope in God above all things.

We can’t base our confidence on any promises we make  
but...

#### WE HOLD ON TO GOD’S FAITHFUL PROMISES

<sup>19</sup> Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, <sup>20</sup> by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh, <sup>21</sup> and since we have a great priest over the house of God, <sup>22</sup> 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.

<sup>23</sup> Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful.

Other readings for today call for endurance through troubles.

Jesus says, He who endures to the end will be saved.

For us to stand firm, we need a firm place to stand.

We have a solid place to stand: the promises of God.

Children who grow up in tough neighborhoods  
too often end up with no hope.

what can make all the difference is having a home to go to  
where they are safe, secure, loved and provided for.

In this world, we live in a tough neighborhood.

But we have a safe house here, the house of God.

Text pictures temple of God in O.T., where God revealed  
his presence in the holy of holies, behind a curtain  
which only the high priest could enter once a year  
while sprinkling blood of a special sacrifice.

He did this with fear and trembling.

But Jesus, by sacrifice of his own blood

has opened this curtain wide open for us to come  
with bold confidence to our powerful, loving God.

In your house, you surely treat your guests well,

you might get drink or snack for them from refrigerator.

but special people have refrigerator privileges,

that is, they are not just guest, they belong there.

We have refrigerator privileges in God’s house.

We are welcome in God's house any time because  
we have been given the key, which is the blood of Jesus.  
We are free to come often to the safe house of worship.  
I look forward to going home to my house every night.  
I also look forward to coming to my Father's house.  
A few Sundays ago we considered importance of  
desiring God above all things.  
Make note of how often you hope to worship in God's house.  
v. 20 says this way has been opened up for us  
through Jesus flesh. He himself is the way to God.  
Jesus gives us his flesh and blood in Holy Communion  
which wonderfully connects us to God's grace & love.  
Make note of how often you hope to receive Communion.  
So, v. 22 says, let us draw near with a true heart.  
We can draw near to God with our hearts in prayer  
at any time and place, with assurance he hears us.  
What a wonderful privilege to have.  
Make note of how much time you hope to spend in prayer.  
v. 23 says let us hold fast the confession of our hope.  
Because our hope is based on the promises in God's word,  
way we hold fast to this hope is by holding to God's word.  
Confession means agreeing together.  
Studying God's word together, learning to agree on it,  
is how we hold on to word of God who holds on to us.  
Make note of how much time you hope to be in group study.  
Last Sun. we considered importance of trusting God above all.  
Finish Spiritual Life Plan by making note of how  
you hope to return to God financial gifts  
he has entrusted to you for use in his service.  
We act with bold confidence because none of what we hope for  
depends on our own abilities or accomplishments.  
If so, we would give up hope and do nothing.  
But we have hope because of all God continues to give us  
including his faithful promises for the future.  
All we do is hold on to his wonderful gifts to us.  
**WE HAVE HOPE IN JESUS' COMPLETE CLEANSING**  
By his sacrifice which has a continuing effect in our lives.  
**WE HELP EACH OTHER LIVE IN LOVE TOGETHER**  
meeting to encourage one another to love & good deeds  
**WE HOLD ON TO GOD'S FAITHFUL PROMISES**  
which we receive through his word and sacraments.