

## BETTER THAN

Andy Deane · 3/5/2023 · Hebrews 9-11

Today in Hebrews we'll be reminded that the gospel message should affect our lives in practical & powerful ways.

Hebrews 9:27-28, <sup>27</sup>Just as people are destined to die once, and after that to face judgment, <sup>28</sup>so Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many; and he will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him.

### **Jesus is BETTER THAN: Our Isolation**

Hebrews 10:22-25, <sup>22</sup>let us draw near to God with a sincere heart and with the full assurance that faith brings, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water. <sup>23</sup>Let us hold unwaveringly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. <sup>24</sup>And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, <sup>25</sup>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.

### **Why should we seek community over isolation? It's keeps you:**

1. Satisfied: *It is not good that the man should be alone* (Genesis 2:18)
2. Sound: *Whoever isolates himself seeks his own desire; breaks out against all sound judgment.* (Proverbs 18:1)
3. Safe: *Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.* (1 Peter 5:8)

### **How do we seek spiritual community over isolation?**

1. Draw close to God by being:
  - a. Responsive: *let us draw near...* (v.22a)
  - b. Real with God: *with a sincere heart...* (v.22b)
  - c. Confident: *with the full assurance that faith brings...* (v.22c)
2. Draw close to others by being:
  - a. Inspiring: *spur one another on...love...deeds...* (v.24a)
  - b. Consistent: *not giving up meeting together...* (v.25a)
  - c. Inconvenienced: *some are in the habit of doing...* (v.25b)
  - d. Encouraging: *but encouraging one another...* (v.25c)

### **Jesus is BETTER THAN: The Alternative**

Hebrews 10:26-31, <sup>26</sup>If we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, no sacrifice for sins is left,<sup>27</sup> but only a fearful expectation of judgment and of raging fire that will consume the enemies of God. <sup>28</sup>Anyone who rejected the law of Moses died without mercy on the testimony of 2 or 3 witnesses. <sup>29</sup>How much more severely do you think someone deserves to be punished who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, who has treated as an unholy thing the blood of the covenant that sanctified them, and who has insulted the Spirit of grace? <sup>30</sup>For we know him who said, "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," and again, "The Lord will judge his people." <sup>31</sup>It is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

### **When it comes to faith, it's important to consider the alternate ending of not choosing Jesus.**

- *It's a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God [as an unrepentant sinner]* (v.31)
- But it's amazing to live satisfied, secure and saved within those same hands [as a forgiven sinner]!

### **Jesus is BETTER THAN: Earthly Comforts**

Hebrews 10:32-35; <sup>11</sup>, <sup>32</sup>Remember those earlier days after you had received the light, when you endured in a great conflict full of suffering.<sup>33</sup> Sometimes you were publicly exposed to insult and persecution; at other times you stood side by side with those who were so treated. <sup>34</sup>You suffered along with those in prison and joyfully accepted the

confiscation of your property, because you knew that you yourselves had better and lasting possessions. <sup>35</sup> So do not throw away your confidence; it will be richly rewarded.

- Believers endured physical pain & inconvenience from others because they valued spiritual blessings the most!
- [God] has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. (Ephesians 1:3)

Hebrews 11:1, <sup>1</sup> Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see... <sup>3</sup> By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible... <sup>5</sup> By faith Enoch was taken from this life, so that he did not experience death: "He could not be found, because God had taken him away." For before he was taken, he was commended as one who pleased God. <sup>6</sup> 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... <sup>7</sup> By faith Noah, when warned about things not yet seen, in holy fear built an ark to save his family... <sup>8</sup> By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going. <sup>9</sup> By faith he made his home in the promised land like a stranger in a foreign country; he lived in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise. <sup>10</sup> For he was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God...<sup>13</sup> admitting that they were foreigners and strangers on earth...<sup>15</sup> If they had been thinking of the country they had left, they would have had opportunity to return. <sup>16</sup> Instead, they were longing for a better country—a heavenly one...<sup>23</sup> By faith Moses' parents hid him for three months after he was born, because they saw he was no ordinary child, and they were not afraid of the king's edict...<sup>24</sup> By faith Moses...<sup>25</sup> He chose to be mistreated along with the people of God rather than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin...<sup>31</sup> By faith the prostitute Rahab, because she welcomed the spies, was not killed with those who were disobedient. <sup>32</sup> And what more shall I say? I do not have time to tell about Gideon...

### **We possess our spiritual blessings through faith:**

- (11:1) DEFINITION OF FAITH: Faith comprehends God's spiritual blessings as fact, even though they cannot be experienced by physical senses. It's a conviction of their reality. Real faith in God alters our life because our belief determines our behavior (so if we aren't behaving a certain way it could be we don't really believe).
- (11:3) CREATION: faith helps us know God started it all
- (11:5-6) ENOCH: faith helped him please the Lord
- (11:7) NOAH: faith helped him heed God's warning
- (11:8-10) ABRAHAM: faith helped him leave comforts
- (11:13-16) ALL: faith helped them live like pilgrims
- (11:23) MOSES' PARENTS: faith helped them be bold
- (11:25) MOSES: faith helped him resist temptation
- (11:31) RAHAB: faith helped her receive forgiveness and a new start

Faith is only as great as the object you place it in. Let's place our faith in God.