

Introduction

Basically, the passage is telling us that because of Jesus & in Jesus, we have these 2 things: confidence, full access to God's presence and a great high priest.

As a result, H draws 5 exhortations, a warning against apostasy, and some closing comments. → I will cover only a few aspect of the passage.

Therefore, since we have

Therefore...for these reasons, consequently...wraps up and bring together previous teaching into a summary and an application

Because of Jesus, we now have a full access to God & a such a great high priest in Him who paid it all, therefore, let us...but be careful about the danger of apostasy...

Since we have confidence to enter the presence of a holy God and such a great high priest, the author of Hebrews issues 5 exhortations and warning against the danger of apostasy... we will focus only on 2 exhortations and the warning about apostasy because there is too much in this passage...too long

1. confidence to enter
 - a. the most holy place
 - i. accessible only once a year by one person, and only w/ blood
 - ii. now accessible by any children of God at any time w/ confidence
 - b. we often confuse confidence w/ arrogance as if it is wrong to be a Xian & be confident
 - i. Or resort to false humility...not being worthy, etc....
 - ii. or do any work as Jesus did it all
 - c. confidence as one of the most precious thing when it comes to religion
 - i. we can enter w/ confidence, w/ full assurance, w/o fear, doubts or uncertainty
 - ii. uncertainty for different reasons is usually the standard, right
 1. not sure you will be accepted, or heard,
 2. ancient gods were unpredictable in their behaviour
 - d. our confidence is based
 - i. on Jesus all sufficient, final work
 1. Jesus met the conditions for us
 - a. v.22 he made us fit to enter into the presence of a holy God
 - i. our hearts has been sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience & our bodies have been washed with pure water
 1. OT imagery referring to make someone ceremonially cleanse & holy to enter into God's presence
 - ii. Just a word about guilt: objective & subjective guilt

1. NH issues or weak conscience...everything is wrong when not necessarily the case.
2. We could say that God has been appeased by Jesus sacrifice
3. His work made us perfect before God and fit to enter God's presence
4. As a result, we have a privilege OT people did not have before us.
 - a. We have a full access to enter the very presence of God, which was reserved, to only the high priest once a year.
 - b. We have the presence of God with us, in us permanently
- ii. on God's character
 1. not going to be rejected
- e. we can enter w/o doubts or second thoughts
 - i. knowing we will be fully received if we approach as prescribed
 - ii. if we think otherwise, it is from the enemy or a message from past experience
2. a great high priest
 - a. who gave himself for us and continue to intercede for us as we speak
- 3. 5 exhortations**
 - a. Let us draw near to God...**
 - i. w/ a **sincere** heart in **full assurance** of faith
 1. w/ no duplicity or doubts/questions in our hearts
 - a. Ex. approaching God as a vending machine
 - b. Will God receive me?
 - ii. Do you draw near to God to regularly bring
 1. Thanksgiving & praise, prayers & petition that are in your hearts that you want to be changed in your life and in the life of those around you?
 2. Your anxiety & discouragement, fears & worries?
 3. To process your hurts & brokenness & be healed?
 - iii. It is the 1st place to go for comfort, for pouring out your heart, encouragement, replenishment, to receive strength, forgiveness, guidance & direction even before you ask someone.
 - iv. It is a spiritual experience for a taste of God.
 - v. The accomplishment of our 2025 vision starts right here in drawing near to God on a daily basis.
 1. If we don't do it, the rest of our "programs" become meaningless & irrelevant because they are not stamped by the presence of F
 2. How can we transform our community if we are not transformed ourselves?
 3. We get transformed by spending time in the presence of God on a regular basis
 - a. Xianity is not just about reading the B, but to meet w/our Father
 - b. To enjoy his love, goodness, his light, his sanctification
 - c. To experience God in Spirit
 - vi. Jesus paid with his life to pave the way to the Father for us so we can enter the Father's presence...so we can draw near & meet w/ him each day

1. I would like to submit to a few questions to your attention not for a guilt trip but to make us think & reflect.
 - a. Do you do it? If not why not?
 - i. Not a priority?
 - ii. Its boring
 - iii. In a burnout by the high demands & unattainable standards of the Xian life
 - iv. You are afraid. Fear to be known & exposed
 1. Shame or guilt?
 - b. The Father intends no harm to us...only healing, the experience of his goodness, joy, peace, transformation, etc.
 - c. And if you do it,
 - i. Is it by obligation & it is a burden rather than a joy?
 - ii. Or to gain some favor from God or
 - iii. Really to commune w/ the Father?
- b. v.23 Exhortation #2 “let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess...”
 - i. It is our active responsibilities to hold on...w/o deviation.
 - ii. Live in light of the hope
- c. v.24 Exhortation #3 “let us consider how we may spur OAO towards love & good deeds
 - i. arouse/provoke/encourage/stir up OAO
 - ii. love should be central in our lives & good deeds is the outflow of Love
 - iii. the great command to love the Lord our God and love our neighbour as Oself
- d. **v.25 Exhortation #4** “let us not give up meeting together as some are in the habit of doing...” → this is the other Exhortation I wanted to spend time...

What mean & does not mean

- i. what does this passage does not mean
 1. It doesn't mean to be present every times the church doors are opened like it used to be.
- ii. What does this passage means: some translation have neglecting but the Greek word behind is stronger than just neglecting. It has the sense of giving up or abandoning.
 1. So some were forsaking the worship meeting.
 2. It was a faith issue rather than a commitment issue
 3. Giving up meeting is often the first external step of apostasy It was a step towards apostasy
 4. That make sense with the warning against apostasy just after.
 - a. In fact, all the 5 exhortations are means of grace to nurture our faith
- iii. However, I want to go step further & make an application & bring some reflection from this exhortation because neglecting our assemble is an issue these days & the importance of a consistent involvement in fellowship in relationship to normal condition

1. Here, I want to submit to you a few hard truths
2. The real Q here is what would bring someone to neglect the assemble? Why is the meeting important or not important for someone? In order to answer the Q, we have to be ready to be honest w/ Oselves
 - a. 3 answer to this Q
 - i. A commit issue: participation in the BofC is not a priority. We have better things to do. new average is 1-2 a month
 - ii. An undue influence of modernism's emphasis on individualism & self-sufficiency. "I can do it on my own"
 1. It is only about Jesus and me
 2. ...Guthrie says "the NT gives no support to the idea of a lone Xian or a lone rangers
 - iii. A gross misunderstanding of the Work of X & the role of community of faith in our life.
 1. I understand we are in special circumstances in the pandemic and certain people are at risk & need to be careful. But I must say that for some, it became an excuse & a convenience thing
3. Xianity is not just me & Jesus...it is also a OAO thing
 - a. Over 50 references of OAO in the NT
 - b. God's plan was not only for individ S but to create a comm of F
4. The work of Jesus was not only for salvation but also to establish a new community, a community of believers 1Co12:13 all baptized by one Spirit into one body.
 - a. Ascension, pouring out of HS, then Act 2 the body of Christ is formed.
 - b. As a result of the work of the HS, the early disciples were devoted to certain activities & OAO. It was a priority
 - c. On the dawn of the end of Covid & full reopening, are you excited...?
 - d. The next exhortation flows out of this one...to encourage OAO
5. We need OAO & we belong to OAO.
 - a. Not just attendance but participation. To think we don't need the body or that participating is not important is an act of self-deception
 - b. We encounter God through OAO
 - c. Nature & scriptures tell us we need OAO
 - i. The Lord's table reflects this idea: 1 cup/loaf
 - ii. 1Co12:12 "the body is a unit, though made up of many parts, though all its parts are many, they form 1 body!" and all parts are useful & have a role to play
 - iii. You need the body & the body needs your role.

- e. v.25 Exhortation #5 “but let us encourage OAO
 - i. I take it as closely connected to the previous one
 - ii. We can supply “but let us encourage OAO *to be faithful*”

- 4. **Warning against the danger of apostasy** (2 steps neglect/forsake-attitude of contempt)
 - a. Certainly connected w/ previous verse but to the overall previous passage as well.
 - i. if you neglect & ignore the means & practices of grace described in v.19-25, you put yourself at risk of apostasy...these means of grace are there to keep us away from apostasy so to speak
 - 1. Keeping close to God, holding on to hope, fellowshipping w/ the saints. Meant to keep you in the faith and spurring on your faith
 - 2. ignoring these over times may just be showing you did not have real/genuine faith in the first place
 - ii. Also, a warning similar to 6:4-8 we covered a few weeks ago.
 - b. talked about that a few weeks ago, so will not cover this in details except for few things
 - c. apostasy described
 - i. v.26 “if we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received K of T”
 - 1. intentionally refuse to repent in light of the truth about Jesus
 - ii. v.29a “trampling the SofG under his foot”
 - 1. crushing Jesus, walking over, rejecting Jesus, treating him w/ contempt
 - iii. v29b “who has treated as unholy the blood of the covenant that sanctifies him”
 - 1. Who did not discern the value of the blood & life of Jesus? Who profaned the most sacred things of God, treated w/ irreverence & disrespect the most precious thing in the eyes of God
 - iv. v29c “and who has insulted the Spirit of grace”
 - 1. disrespect & spit on the grace of God as unworthy & as nothing
 - d. God’s response v.26-27, 30-31
 - i. v.26-27 “is the judgment & a raging fire that will consume” those who do this
 - ii. “it is a dreadful thing to fall in the hands of the living God”
 - iii. Imagine what will happens to those who rejected the grace of God....
 - e. Here are a few principle to help our thinking and understanding about Apo
 - i. There is the divine & human perspective on salvation
 - 1. God see the heart, we don’t.
 - 2. We only hear claims & see behavior. We don’t have God’s certainty, therefore warnings
 - ii. The Bible gives us assurance & warnings
 - 1. A so that we don’t walk in uncertainty → the product of the W & testimony of the HS
 - 2. W are there against self-deceptions and encourage us to nurture your faith...There is a reason for the warnings: because there is a danger from the human perspective.
 - 3. As today’s passage says, there is a point of no return
 - a. A fatal denial of the faith

- b. Like pharaoh in OT: no matter how many evidences...nothing was moving in his heart.
 - iii. Not everyone who starts in the faith finish in the faith
 - 1. We covered that in last sermon...parable of sower...some follow only for a time. Some were never Xian in the first place.
 - 2. Salvation is not only a prayer we make but a new lifestyle
 - 3. There is a need to persevere until the end...
 - a. Only those who P until the end will be saved
 - b. Only those who are saved will P until the end
 - 4. There is a need to examine ourselves → LT

5. Final exhortations

- a. v.22-34 **A call to remember** what you have done so far
 - i. v.32 You already walked a long way...and suffered
 - 1. v.33 You suffered and stood your ground
 - a. Insulted & persecuted
 - b. Stood w/ those who were insulted & persecuted
 - c. V.34 Sympathized w/ those in prison
 - d. V.34 had properties confiscated
 - b. v.35-36 A call to persevere until the end
 - i. v.35 do not throw away your confidence/faith...it will be rewarded
 - ii. v.36 “you need to persevere” until the end in order to receive the promise
 - 1. Only those who P until the end will be saved
 - 2. Only those who are saved will P until the end
- c. v.39 a final note about 2 categories of people
 - i. side with us...we are not of those...but we are of those
 - ii. do not be among those who commit apostasy, but among those who believe & are saved

Conclusion

On the basis of what we have in Jesus

Confidence to enter the presence of the Father

and a great high priest in Jesus

We were given 5 exhortation with a warning against the danger of apostasy and an encouragement to persevere until the end in order to receive the promise...