**Rhythms of Grace**

The Christian Life is a Community Project

Hebrews 10:19-25

February 6, 2022

We started the year with a series called the Rhythms of Grace, looking at the rhythms of the Christian life/discipleship, those habits God uses to produce spiritual growth, grace-driven and Spirit-led obedience. We started by looking at our priorities, making God our number one priority in life. Then we looked at flourishing in life by engaging God’s word. Third, we considered our motivation for praying. We took a two break for Sanctity of Life and Vision Sunday. Today’s message is The Christian Life is a Community Project, looking at the need for community for discipleship, following Jesus and becoming like Jesus. My big idea today is that the Christian life requires a grace-driven and encouraging community.

So let’s look at what Hebrews 10:19-25 has to say about our need for a grace-driven and encouraging community. This passage has two sections. The first section (19-21) reminds us that Christ gives us free and complete access to God. The second sections (22-25) tell us how to live in light of this access/truth. I am just going to summarize the first section and we will focus our attention on the second. Verses 19-21 tell us that Christ’s death made the Old Covenant sacrificial system obsolete, giving us full and free access to God. Because Jesus gave us full and free access to God, he gives us three responses describing how we are to live. We are to draw near to God, hold fast to our hope, and stir up one another.

**Draw Near God (vs. 22)**

First, we are to draw near to God. This is actively and confidently going to God for grace/strength because of the assurance we have in Christ. Drawing near is taking advantage of the habits of grace which strengthen us for grace-driven Spirit-led obedience. We have confidence to approach God because of the assurance of God’s forgiveness described as Christ having cleansed our hearts. Confidence is a subjective boldness based on objective information. We have confidence approaching God because we are no longer under the power or penalty of sin that separates us from God. Drawing near is practicing those habits that provide us with strength for grace-driven and Spirit-led living. Drawing near to God is being proactive, driven by our need for grace. If you are not actively drawing near to God, you are drifting. We are either drawing near to God (actively) or drifting from God (passively).

**Hold Fast to our Hope (vs. 23)**

Secondly, we are to hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering (4:14; 6:18-19). This means to hold onto all that God is for us in Jesus (gospel) because God is faithful to his promises. It is resting in the hope of all that the gospel promises us because you trust God’s faithfulness. This has a personal and public dimension. We hold fast in personal devotion to Christ, following him faithfully because of our hope in the gospel. We also hold fast in our public witness, faithfully following Christ in the world and publicly professing Christ (Mat 5:14-16). Holding fast, personally and publicly, is a daily fight to believe that Jesus is better than sin. Resist, fight daily against anything that draws you away from Jesus.

**Stir Up One Another (vs. 24-25)**

Finally, we are to stir one another up to love and good works. Consider tells us that we are to think about how to motivate and move each other to grace-driven Spirit-led love. We stir each other up by meeting together to encourage one another (25). He challenges some who have given up meeting together. The writer sees meeting together as a necessary habit of grace that God uses to bring about grace-driven Spirit-led obedience, love and good works. He is describing a particular type of togetherness, one that seeks to stir each other up toward obedience, by encouraging each other toward love and good deeds. He is describing something like a Life Group or a Discipleship Group. We encourage each other two ways, by comforting and calling. First, we comfort the discouraged by our presence, by prayer, and pointing them to trust God. Secondly, we call the drifting to grace-driven and Spirit-led obedience.[[1]](#footnote-1) The Christian life is a lot like a campfire. A campfire burns hot and bright when the logs are piled up close together. When the logs are pulled away from the fire, they grow cold and die out. In a similar way, we gather together regularly to fuel our faith and when we remove ourselves from meaningful community, we slowly grow colder and die out. Life Groups, when meaningful discussion is happening, comforts us and calls us away from drifting. The Christian life is a community project. This is the normal Christian life. None of us can do it alone. Like the camp fire, you need to be close to other burning logs to keep your faith thriving. Remove yourself from the encouragement of the other logs and you will cool off spiritually and drift away.[[2]](#footnote-2) The Christian Life is a community project.

**Life Group Questions:**

You do not need to ask all questions if time does not permit!

Ice Breakers (no need to ask all . . . )

1. What has been an awkward/funny moment for you in church?
2. What does community look like to you?

Head

1. What is basis that we draw near to God with confidence?
2. Read Hebrews 4:14 and 6:18-19.  This holding fast is firm gripping, not a casual holding. What is the confession of our hope?
3. What does meeting together to stir one another up look like?

Heart

1. What hinders you from drawing near to God?
2. What can you do about it? How can we help you?
3. What are false sources of hope that you’ve observed in our culture? How about false sources of hope in your own heart?
4. In what ways is our Life Group is good at living the Christian life as a community project.
5. In verse 23, the author says, “He who called you is faithful.” Why does this make all the difference to our practices of perseverance? In what ways do you see evidences of His faithfulness in your life? In what ways are your struggling to see His faithfulness, currently?

Hand

1. What ae some tangible ways you want to draw near to God?
2. How can we grow at living the christian life as a community project?
3. How should I respond to this passage
1. Rom 15:18; 1 John 3:18; Mat 15:14-16 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. This is why the writer of Hebrews gave an earlier and similar encouragement in 3:12-14. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)