

• *The great turning point*

• *The first 10 chapters superiority and greatness of what God has done in Christ*

• *Now an appeal to make use of what we have available*

• *There are three things we have*

• *And five things we must do*

• *Let us encourage one another*

An appeal for using the authorization we have to get close to God

• *He is writing not about what we feel – but what we have*

Hebrews 10:19 brings us to the great turning point of this letter to the Hebrews. For almost ten chapters our writer has been putting to us the greatness of the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus is God's full and final revelation to us. He is the divine Creator. Above everything else, he is the one who has made a cleansing of all sins everywhere. That is, he has provided a way for the forgiveness of our sins, no matter how bad they might be. He has provided the possibility of a cleansed conscience and access to the living God. He is our guide through the wilderness, our greater-than-Moses. He is our Aaron, our great high priest. His death upon the cross does what no animal-sacrifice could ever do. Jesus' blood has made open the holy of holies, the place where God's presence is experienced. Our writer has said all this to us, and his main teaching is now finished. So what remains? **He now has to appeal to us to make use of what is available.** What we have here is the heart and summary of everything our writer wants to say.

¹⁹Therefore, brothers and sisters, we have a reason for boldness so that we may enter the most holy place, by the blood of Jesus. ²⁰We have a way that is new and living, which he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh. ²¹And we have a great high priest over the house of God. ²²So let us be drawing near with a true heart, in full conviction of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience, and having our bodies washed with pure water. ²³Let us hold fast the confession of hope without wavering, for he who gave us promises is faithful. ²⁴And let us consider one another to encourage one another to promote bursts of love and good deeds, ²⁵and let us not be forsaking the times we gather together to meet each other, as is the habit of some, but let us encourage one another and all the more as you see the day drawing near.

So there are three things we have:

- We have a reason for boldness
- We have a way that is new and living
- We have a great high priest.

And there are five things we must do:

- So let us be drawing near
- Let us hold fast the confession
- Let us consider one another to encourage one another
- Let us not be forsaking the times we gather together

Let us encourage one another.

He begins with an appeal for using the authorization we have to get close to God. Many translations speak of 'having boldness...' (the Greek is *echontes... parresiari*). It is actually difficult to translate because the English word 'boldness' is a **subjective** word. It refers to a feeling, an emotion. But this is not what is meant. Our writer is not speaking of an emotion; he is speaking of a fact. Imagine a man who has been in prison for twenty years, and then is released. He now **has** his freedom. But he may not feel very free. He has been in prison for so long he does not know how to act like a free man. He 'has' freedom as a fact. But perhaps he does not **feel** very free. He acts as if he were still in prison. This is the point here in Hebrews 10:19. Our writer is not talking about whether we **feel** very bold; he is writing of what we **have** – whether we feel it or not! I translate it, 'Having therefore, brothers and sisters, a reason for boldness...'. William Lane translates, 'Since we have authorization for free access...'. The New Century Version says, 'So, brothers and sisters, we are completely free to enter the Most Holy Place...'. Another translation says, 'And so, dear brothers and sisters, we can boldly enter heaven's Most Holy Place...'. Our writer is not dealing with feelings; he is speaking of objective facts.

• *Jesus is full of sympathy and ready to speak to us*

• *Total confidence*

• *Jesus' blood makes it possible*

There is a new and living way to God

• *Through a person – not a system*

• *Through the curtain*

We have a great high priest

• *Felt and assured contact with the living God*

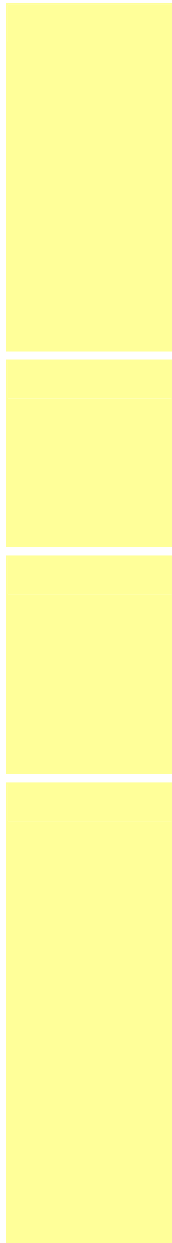
• *So let us take advantage of this provision*

We are authorized to come close to God! Jesus is full of sympathy. He is ready to speak to us and lead us. He will reveal the promises of God concerning our lives in a very personal manner. He will guide us when we wander, restore us when we fall, come to us with bread and wine after every battle. He will tell us he is our shield and our great reward. He is the table at which we sit, the seven-branched lampstand which shines upon our life, the incense who makes our prayers sweet to God. He is all this and more. We are authorized to come to God through Jesus with total confidence – no matter what we have done or how badly we have fallen. We have a reason for boldness, a grounds for confidence. We may enter into the very immediate presence of God by faith. Jesus' blood makes it possible.

There is a new and living way to God. It is new because it is utterly greater than anything that was known in Old Testament times. It is living because it is coming through a person not through a system. Amongst other things the two compartments of the tabernacle stand for the two main covenants (Mosaic and new) by which God has had dealings with his people. Jesus is the dividing line between the two ages.

The curtain stands for Jesus here in this world in human flesh. When Jesus was crucified the curtain was torn down. That is, when Jesus was crucified the curtain which hid the new age of the gospel was taken down and the way into fuller fellowship with God was made possible. 'We have a way' that is greater than anything known in past times. It is 'opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh'. When Jesus was torn upon the cross, the new era of fellowship with God was opened up.

We have a great high priest. The way we go to God is no longer through ceremonies or symbolisms. We go to God through Jesus. Even the small number of New Testament ceremonies (water-baptism, the Lord's Supper, anointing with oil, the holy kiss, the right-hand of fellowship; are there any more?) are only reminders of Jesus and little more. They help us if they rouse our faith in Jesus and his Holy Spirit, but the secret of all spiritual blessing is our closeness to God through our great Sympathizer, the Lord Jesus Christ. The ceremonies of the old covenant are abolished because the One they point to is here. The ceremonies of the new covenant are small and simple. The great need is personal contact, **felt** contact, **assured** contact, with the living God. And that we can find when we come to God through Jesus. We can know God. We can draw near to him. So let us persist in faith. Let us consider one another to encourage one another. Let us not be forsaking the times we gather together, and let us encourage one another as we see the final day drawing near.



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