

ADVICE FOR TREACHEROUS TIMES

Hebrews 10:19-25

How do we handle hard times?

What do we do when life is hard?

When the going gets rough?

“When the going gets tough, the tough get going!”

But, some days we don't *FEEL* like it! Do we?

What do we do then?

How should we respond to Christ's greatness, as we face the practical issues of life?

First 9 ½ chapters demonstrate Jesus is better than Judaism.

Based on Jesus' superiority,

presents proper response for God's people.

He shifts from *doctrinal* focus to *practical* response to
Christ's superiority.

If Christ's PERSON is superior to great leaders of Israel...

If Christ's MINISTRY is superior, . . .

HOW SHOULD WE THEN LIVE? 10:19-13:25

Primary response called for:

trust God and remain faithful to Him.

Call is especially evident in... **19-25** “Since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, ²⁰by the new & living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh, ²¹& since we have a great priest over the house of God, ²²let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience & our bodies washed with pure water. ²³Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. ²⁴& let us consider how to stir up one another to love & good works, ²⁵not neglecting to meet

together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, & all the more as you see the Day drawing near."

BASIS FOR FAITH 10:19-21

He reminds us of **2 THINGS WE'VE RECEIVED IN CHRIST:**

2 reasons for faith, in midst of hard times:

1. 19-20 **We have confidence to approach God.**

Access to God.

"Since Christ has given us direct access to God..."

2. 21 **"We have a great high priest. An Advocate before God.**

"Since He intercedes for us continually as our High Priest..."

We're so used to these benefits that they no longer impress us.

To Heb reader these represented a radical change.

O.T. system reminds people that we're separated from God.

They approached Him with fear; even then, they couldn't come near to the Holy of Holies where God's presence dwelled among His people.

That privilege was reserved for High Priest;

he could only go once a year.

We have a *new* priest, *new* covenant, *new* tabernacle, *new & better* sacrifice.

Therefore, we come boldly into God's presence.

CALL TO FAITH 10:22-25

3 APPEALS, Based on God's provision.

Based on our direct access into God's presence.

1. *Let us draw near to God by faith 22* **FAITH**

Neg-Appeal not to turn away from Him.

Pos-Appeal to enter His presence with confidence.

Symbolic language **invites us to come** into God's presence clean & pure.

Let's draw near with confidence. since He has cleansed us.

Symbols look back to rituals of O.T. purification:

Blood was sprinkled as means of purifying instruments of worship.

Priests washed selves with pure water so they'd be clean.

Symbols couldn't truly cleanse those sprinkled & washed

Our hearts are sprinkled & cleansed by Jesus' blood

Our bodies likewise are purified, as with pure water.

We stand cleansed in God's presence—heart & body!

We come boldly into His presence with sincere heart, & with confidence

2. Let us hold firmly to our confession of hope. HOPE

Neg. — Don't waver in our trust.

Pos. — Trust God. He is faithful. He won't fail us.

Christians possess unique kind of hope.

People are waiting for nebulous "something better" than what we have now!

Their hope has no solid ground under it.

If our hope is ungrounded, as the world's—if it's just "*I hope everything turns out all right in the end*"—we're to be pitied.

But it isn't! Our hope has substance. **6:19-20** "*We have this as a sure & steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters into the inner place behind the curtain,²⁰ where Jesus has gone as a forerunner on our behalf...*"

Our hope is grounded in life, death, resurrection, ascension, glorification, & intercession of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Our anchor isn't in the sea; it's in heaven.

It's anchored in the presence of God.

"He Who promised is faithful!"

From perspective of the present, all may be tragedy;

From perspective of eternity, God uses cinders of devastation
as building blocks to make something beautiful for His glory.

Hebrews doesn't just say to hang on to our hope.

It urges us to hang on to the *confession* of that hope [NAS].

Hang on firmly to what we SAY we believe.

Rather than throw in the towel and escape, hold on to it;

Don't be *ashamed* of our hope—proclaim it without flinching!

3. **Let us consider how to stimulate one another**

to love and good works

—**unite & encourage 1 another.** 24-25

LOVE

Last two "let us" in v. 25 in the NIV, are dependent clauses
derived from exhortation in v. 24.

We spur one another on to love and good deeds

by meeting together and **by** encouraging one another.

**Neg—We shouldn't allow ourselves to become
discouraged.**

We shouldn't isolate ourselves from other believers.

Pos—We ought to encourage one another.

Reason for gathering isn't what we get out of church attendance. It's because of what we give to it!

Family of God isn't place for verbal put-downs & critical comments.

Church is for *encouragement*—not *discouragement*.

Don't isolate yourself.

Come together and encourage each other.

The word “encourage” is used in describing a battle.
 Barclay: “word of rallying-call; used to urge each other on.”
 That’s how we should encourage 1 another to hang in there.
 Beautiful thing about encouragement: *anybody* can do it!
Anyone can “come alongside” someone else to help.
 We can send note of encouragement to someone struggling.
 Way we treat 1 another sometimes reminds me of basketball.
 We’ve watched it happen many times. 2 teams are playing.
 1 has great individual players—Each plays for himself or herself.
 They begin to criticize one another => They come unglued!
 The other team has players of only mediocre ability.
 Each tries to help & encourage the other.
 That team usually wins! They pull together and win!
 That’s what God wants us to do! —to pull together.
 —to encourage one another
 —to stimulate one another to love and good deeds.
***If we don’t work together, when pressure rises
 and affliction comes, we’ll come unglued!***
Don’t take this passage out of context!
 This isn’t an exhortation to go to church on Sundays.
 It’s warning of danger of isolating from others in hard times.
 Illustration of 1 burning ember separated from the rest demonstrates
 our need for 1 another, to burn brightly in dark society.
 In isolation, like the ember, our flame dims and we turn cold.
 It’s impossible to stimulate people to love and good deeds,
 if we’re never around them.
 We can’t encourage each other, if we live our lives in isolation,
 pushing people away from us.
 Encouragement is a face-to-face thing.

It's more important "*as you see the day approaching*"
because in last times "*perilous times shall come.*"

Things are going to become treacherous.

We'll need each other's support as never before.

When we no longer believe, brothers & sisters believe for us,
They hold on to God for us. That's what we need.

Someone along side, to be there when times are tough.

Suffering isolates us, when we need each other most!

When the pressure rises, church has to hang together; encourage each other to do what's right.

How should we respond when pressure rises?

When times are hard...

Rather than turn away from God, . . .

* **DRAW NEAR TO HIM!** ***Draw near!***

* **HANG ON TO OUR HOPE!** ***Hang on!***

Consider how to **SPUR 1 ANOTHER ON** to love & good deeds. Encourage one another. ***Spur on!***

When we face hard times, isn't time for isolation!

Satan wants to isolate us—get us to tough it out; to go it alone.

We don't feel like getting together; much less going to church

That's when we need each other most!

We need Him. We need each other.

Assignment for this week.

Think of 3 people that need encouragement.

Apply this passage specifically to them.

"Consider how to spur one another on to love & good deeds."

CONSIDER how you could spur these 3 people on.

Pray God will show you how to encourage them—each may need something different.

Then *just do it!* Do whatever you come up with to spur them on!