

# Hebrews 10:23-25

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*We should be fully committed to confess our hope in God. We should love and do good for our fellow believers. We should meet with and encourage one another to do this, because the day of judgement approaches.*

The Pauline Author urges his readers to continue to confess the hope they have in Jesus, rather than drift from the faith or neglect their salvation (Hebrews 2:1–3). He has used this phrase *hold fast the confession* (v 23) before, in Hebrews 4:14: “Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession.” In that verse, the Pauline Author references our great High Priest Jesus as the reason for *holding fast the confession of our hope without wavering* (v 23).

In this chapter, he has reiterated the point that Christ is the great High Priest. The Pauline Author has also added another reason to hold fast to the confession of Jesus our hope: *He who promised is faithful* (v 23). If we hold fast to Jesus, we can depend on Jesus to keep His promise to reward us greatly.

Believers in Christ can persist in their walk with God, their sanctification, with the good confidence that God keeps His promises. The Pauline Author has referenced several promises of God throughout Hebrews, such as Hebrews 6:12, 9:14–15, and 9:28, which speak of inheriting the promises through faith and patience, and through serving the living God.

These promises are the rewards of eternal inheritance for those who endure to the end. This is why the Pauline Author keeps hammering the point that Jesus was the ultimate sacrifice for sin and is the superior High Priest in heaven. The Pauline Author wants his Hebrew audience to truly understand that they are free from the guilt of sin. The gifts of God are irrevocable (Romans 11:29). There is no need to seek to be justified in the sight of God, because Jesus has taken care of that. Therefore, we are empowered to live lives of enduring faithful obedience toward God.

Those who live in obedience will receive the reward of the inheritance as God has promised (Colossians 3:23). They will be rewarded in the kingdom of God in the next life. Some believers won’t inherit these promises, that is clear. These are believers who drift away from their faith or neglect it. That does not mean they will lose the gift of eternal life, being justified in the presence of God, which is a free gift from God for any who believes (Ephesians 2:8–9).

But the entire book of Hebrews is essentially one long warning for people who already believe in Jesus but are starting to wander from living by faith. There are many ways to wander from the faith. As we will soon see, in this instance, it appears the Hebrews were beginning to trust in following religious rules.

In particular, it seems they were sinning willfully, then depending on animal sacrifice to cover their sins, without necessarily intending to alter their sinful choices. That means they were no longer trusting in Jesus, but in religious practices. They are treating Jesus like an idol that must

be appeased. It also means they were defiling their conscience. We can't trust in religious practice and trust in Christ at the same time.

In these verses, the Pauline Author is describing what it looks like for believers to hold fast to the confession of our hope, what it looks like to persist in faith and patience. We should *consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds* (v 24). Living the Christian life means encouraging other believers to be loving, to spend our time doing good deeds, and *not forsaking our own assembling together* (v 25).

Here it is clear that some of the Hebrew believers had given up meeting with other believers; the Pauline author says it *is the habit of some* (v 24). This refers back to the metaphor in Hebrews 2:1 of drifting away from our faith. The Pauline Author is writing that his readers should make it a priority to encourage one another, to stick together, to do good in their lives. This is largely the point of churches—so that believers consistently and regularly spend time together encouraging each other in the faith.

The primary point of meeting, such as in a church, is to encourage one another to live well in between meetings, to live all our lives doing good works to please God. In this unity and fellowship, we are strengthened in our faith and our individual walks. By abandoning meeting together, believers can drift away and cease to thrive.

The Pauline Author also reminds us that the day of the Lord is approaching, the day when Christ will return for His church and will establish His kingdom. When Jesus returns, He will judge the world. Believers will be judged as well (1 Corinthians 3:10–15; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Romans 14:10). Jesus tells us in Revelation that when He returns it will be to give rewards for deeds done on the earth, good or bad (Revelation 22:12).

Jesus's goal in saving us from our sin is to bring us to maturity as "sons" of God who get to participate in ruling in His kingdom over the redeemed earth (Revelation 3:21, Hebrews 2:10, Philippians 2:8-11), but we can lose the right to inherit this reward if we do not live faithfully to God; only those who suffer rejection from the world in favor of obedience to God will share Christ's glory (Hebrews 12:1-2, Romans 8:17). Believers who shrink back from this opportunity will miss out and suffer loss of reward, yet will be saved from eternal separation from God, since our justification in the sight of God is based on the finished work of Jesus's death and resurrection, not our deeds (Ephesians 2:8-9).

There is a deadline here that no one knows, but it is coming, and it will be a wonderful day for those who lived faithful lives. It will be a wonderful day for all believers, but for those who neglected their salvation and drifted away from their faith, there will be shame that they rebelled against obeying God. There will be a loss of reward. The Pauline Author is stressing that we are supposed to look forward to Christ's return, to be conscious of its approach. In light of this coming day of judgment, we are to be *encouraging one another; and all the more as [we] see the day drawing near* (v 25).

### **Biblical Text**

**<sup>23</sup> Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful; <sup>24</sup> and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, <sup>25</sup> not**

**forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging *one another*; and all the more as you see the day drawing near.**