

Our Assurance of Faith: The Means of Assurance

Michael Woody | Hebrews 10:19–31

We may truly pursue assurance founded on the promises of God, the evidences of grace, and the witness of the Spirit; enabled by the Spirit we may “know the things which are freely given” by God in Christ.

WHY THIS TEXT?

1. Last time we looked at the nature of assurance and what we learned is that assurance is not always instantaneous, nor is it always without doubts, but assurance will come for those who resolutely rest on Christ.
2. In that message we had 4 assertions:
 - a. Assertion 1: Not All Who Name Christ are Christ’s
 - b. Assertion 2: True Believers may be harassed with doubts
 - c. Assertion 3: Union with Christ is the answer for those harassed with doubts
 - d. Assertion 4: Assurance is possible for the believer
3. Hebrews 10:19-31 is all about assurance of faith, and there are five reasons for our assurance.
 - a. Our assurance of faith is based on the blood of Jesus
 - b. Our assurance of faith is based on our great High Priest
 - c. Our assurance of faith is based on the faithfulness of God
 - d. Our assurance of faith is based on our availing of the Means of Grace

- e. Our assurance of faith is based on our persevering in the faith
4. What does this passage tell us? We may truly pursue assurance founded on the promises of God, the evidences of grace, and the witness of the Spirit; enabled by the Spirit we may “know the things which are freely given” by God in Christ.

WHAT THIS TEXT?

OUR ASSURANCE OF FAITH IS BASED ON THE BLOOD OF JESUS (v. 19-20)

1. Pictured in these verses is an allusion to the Day of Atonement and as a benefit of the New Covenant he speaks of boldness, or confidence, that we can have.
 - a. The Old Covenant was one of restrictions
 - b. The New Covenant is one of confident access
 - c. This is not the first time the author has told us this: consider Hebrews 4:16
2. Some notable words in these verses:
 - a. v. 19 - therefore - this is not our expected cause and result clause, it is a statement of consequence, it implies the conclusion of a process of reasoning. We might say, consequently or accordingly; it is the result that logically follows.
 - b. v. 19 - boldness - willing to undertake an activity with risk or danger, we would say courage. Why would this be needed? Because we are able now to enter the Holy of Holies, this is clarified further in v. 20 referring to the ‘veil’ as His flesh.
 - c. v. 20 - consecrated (aorist, active, indicative) - to put into effect, to inaugurate or to ratify. This refers to this new and living way, a way that did not exist before.
3. The blood of Christ has reference to His truly dying for sinners.
 - a. This is called a new and living way

- b. This is not to say that Old Covenant believers did not enjoy this same basis of salvation but it does say that it is not something existing before: operative before, yes, but existing before, no.
4. The curtain is referencing the veil that separated the Old Covenant believers, this testified to them that propitiation was indeed promise but not yet fulfilled.

OUR ASSURANCE OF FAITH IS BASED ON OUR GREAT HIGH PRIEST (v. 21-22)

1. Verses 21-24 have three hortatory clauses that we need to see together as mutual aspects of our faith
 - a. Verse 21 - let us draw near
 - b. Verse 23 - let us hold fast
 - c. Verse 24 - let us consider one another
2. The words “High Priest over the house of God” need some explanation
 - a. The Greek texts use the words *mega priest*: the AV/NKJV render this High Priest, the ESV as great priest while the CSV adopts great High Priest.
 - b. This word “great” has a comparative or superlative focus, denoting “the priest that is great above [i.e., greater than] his brethren” (according to the more literal rendering of Lev. 21:10).”
 - c. The house of God is where He exercises His high priesthood ; we should not think of this as a location or a place, it is a people, we are the the house of God (cf. Heb. 3:6)
3. He says, again, to draw near (v. 22)
 - a. Draw near (present, middle/passive, subjunctive) - is to seek association with, in this context it assumes a reciprocal relationship between the person approaching and the one who is approached.
 - b. How are we to draw near? With ‘full assurance’ - to be absolutely sure, a confidence that is full and complete.

- c. Why can we draw near? Because we have been sprinkled (perfect, passive, participle) - to have something made pure, in this context it is our heart.
- d. How pure are we? Pure - free from impurities.

OUR ASSURANCE OF FAITH IS BASED ON THE FAITHFULNESS OF GOD (v. 23)

- 1. What does this verse say? Our hope is based on the unfailing promise of God!
- 2. "Let us hold fast" (present, active, subjunctive) - let us continue holding fast. Louw and Nida say, continue to believe, continue to practice, and continue to follow as a definition of what it means to hold fast.
- 3. Why? He who promised is faithful

OUR ASSURANCE OF FAITH IS BASED ON OUR AVAILING OF THE MEANS OF GRACE (v. 24-25)

- 1. Some of the means of grace like Scripture reading, meditation, and prayer can be done outside of the church, but the preaching of the Word, the Lord's Table, Baptism, singing of hymns, and fellowship of the saints are within the local church; it is this role of the local church that comes into view here.
- 2. The CSB puts this verse, And let us watch out for one another to provoke love and good works
- 3. What are the commands here?
 - a. Consider one another - present, active, subjunctive meaning to think about very carefully.
 - b. Provoke one another - a noun, meaning to stir up emotions feelings and responses around love and good works.
 - c. Do not forsake one another - present, active, subjunctive meaning to cease from an activity which has gone on for some time
 - d. Exhort one another - present, active, participle meaning to encourage a response or action.

4. We cannot underestimate the importance being in Church - it provides the motive, focus, and it is the God ordained expression of what Christ has bought us to be in Him. In this passage love *is* provoked in the sense of being stimulated in the lives of Christians by the fellowship and community of others in the body.

OUR ASSURANCE OF FAITH IS BASED ON OUR PERSEVERING IN THE FAITH (v. 26-31)

1. Scripture testifies to these truths in Joh 10:28-29; Phil 1:6; 2Tim 2:19; 1 John 2:19; Psa 89:31-32; 1 Cor 11:32; Mal 3:6.
2. This passage is about those who fall away, there are characteristics described here:
 - a. They know the truth
 - b. They reject the truth
 - c. They are damned in their sin

CONCLUSION

1. Our assurance of faith is based on the blood of Jesus, on our great High Priest, on the faithfulness of God, on our availing of the Means of Grace and on our persevering in the faith.
2. May we not forsake any of these means of assurance - all are accessed by faith alone