

# WHAT TO EXPECT FROM YOUR CHURCH

Part 1 of GREAT EXPECTATIONS. Hebrews 10:19-25.  
Peter Foxwell. Cornerstone Church. September 10, 2023.

## UNMET EXPECTATIONS

**One of the lows I experience is unmet expectations.**

- Often, expectations go unsaid. As a result, they go unknown and unmet.
- Then, people are disappointed or mad, or they take off.
- Some expectations are unrealistic.

**Today and next week, we'll look at two expectations:**

- What you can expect from your church.
- What your church can expect from you.

## HEBREWS 10:19-25

**Hebrews 10:19-25 is the basis for our expectations.**

Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, 20 by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh, 21 and since we have a great priest over the house of God,

22 let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

23 Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful.

24 And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, 25 not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

# JESUS CHRIST OPENED THE WAY

## **The argument of Hebrews culminates in 10:19-21.**

- Jesus Christ is the ultimate High Priest who has opened the way for unholy sinners to approach the holy Presence of God.
- We can approach Holy God with confidence:

Hebrews 4:16a (ESV) Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace ...

## **This has three implications.**

- Verse 22: Let us draw near to God ...
- Verse 23: Let us continue to confess Jesus Christ ...
- Verse 24: Let us care for each other ...

## **These three implications are the basis for our expectations.**

- But remember: The church is not a business; we're not customers.
- The church staff are not the church.
- We are the church.
- Therefore we must meet these expectations by working together.

## **The expectations are ...**

# **YOU CAN EXPECT YOUR CHURCH TO HELP YOU ENTER THE MOST HOLY PLACE**

Hebrews 10:22a (NLT) ... let us go right into the presence of God with sincere hearts fully trusting him...

## **When we worship together ...**

- The various elements are designed to take us from this physical space into the throne room of God, the Holy of Holies.
- We don't make this happen. We can't make it happen.
- It's all about Jesus opening the way into the Presence.

## **This is a unique experience.**

- Therefore, our worship gatherings should feel out of this world.
- They should not feel like a concert or play or lecture or political rally.
- It's all about walking into God's presence with a door pass signed by Jesus in his blood.

## **You can expect your church ...**

- To transport you out of this world.
- To lift your heart and mind up to God.
- To take you into the Presence - see Revelation 4:2-6.

## **We can take this experience anywhere.**

Our worship gatherings are models and opportunities that we can replicate in the car, at the office, in our living room.

# **YOU CAN EXPECT YOUR CHURCH TO STRENGTHEN YOUR FAITH IN JESUS**

Hebrews 10:23 (ESV) Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful.

## **Jesus - Front and Center**

- The “hold fast ... the confession of our hope” in verse 23 means, “Keep professing faith in Jesus Christ as the only way into the Holy of Holies.”
- Only Jesus can do that. He is indispensable to our spiritual life and growth.
- Christless, self-focused Christianity is not Christianity.

Colossians 1:27-28 (ESV) To them God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. 28 Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ.

## **What's a church good for if it's not constantly and passionately making much of Jesus?**

- The world does everything else better, but it can't give us Jesus.
- You can expect your church to constantly make Jesus front and center:
  - Jesus is the main thing in the church's culture and activities.
  - Jesus is worshiped as God. Delighted in. Treasured.
  - Christ is taught as the sole basis for spiritual life and growth.
  - Holy Communion is celebrated often.
  - Jesus is understood as the burden-bearer, not life coach.