

## 199431 hortation letsdoit dow heb10

Well, you'll just have to invite me to speak in your church, because I've got a whole lot more jokes, and they're pretty bad, too. They're really bad. Verse 8, Hebrews 10.

First he said, Sacrifices and offerings, burnt offerings, sin offerings you did not desire, nor were you pleased with them, although the law required them to be made. Then he said, Here I am. That's Jesus.

Here I am. I showed somebody that at the altar last night, those words of Jesus in Revelation. Here I am.

And I said, Where is he? And she said, He's here. I said, How do you know? He said it. He said, Here I am.

Here I am. I've come to do your will. With all of that involved.

He sets aside the first. The first covenant to establish the second. And by that will, we have been made holy.

Here's another. You know, you look for the key verses and. Underline them.

Put a star beside them. And by that will, because he was willing to do the father's will, not my will, but thine be done with all that that obedience involved. By that will, we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ.

Once for all. Day after day, every priest stands. You see, they were still in Jerusalem offering sacrifices every day.

Putting the bread on the table. Lighting the lamp. Burning the incense.

Slaying the lambs. Shedding the blood. Every day, day after day.

Because it was all symbolic and all ceremonial and all outward. Day after day, every priest stands and performs his religious duties again and again. He offers the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins.

But when this priest. Oh, Jesus, be lifted higher. When this priest had offered for all time one sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God.

You've heard it before. These priests never sat down. They were never finished.

They were never done. The work was never done. They kept having to offer sacrifices for themselves and for the people day in and day out.

But when this priest had offered for all time one sacrifice for sin, he sat down. The work was

finished. Nothing more to be done.

And since that time, he waits for his enemies to be made his footstool. Any possibility of some water up here to lubricate this preacher would be greatly appreciated. Therefore, verse 19.

On the basis of that, all of that and so much more than we have been able to say. Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the most holy place by the blood of Jesus. By a new living way open for us through the curtain that is his body.

Since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near to God with a sincere heart. In full assurance of faith, having a heart sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience. Having our bodies washed with pure water.

Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess. For he who promised is faithful. And let's consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds.

Let us not give up meeting together as some are in the habit of doing. But let us encourage one another and all the more as you see the day approaching. And then some serious warning again.

And down to verse 35. So do not throw away your confidence. It will be richly rewarded.

You need to persevere. So that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what he has promised. For in just a very little while.

He who is coming will come. Somebody said to me when I was working my way through this and we were discussing it back at the college. Is every aspect of the life and ministry of Jesus covered in the book of Hebrews? And I said, the second coming, is that in there? Well, here it is.

He who is coming will come. And will not be late. But my righteous one will live by faith.

If he shrinks back, I'll not be pleased with him. But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed. But of those who believe and are saved.

On the basis of all that's gone before in this discussion of the perfect work of our forever priest. This chapter presents us with a grand series of what I'm calling this morning, Hortations. Ever heard of a Hortation? I know you've heard of an Exhortation.

But here's a Hortation. An Exhortation says, you do it. You'd better do it.

You'd better do it. A Hortation says, we want to do it. Let's do it.

Let us do it. Because we have every reason to be mightily motivated to do it. Nice and all.

Wow. Your fault, Brother Sherry. You got me all weeping this morning.

Now I'm croaking. Don't croak now. The word Hortation comes from a Greek grammatical

construction.

And there are a number of them between verses 22 and 25. In fact, a grand series of Hortations. For the record, the Greek construction is known as the Hortatory Subjunctive.

I'm showing off for Randy. As a matter of fact, there are several verbs here that are in the present middle volative subjunctive. I just made that up.

If you don't know that. No, it's true. I worked that out.

And all these phrases, let us, let us, let us. Those are Hortations. Not just imperative, do it, do it, do it.

But happy Hortations that say, on the basis of all that Christ is and means to us. Let's do it. Let's do it.

Let's do it together. And this present middle volative subjunctive has to be expanded in its translation. It has to not only say, let's do it.

But every time you read it, you have to say, let's continue to do it. Let's keep on doing it. Let's not stop doing it.

Let's never cease for any reason from doing it. Because we have every reason to. Hortation number 1, verse 22.

Let us continue to draw near to God. Therefore, because of all that Christ is and means to us. This superlative, matchless, incomparable Christ.

Let us continue to draw near to God. Can we? Is the way open? Oh, yes. The book has said, page after page, word after word, the way is open.

Atonement has been made. Sacrifice has been offered. Blood has been spilled and poured out and sprinkled.

The veil has been rent. The curtain has been torn. The priest has provided.

The new and living way into the very presence of God is wide open. Let us draw near. Let us continue to draw near to God.

Jesus is the way. He lives. He's our great high priest.

And we can follow him right into the holy of holies. Take off our shoes. Down on our knees if we have any sense of reverence.

But we can come in with great confidence. Oh, that high priest had to be ceremonially clean. But through Jesus, we are purified inwardly.

And we may enter in. Moffat's translation says, enter in wholeheartedly with honesty in faith. One author defines faith in this chapter as an unqualified assurance and an absolute conviction that when we enter in, he's there to meet us.

And when I've knelt down here at this altar night after night, absolutely certain the Lord is here. It doesn't have to be here. It's wherever we realize that the way is open and we can draw near.

The Amplified Bible, where it says faith in this verse and a parenthesis with these words. Faith is leaning the entire personality on God in absolute trust and confidence in his power, in his wisdom, and in his goodness. And when we come to God and draw near to God, we just lean on him and lean on these promises and have absolute confidence and assurance that he is wise and he is good and he is all powerful.

The high priest on the Day of Atonement entered the Holy of Holies briefly, timidly, fearfully. But we may enter because of Jesus boldly. What a contrast in this book between the Old Covenant and the New, time and time again.

Their approach to the Holy of Holies was tentative and fearful. Our approach is to be confident and joyous. They were told to keep their distance.

They could come into the courtyard of the tabernacle, but only the priests into the holy place and only the high priests into the Holy of Holies and then only once a year for a few brief moments. But the book of Hebrews says, let us draw near. Let us continue to draw near.

Let us not cease for any reason from continually drawing near. Over in chapter 12 and verse 18, a contrast between the Old and the New. And the writer suggests that the Old Covenant symbolized by a mountain.

And what mountain to symbolize the Old Covenant, the Old Testament, like Mount Sinai? And there it is in verse 18 of chapter 12. You have not come to a mountain that can be touched and that is burning with fire and to darkness, gloom and storm, that was Sinai, to a trumpet blast or to such a voice speaking words so that those who heard it beg that no further word be spoken to them. A frightening place of law and command and demand because they could not bear what was commanded.

They were told that even if an animal touches the mountain, it must be stoned. Stay back. Keep away.

Keep your distance. The sight was so terrifying that Moses says, I am trembling with fear. You haven't come to a mountain like that.

Well, what then? Verse 22. But you have come to Mount Zion, the mountain of the New Covenant. And then he just pours out a whole string of literary allusions to the glories and wonders of walking with Christ and knowing Christ and drawing near to God through Christ.

You've come to the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God. You've come to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly, to the church of the firstborn whose names are written in heaven. You've come to God, the judge of all men, to the spirits of righteous men made perfect, to Jesus, lift Him higher, the mediator of a new covenant, to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel, the blood of Abel crying from the ground, revenge, revenge, and the blood of Jesus crying from the throne, mercy, mercy, mercy.

Draw near. Let us draw near. Let us continue to draw near and let us never cease from continuing to draw near to God.

Quotation number 2, verse 23. Let us continue to hold unswervingly, firmly, hold fast to our confession and hope because He who promised is reliable. Dennis has done some interesting things in the morning, Bible studies and thinking of all the attributes of God right down through the alphabet.

I don't know if that one came through when you got to R, but here it is. Different translations render the word differently. He who promised is faithful.

He who promised is reliable. And if God is anything, He's reliable. Don't let go of your hope and your confession.

Don't stop confessing your hope publicly is the meaning of this quotation. Hold your confession. Hold on to what you confess.

Hold on to the hope that you confess. Hold it high like a flag. The word is unswervingly and in Greek it means unbent.

It's the word that was used when soldiers were commanded to hold the banner high and don't let it droop and never let it touch the ground. Ever, says my good friend Lenski in his commentary, ever confess all your Christian hope fearlessly, courageously. Never grow silent.

Never deny Christ. Let's be faithful for He is faithful. Let's be reliable for He is reliable.

He keeps all of His promises. Let's hold fast to our hope and continue to hang on to hope and never cease holding on to our confession and to our hope. Quotation number 3, verse 24.

Let's continue to. Let us consider how we may provoke, says the King James. Well, there's lots of folks ready to provoke us and there's a right sense of the word provoke.

Let us consider how we may spur one another or stimulate or incite or sharpen one another to love and good deeds, helpful, noble, compassionate activity for one another. Another translation puts it, let us create an atmosphere of caring and compassion for one another. My friend Randy has visited England and studied in England and studied John Wesley and visited all the Wesley sites in Iambium.

John Wesley said the Bible knows nothing of solitary religion. Let's consider how we may

stimulate one another to love and good deeds. Hold fast yourself and encourage one another to do so.

And when we're in the fellowship and we sense that somebody's discouraged, let us step in and strengthen their resolve to hang on. An old Anabaptist membership covenant contained these words, we engage to watch over one another in love. Luther said, oh, it is a living, busy, active, powerful thing that we have in faith so that it is impossible for faith not to do good without ceasing.

Nor does faith ask if good works are to be done. But before the question is asked, faith has wrought them and is always engaged in doing them. Let us continue to stir one another up to love and good deeds.

Quotation number 4, verse 25, let us not give up. Let's not leave behind as though it was something that we did and we've decided to leave it behind. The word can also be translated, let's not leave people in the lurch by forsaking the meeting together continually as is the custom of some.

And the word custom is interesting here. It's the Greek word ethos. And we get the word ethics from ethos.

Your ethos is, well, add up all the ethoi in your life and that's your ethics. It's your life, your moral life, your whole ethical philosophy, all of the ethical policies and standards that determine your behavior. And he says some people have developed an ethos of absence.

But he says don't give up meeting together continually. I was at Auburn a few weeks ago for their anniversary. Did I have a lovely day in Auburn? Jim Carn stood here at the other service and he said, now be friendly.

He said we've got 60 plus. I imagine before tomorrow night they might have upwards of 100 people from Auburn who have attended this camp. That's amazing.

Almost the whole congregation up here at one time or another. Is he going to have to promote camp during this next year? They're going to do it for him. He's got his trailer here.

We walked past his trailer yesterday and a whole bunch of Auburn people sitting there singing and can it be that I should gain. And Jim stood here and he said, now be friendly to these new Auburn folks and be friendly to one another because he might have said friendliness doesn't just happen. We have to make it happen.

I don't think very many things that are good and worthwhile just happen. Do you? We have to make them happen. And if Jim Carn stands in front of his folks and says to them what he said to us, be friendly, be friendly, be friendly, and he's the biggest friendliest guy you can imagine, you could expect if you'd spend a day in the Auburn church, you're going to get treated pretty well.

Well, I did. And I was. We went for dinner in the community hall afterwards, the church too little to hold all the people, served up a great big potluck dinner, me on my 50 calorie a day diet that I've been on for a few years now.

People came up to me while I'm sitting there eating, just want to greet you and talk to you, and they just shared the story of how they've come to Christ and then another couple would come up in a family and individuals and wow, are they ever. The ethos of Auburn is let's not give up meeting together continually. That's our ethos.

And they drag that ethos all the way to Stainer. What's the ethos of your place and of you? John Calvin said there is so much peevishness in almost everyone that individuals, if they could, would gladly make their own churches for themselves. This warning is therefore more than needed by all of us that we should be encouraged to love rather than hate and we should not separate ourselves from those who are joined to us by a like common faith.

Let us continue to meet together and let us not cease in continuing to meet together. Quotation number 5, verse 25, let's continually encourage one another. On the basis of all that this writer has said about the excellency of Jesus Christ and the wonder of the new and living way, we have a lot to encourage one another with.

Did these readers need encouragement? You bet they did. They knew what real persecution was. Doesn't the end of the chapter say that? Something about what they had begun to suffer for the sake of Jesus? Remember verse 32.

Remember those earlier days after you had received the light when you stood your ground in a great contest in the face of suffering? I think that they were in Rome and I think they lived at the time of Nero and I think that the persecution had been poured out and it was just really getting started. In persecution, at other times you stood by, side by side with those who were so treated, the Gentile believers. You sympathized with those in prison and joyfully, get this, joyfully accepted the confiscation of your property.

Imagine the stories behind it. Who knows what that's all about? Their property was confiscated. He drives up to your house with a big moving van, break down the door, crash in and start heaving all of your stuff out.

Say, what's going on? Well, it's been determined that Christianity is an illegal religion. You practice it and that's against the law and one of the penalties is the confiscation of your property. You say, that's absurd.

Of course it's absurd, but that's history. A lot of times I tell stories in history classes that don't make sense, but that's reality, that's what happened. But notice the little word in the middle.

You joyfully accepted the confiscation of your property. Are they fools? Because, you've got to finish the sentence, because you knew that you yourselves had better and lasting possessions. Isn't that fantastic? Well, they had been robbed of their possessions, some imprisoned and so

on.

And when these folks gathered together, what do you suppose they did? Well, they encouraged one another. Most of them were really going through very, very difficult circumstances and in the midst of suffering, they needed encouragement. And this little hortation says, don't stop encouraging each other.

The day of the Lord is near and it will come. And when he comes, he won't be late, it says. Stand by one another and, Randy, again the word is parakaleo, parakalein.

Stand beside each other. Hold each other up. I've had people this week who got bad news and I'm glad I was standing beside them because if I hadn't been, they would have collapsed.

And if it weren't for our Christian brothers and sisters, sometimes we'd just collapse. Hold each other up. That's why we come together, isn't it? Not to tear each other down, but to build each other up and to make each other stronger in the Lord.

Continually draw near to God. Continue to hold on to your hope and your confession. Continue to provoke one another to love and good deeds.

Continue to meet together. Let this become your ethos. Continue to encourage one another.

Let's do it. Let's continue to do it. And let's not let anything cause us to cease continuing to do it.

Shall we? Let's draw near. Let's draw near. Lord, our faith has been strengthened this week because You have shown Yourself to us as we've prayed and contemplated Your Word, as one who keeps His promises, as the faithful, reliable one, as the one who would not lie to us because He cannot lie to us.

He has sworn by Himself that His promises belong to those who are in Christ and those promises will be kept and we who are in Christ will inherit all things that pertain to eternal salvation. And so we draw near. Draw near to God.

And wonder of wonders, He will draw near to you. And this week we've needed You as much as we've ever needed You in our lives. And what did we find? That God keeps His promises and He's reliable.

And when He says, He has come through Jesus because of the blood, the sprinkled blood of the everlasting covenant, because of this great High Priest who takes our hand and ushers us in to the very Holy of Holies. What have we found this week, as recently as this moment? Oh, just grace to help us in our time of need and mercy because we're so desperately undeserving. And what can we do but hold Jesus in greatest honor and lift Jesus higher and higher.

Praise God from whom all blessings flow. Praise Him, all creatures. Give Him the praise.

Praise Him, all creatures. This is holy ground. We're standing on holy ground.

The Lord is here and where He is, is holy. Randy, you know you're going to preach a couple times tomorrow and I think, we're not sure what they have planned for us, but we think Randy has to leave tomorrow afternoon and so I better say publicly thanks to my dear friend. We've been friends for a few years.

We've been in a lot of different situations and circumstances. We have agonized in Bible colleges that we have visited together when we've been analyzing them and evaluating them for accreditation purposes. We were at a Bible college and we worked very hard to put the whole report together, remember that, and got it all printed into the computer and realized that the only person who could figure out how to get that stuff in the computer over to the printer, special secret passwords, had gone for the weekend.

We were stuck. And we've been to Bible college conventions and board meetings and last summer the great, grand privilege to stand together on the platform of the Emerging General Assembly. Our kids grew up with your wife and her family in Nigeria as really good friends.

So thanks, brother. You are a brother. You've ministered to me and to us and we love you.

And thanks, Dennis, for your great leadership. What a baptism you are receiving as the new district superintendent. And you're doing a fantastic job.

You know, you asked me months and months ago, pray for me, and I'm humbled enough to have been surprised when you asked for my advice at that time. And I said, Dennis, yes, yes. And eventually the Lord said, yes, yes, and here you are.

And you're just doing a sparkling job. And everybody else in the camp has worked so hard. I don't know why, but whenever I've been here before I've never been struck with the fact that so many people love this place as much as they do.

I guess I just was too preoccupied with whatever I was doing. But I have been listening more this time. When I hear people say, this is, you know, one couple here said to me the other day, we had an opportunity.

We had a choice. We were either going to such and such a place, one of the most popular resorts anybody could go to for a vacation. They said we were either going to go there or go to Stainer, and Stainer won it out hands down.

Wow. So a real honor and privilege to be asked to take on this responsibility. And I've been blessed, and I pray that you have too.

And public thanks to all concerned. I get the chance to preach the last sermon, I guess, Sunday night, Lord willing. And if you're here, well, that grand galaxy of believers in chapter 11, can't get to 13, but at least I quoted from 12 this morning, and I'll quote from 13 on Sunday night so

I'll be able to say we talked about the book of Hebrews at camp this year.

God bless you.