



Hebrews 10:11-25
 Hebrews: Seeing Jesus Clearly
 “Risen and Seated”

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 Easter

Today we join people all over the world celebrating the resurrection of Jesus Christ — and the hope, joy, and fulfillment he brings. But those blessings don’t come from the resurrection in isolation. They are grounded in his death, his life, and thousands of years of redemptive history before that. All of that speaks directly to us here in the 21st century, on the Eastside. So today, I’m going to condense 4,000 years of history into one sermon — and leave you with a few points of application for your journey of faith. I’ll finish in a couple of hours. 😂

In the first 9 ½ chapters of Hebrews, much of the historical groundwork for Jesus’ life has already been covered: Jesus did not arrive out of the blue. He came as the fulfillment of a centuries-long covenant history — a history involving Israel, priests, sacrifices, and a religious system that was always pointing forward to something more. The Old Testament system was “a copy and a shadow” as Hebrews puts it multiple times; Jesus is the substance, the real thing. That’s the message of Hebrews. And our passage today is the summit of the entire letter. Everything has been building to this moment — which ends with a series of exhortations showing what it looks like to live under the new covenant Jesus has established. Let’s start with **Hebrews 10:11-14...**

If you’ve been with us these past few weeks — or are familiar with Hebrews — you know these verses summarize what the letter has said repeatedly about the Old Testament priesthood. Under the old covenant God made with Israel through Moses, the priests offered sacrifices continually so that the people’s sins would be forgiven. And: **Notice the posture of the priests: they stand.** The grammar emphasizes that this is an ongoing action — the work is never finished; they “always stand” is the implication. The sacrifices were effective, but only to a degree — they had to be repeated over and over because they could not permanently remove sin.

Contrast that with verse 12: Jesus “sat down” — not in retirement, but in enthronement. This isn’t a recliner; it’s the throne room of God the Father. And he can sit *because of his resurrection*. A dead Jesus can’t reign over Creation. The New Testament anchors this in history: after his resurrection, Jesus appeared to his followers over forty days — recorded in the Gospels, Acts, and in Paul’s first letter to the Corinthians, where he notes Jesus appeared to more than five hundred people at once (1 Corinthians 15:6).

And the contrast between the standing priests and the seated Christ is one of the most powerful images in Hebrews. **The standing priest says, “There’s more to do.” The seated Christ declares, “It is finished.”** This image was introduced at the very start of Hebrews where we read: “After he had made purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high” (1:3). Everything since has been building back to that message in today’s passage.

Verse 14 drives this home even further: “By one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy.” In other words: if Christ’s death is effective for you then there’s nothing for you to add — he makes you holy. How it becomes effective is addressed in a moment — we’ll get there. But there is one sacrifice. And its effect of making you holy is permanent. **Let’s now read verses 15-18...**

Verses 16-17 quote the prophet Jeremiah, written centuries earlier. So: **Even while the Old Covenant was still in effect, God was promising something new: a covenant written on people’s hearts and minds, with sins not just covered but “remembered no more.”** From God’s perspective: they’re gone. Verse 18 then makes the point that Hebrews has been making repeatedly: Jesus’ sacrifice is sufficient.

So, these verses summarize everything that’s come before and show how Jesus fulfills the Old Covenant. As Jesus himself said, he came not to abolish the law, but to fulfill it. Everything is pointing to and fulfilled in Jesus.

Then we come to verse 19. As you'll see, it begins with the word "Therefore." Everything up to this point in Hebrews, all 188 verses, leads to this. So, if you've missed or slept through the other sermons, time to wake up: this is why the letter was written. **Let's read Hebrews 10:19–21...**

I know it keeps going...we'll get there. **These three verses are pointing to one reality: we can enter the presence of God.** Because of Jesus — his once-for-all sacrifice, his resurrection, and his role as our great high priest — we now have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place. Under the old system, that was unthinkable. Only the high priest could enter through the curtain to the Most Holy Place, and only once a year, and never without blood being shed. But when Jesus died, the curtain was torn from top to bottom. All four gospels record this. The barrier was removed. *Now*, through his broken body and shed blood, we have access to the very presence of God — and not just in an earthly building, but in the heavenly throne room and for all eternity.

And then come several "let us" statements. Not leaf lettuce, or romaine, or red "lettuce"... "let us." This is where the rubber meets the road and things get practical. So, let us read **Hebrews 10:22-25.**

First: Let us draw near to God with the full assurance that faith brings. *Faith* is our response to what Christ has already done. Not confidence in ourselves, but trust in him — that is how his death becomes effective for us and makes us holy. We saw earlier (verse 14) that we're made holy if Christ is at work in us. Now we see this is how he does it: through faith. So, you don't come to God because you've cleaned yourself up. You come because Jesus has made a way, and we trust that, we have faith in that.

Second: Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. The hope of Christians is not wishful thinking: In other words, it is not the same kind of hope Mariners fans have clung to for fifty years. I say that as a lifelong fan. Our hope is rooted in God's faithfulness. He made promises — and in Jesus he has proven himself faithful to keep them.

Third/fourth/fifth: Let us consider how to spur one another on toward love and good deeds...not giving up meeting together...but encouraging one another. “Let us” appears once here, but it’s implied two more times. We’re called to actively think about how to stir each other toward love and good deeds — this is how the gospel is shared and how disciples are shaped. Not through pressure, manipulation, or coercion, but through demonstration: a life of love and good deeds lived in front of people in the real world where we live, work, and play. This is where we demonstrate our faith, because the Christian faith is not about just “believing,” it’s about putting that faith in action.

Fourth: let us not give up meeting together. Look, people have not been gathering on Easter for centuries to proclaim, “Gas prices have risen, they have risen indeed.” No. *Jesus* is risen indeed, and he is seated at the right hand of God the Father. So, we gather on Easter Sunday and all the other Sundays, too, so we would stay connected in relationship with other believers. That’s how important Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection is – we meet every week.

And fifth: let us encourage one another. We need that encouragement from other believers, because no one else will. The government won’t. Your neighbor probably won’t. Your boss won’t. The newspaper won’t. But other believers will; it’s a big reason we meet together. And you can come with your doubts and your questions and find encouragement rooted in the truth of Jesus Christ.

Ok, I realize that’s a lot to take in. So, let’s shift gears for a moment. You may have heard about Punch, a baby snow monkey at a zoo near Tokyo (Photo). (Cute, huh? Everyone together: Awwwww...) He was born last summer and was abandoned by his mother almost immediately. Zookeepers hand-raised him, and when he was old enough, they introduced him to the rest of the monkeys. But it did not go well.



Videos of Punch went viral earlier this year. What captured people wasn’t just that he was cute — it was how he moved around. While the other monkeys

groomed each other, played, and piled on top of one another, Punch stayed on the edges. Watching. Wanting in. But not quite belonging. And the whole time he clung to a stuffed orangutan from IKEA that the zookeepers gave him because it was the closest thing to comfort he had (\$20; IKEA is sold out).

A couple months ago, a USA Today Opinion article by Louie Villalobos said **Punch “reminds us of the loneliness and sadness we’ve felt in our lives from loss or rejection, and the feeling that maybe we weren’t enough” (Louie Villalobos, USA Today).**¹

Most of us have felt like Punch at some point. Staying around the edges. Watching others who seem to belong. Holding onto something that offers a little comfort but isn’t quite the real thing. Not sure the group will actually receive us if we step in. Loneliness. Rejection. Wondering if *are* enough, or if we’ve *done* enough.

Here’s what the Gospel and this passage says: After everything we’ve seen — the cross, the empty tomb, the seated Christ, the open way — the first application that sets up the others is not a demand or a command or a rule to follow. It’s an invitation. We read: **“Let us draw near to God — with a sincere heart, in full assurance of faith” (Hebrews 10:22).**

Not a perfect heart, but a sincere one. You don’t have to have it all together to come to Jesus — which is really good news because even with all the wealth, intelligence, talent, and capabilities that we have, we still have struggling marriages, careers going sideways, difficulties in school, depression, addictions and more. We mask them really well. You are welcomed into the presence of God and you can come just as you are. And the confidence that you belong isn’t because of confidence in yourself — it’s faith in what Jesus has already done: crucified and resurrected. He is our confidence.

Do you want to know God and what he’s like? The cross and the resurrection say it all. Jesus does what we could never do and makes a way to God that we could never make. The question is not whether God will accept you and let you in to know him. This isn’t like Punch. Jesus has already

settled it and answered the question: He's made the way to God for us; You are accepted by God when you trust Jesus. And his resurrection proves he has overcome even the "death barrier" and that he is Lord of everything.

So, if you don't know Jesus: then get to know Him and trust him. That's the invitation!

He transforms.

He cancels sin.

He brings hope.

He rolls away stones.

He empties graves.

He brings resurrection.

He gives eternal life.

He makes all things new!

And you're invited to follow him. Talk to me, talk to one of our other three pastors, talk to any Christian in your life, and, as this passage encourages us: let's not give up meeting together.

If you *do* already know him, then the invitation is to keep following him, to keep trusting him because he's faithful; keep loving, keep doing good deeds, keep encouraging others in faith. Keep living, working, and playing for Jesus, and giving him all the glory all the time, for as long as you live, with every breath you've got, all the way into eternity in the presence of God.

So: This is the Good News of this passage and of this day: that the way is open to God because of Jesus' death and resurrection. And the message proclaimed for the last 2,000 years is summarized in this phrase: "Christ is risen! He is risen indeed!" Let's pray...Amen.

¹ <https://www.usatoday.com/story/opinion/columnist/2026/02/25/punch-monkey-japan-zoo-abandonment/88832993007/>