

JESUS IS BETTER: letter to the Houstonians

Sermon Study Guide | Part Six: Better than Guilt | 10/15/17 | @thestoryhouston @pastorerichuffman

PURPOSE OF THIS SERMON SERIES

1. To become more familiar with the Bible through a study of Hebrews
2. To convey the stark differences between the Gospel of Jesus and religions of men
3. To inspire people to believe Jesus (as opposed to just “believing in Jesus”)

EWVV-CHARIST

The weekly meal we call Communion (a.k.a. *Eucharist* which literally means “thanksgiving”) can be quite confusing for newcomers to Christianity. In fact, this ritual has confounded non-Christians since the very beginning of the Jesus movement. The earliest critics of Christianity accused Jesus’ followers of being incestuous (because the New Testament says “brothers and sisters” should “greet each other with a holy kiss” (Romans 16:16) and cannibalistic (because Christians consume the body and blood of Jesus).

What did the Last Supper mean in context?

Why do Christians still celebrate it today?

A major theme of Hebrews is the difference between the effectiveness of animal sacrifices and that of Jesus’ sacrifice on the cross. How would you define the difference?

KEY TEXT: HEBREWS 10:19-22

Therefore, brothers and sisters, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near to God with a sincere heart and with the full assurance that faith brings, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water.

CURTAIN CALL

What was the Most Holy Place for ancient Jews? What is it for followers of Jesus, and how do we have confidence to enter?

What do you think the author means by “a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that

is, [Jesus'] body? What was the symbolic meaning of the *curtain*?

NEARLY THERE

The author encourages believers to draw near to God with _____ and with _____ that faith brings. Let's take a closer look at these two concepts.

1. *A Sincere Heart* - What does it mean to you to draw near to God with a sincere heart? This is an intentionally personal question. What is *sincere* for me may not be *sincere* for you. What habits, choices, resources, and surroundings revive your heart's affections for God?
2. *The Full Assurance that Faith Brings* - What is the source of this assurance? What is the difference between this "full assurance" and being an arrogant, entitled brat?

KEY TEXT: HEBREWS 10:23-25

Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another - and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

NOT GIVING UP

According to *Hebrews*, what exactly is "the hope we profess"?

How does faith in Christ change our thinking? Do you think it's usually right behavior that leads to right thinking, or right thinking that leads to right behavior?

What is church *for*? How are the "lead measures" for a faithful church, and what measures are just meant to feed human ego?

Why is it important for Christians to meet together?