

A MESSAGE OF ENCOURAGEMENT

Our access to God gives us a message of encouragement.

KEY POINTS

- ❖ Romans 12 tells us that “we have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith; if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; **if it is to encourage, then give encouragement....**”
- ❖ Peter C. Wagner defines the gift of encouragement as follows: “To minister words of comfort, consolation, encouragement and counsel to other members of the Body in such a way that they feel helped and healed.”
- We have direct access to God.**
- ❖ “Therefore, brothers and sisters, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus...” (Hebrews 10:19). To comprehend the weight of this statement, we would need to look at the context in Israel.
- ❖ From the time Moses built the tabernacle until the death of Jesus, it was forbidden for all except the High Priest to go into the Most Holy Place where the Presence of the Lord dwelt. And he would only go in once a year to make atonement for the sins of himself, his family and the nation of Israel.
- ❖ Leviticus 16 describes two actions the High Priest would carry out: he would burn incense to cover the mercy seat, then he would sprinkle blood from his sacrifice over the mercy seat. This covered Israel’s sin for another year. But after Jesus’ death once and for all, every believer can now enter into the Presence of God directly.
- ❖ The synoptic gospels (Matthew, Mark, and Luke) describe how the veil, or curtain, of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom when Jesus died (Heb. 10:20). This curtain separated the Holy Place, which the priests could enter, from the Most Holy Place, which only the High Priest could enter once per year.
- ❖ Practically, this meant that previously unauthorised people could look upon the place where God’s Presence dwelt without dying. Theologically, it meant that Jesus’ blood had paid the sacrifice for all time. “Therefore, through Jesus we all have direct access to God” (Heb. 10:21).

We use our access to God to transform our hearts.

- ❖ “Let us draw near to God with a sincere heart and with the full assurance that faith brings...” (v. 22).
- ❖ Knowing that we now all have direct access to God without the need for intermediate sacrifices besides Jesus, we must not remain distant from God but exercise our right to draw near to Him. But it’s important to be sincere (Heb. 11:6). We give our hearts to God knowing that He can and will change us. It’s not our power that accomplishes this, but God’s Spirit (see Romans 8:1).
- ❖ The devil is described as the “accuser of the brethren” (Revelation 12:10 KJV). But we are no longer slaves to sin. We don’t allow the devil to throw our past sins in our face or hold us down when we fall as Christians.
- ❖ “Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful” (Heb. 10:23).

KEY SCRIPTURE: Hebrews 10:19-25
(all scripture in NIV unless otherwise noted)

- ❖ We have been baptised in water for the remission of our sins. Therefore, we qualify for the new life that Christ gives. So, let us “press on to the mark of the higher calling in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 3:14).
- Our transformed hearts bring a message of encouragement to the saints.**
- ❖ “Not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing...” (Heb. 10:25).
- ❖ It was a fact even in the early church, as it is now, that some peoples’ love waxed cold. After the initial meeting with Christ, they become like the seeds that fell among the thorns in Jesus’ parable of the sower and the seed (see Matt. 13:5-6).
- ❖ In Canada, about 30% of the population believe in God and pray but say that they don’t need to go to church. The Apostles called this a “habit” and disapproved of it.
- ❖ In Matthew 24:12, Jesus warns us that “because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold.” Christians should prioritise coming to church, so that we can encourage one another. Every saint in the local church is important and used by God to exhort others.
- ❖ Our access to God gives us a message of encouragement. It is especially for you if you know that you are inspired “to minister words of comfort, consolation, encouragement and counsel to other members of the Body in such a way that they feel helped and healed.”
- ❖ “...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” (Heb. 10:24-25).

DISCUSSION/REFLECTION TOOLS

1. The devil is described as the “accuser of the brethren” (Rev. 12:10 KJV), but Romans 8:1 tells us that “there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.” Discuss what this means.
2. Hebrews 10:23 instructs us to “hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful.” Discuss this hope and how we can hold onto it during difficult situations or even when others are telling us to let go. Consider examples from the Bible (e.g., Job).
3. Jesus warns us that “the love of most will grow cold” (Matt. 24:12). What can cause this coldness? How does one go about identifying it within themselves, and what measures can be taken to combat it? Support your response with Scripture.

PRAYER TIME

Lord, You have saved me and redeemed me. You have given me new life. My hope is in You. Amen.

Start-up: Has anyone given you a word of encouragement that you remember to this day? What were those words and their effect?

WEEK OF SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 2025

NOTES

Meditate as you read through/listen to this week’s message. If it helps, use symbols for your notes.

- ✓ (Reminds me/Confirms) 💡 (New idea) 🗨️ (Think about)
- 🗣️ (Do this) ❤️ (Speaks to my heart) ➡️ (Must share)

PRAYER NEEDS/THANKSGIVINGS

Go deeper with your Life Group family.
 CONNECT-REFLECT-DISSECT THE WORD
 Your Life Group ~ Your Lifeline

