



This week's passage begins with "Therefore," meaning that what the writer is about to say is based on what has gone before. For this reason, stop and review at least Hebrews 10:1–18 before reading our section for this week.

➤ Read Hebrews 10:19–39.

1. God has always wanted intimacy with his people.^a What is it important to realize we "have"? (vv. 19, 21)

2. God's word is intended to foster intimacy with him and transform our hearts and lives.
 - a. How have you experienced this transformation?

 - b. What has caused Bible reading and study at times to be dry, boring, or laborious and not go any further than your head?

3. Because God is holy, his people's sin made it necessary for him to place restrictions and barriers around the Most Holy Place, his dwelling on earth. Under the old covenant, access was limited to only one man, the high priest, and only once a year (see Lev. 16 for more details). Under the new covenant, what enables us to enjoy greater intimacy with God? (v. 22)

Most Holy Place

Leviticus 16 describes the Most Holy Place, the innermost room in the tabernacle, as closed off by a thick curtain. The high priest could not come into God's presence whenever he pleased, lest he die. Before entering, the high priest had to bathe, put on special clothes, and make a sacrifice for his own sins and those of his household. He also had to burn incense—so that the smoke would conceal the atonement cover—and sprinkle blood for the uncleanness and rebellion of Israel.

^a See Gen. 3:8–9 as an example of God's desire. Other references are: Ps. 139:16–17; Is. 49:13–16; Jn. 14:2–3; Rev. 21:3–4.

4. This section of Hebrews may seem repetitive, but the writer is building upon and stressing our benefits in Christ under the new order (vv. 9–10). Using the chart below, contrast what was necessary to enter into God’s presence in the Old Testament with what is available to us because of Jesus’ sacrifice.

	Under the old order	Under the new order
Access	Lev. 16:2–3	Heb. 10:19, 22
Sacrifice	Lev. 16:6–10	Heb. 10:19; Is. 53:6 (a prophecy about Jesus)
High Priest	Heb. 5:1–3	Heb. 7:26; 10:21
Cleansing	Lev. 16:30, 34; Heb. 9:9	Heb. 10:22

5. The writer has used word pictures from the Old Testament that demonstrate the work of Jesus. Most recently he used the idea of a will in Hebrews 9:16 to show what was necessary for us to inherit all the riches of Christ.
- What picture does he now use? (v. 20)
 - What current-day picture can you think of that might help someone understand the necessity of Jesus’ death? If you can’t think of one, ask the Lord to show you.
6. The veil was the barrier between God and his people. Only after the veil had been torn, both literally (Lk. 23:45) and figuratively (Heb. 10:20) could we have access to God and draw near to him (v. 22). How do you take advantage of this unrestricted access to God?

“No longer was the entrance into [the Most Holy Place] the exclusive right of the high priest. It now became the inclusive right of every believer—regardless of sex, age, position, or race—to enter.”¹

7. Sprinkling and washing before coming into God's presence were prescribed in the Law (Heb. 9:19–22; Ex. 30:17–21). What realities were these pointing to?

v. 22

Heb. 9:13–14

Acts 22:14–16

Ezek. 36:25–29a

8. We draw near to God “with the full assurance that faith brings.” (v. 22)

a. What assurance is yours? In other words, what can you be confident of? (Consider verse 22 and the greater context.)

b. In light of this confidence, what five actions should characterize our lives?

v. 22

v. 23

v. 24

v. 25a

v. 25b

Verse 24 tells us to “consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds.” When you consider this, what do you come up with?

Have you ever wondered what the greatest sin is? Hebrews 10:26–31 will explore this question.

➤ Read Hebrews 10:26–31.

In this passage, “the author refers especially to people within the Christian community, who have thus heard the truth. The fact that they ‘go on sinning deliberately even after receiving knowledge of the truth’ indicates that the people in view are not (and never were) genuine believers; that is, these are people who have never genuinely embraced the gospel in a way that has resulted in a life of faith, obedience, and the bearing of fruit.”²

9. Hebrews 10:26–31 is not making the case that we can lose our salvation. After all, God has promised to remember our sins no more (10:17). Hebrews has been building the case that the old covenantal sacrifices are obsolete (Heb. 8:13), and our salvation is guaranteed for all time by Jesus’ once-for-all sacrifice.
- a. Some of the readers of this letter may have been tempted to reject Christ’s sacrifice and turn back to the old sacrificial system. What would it mean for them to do this? (vv. 26, 29)
 - b. What case does the writer make in comparing the rejection of the law of Moses with rejecting Jesus’ sacrifice? (vv. 28–29)
 - c. What contrasts do you see between the people in verses 19–25 and 26–31?

➤ Read Hebrews 10:32–39.

10. In verse 32, the writer pivots to encourage the readers to remember their earlier experience in the faith.
- a. What was their experience after they “received the light” (v. 32)? (vv. 32–34)
 - b. Think about your own experience after receiving the light. How has your life been different, more complicated, more joyful, etc.?
11. Throughout this passage we have seen that faith is active. We believe God’s word, and then we live out of his truth.
- a. In light of his work and our many benefits (vv. 34–36), what encouragement does the writer give? (vv. 35–39)
 - b. How can you apply this encouragement to where you are now, in this season, day, or moment?

¹ Walter A. Henrichsen, *After the Sacrifice: A Practical Study of Hebrews* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1979), 136.

² Lane T. Dennis, ed., *ESV Study Bible* (Wheaton: Crossway Bibles, 2008), 2378, n. 10:26–27.