Since We. Let Us.

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[0:00] Welcome to Built on God's Word, the preaching and teaching ministry of Highland Park Baptist Church in Bartlesville, Oklahoma.! Pastor Mike Scrivani preaches on Hebrews 10 verses 19 through 25.

! Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful. And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another and all the more as you see the day drawing near.
May God add a blessing to the reading of His Word. Would you please be seated? I had a lot of different jobs when I was in high school and college, whether it was a department store, a warehouse, or a restaurant.
We were required to wear a uniform. Usually, it was a vest or a shirt that prominently displayed the company's logo.
[1:41] The reason for uniforms is pretty apparent. In those cases, they help customers identify employees when they need assistance.

And in larger stores, it helps employees identify other co-workers in other departments in the store to be able to help questions from customers who maybe are outside their area of expertise.
When I was a junior in high school, I worked at Lowe's in the indoor lawn and garden department. My main responsibilities, including assisting customers, retrieving things from the top shelves that they couldn't reach, and maintaining a clean work area.
The indoor lawn and garden department was next to the aisle next to us. Right next to us was the aisle that had all the HVAC vent covers.
One evening, while I was working and wearing my uniform, my red Lowe's vest, a customer identified me and asked me to find a specific vent cover that she was looking for.
[3:02] The employee responsible for that department was nowhere to be found, and so I was unfamiliar with that area of the store, but I told her that I would try to help her find what she was looking for.

When we got to the aisle with the vent covers, I couldn't find what it was that she was looking for. I told her that the only vent covers we have are the vent covers in this aisle.
I didn't say this, but it's like, you know, we don't have a secret stash of vent covers in the back of the store that you have to say the magic words for us to be able to get.
What we have is what we have. And she became increasingly irritated and upset with me for not having what she was looking for. So I told her, you know, I'll go find a manager, and maybe they'll be able to help you better, and she scowled at me.
And said something that I think she thought would upset me. She said, no, I'll just drive across the street to Home Depot.
[4:13] I bet they'll have what I'm looking for. I said, okay, maybe they will. What I wanted to say was, lady, I'm going to get paid $8 an hour, whether you buy every vent cover in this store or nothing at all.

When my shift is over, I'm going to take this red vest off. I'm going to stick it behind the passenger seat of my little truck. I'm going to drive home, go to bed, and not lose a wink of sleep over the fact that Lowe's lost a $5 sale to Home Depot.
Working at Lowe's was a job. When I put on that uniform, that red vest, it identified me as an employee of that company, but it didn't change my identity.
It changed what I did when I was working on the clock, but it didn't change who I was as I worked my shift. Putting on that red vest didn't transform me instantly into a stockholder of the company.

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It didn't change my relationship to the CEO of the company who didn't know who I was. It didn't even grant me access to walk into our store manager's office whenever I wanted.
[5:35] They might have told us, I'm sure they did on orientation day, you are now part of the Lowe's family. But that wasn't really true. I saw none of those people outside of work.

At work, relationships are built around what we do together when we're doing our jobs in our uniforms. Our relationships might be changed so long as we work at the same place, but they aren't transformed.
If I went back to that same Lowe's store today, and if I, I don't think I have it, I'm sure I gave it back, that red vest, say I had it and I put it on, I walk back in there, I don't think I'd be very well received by Lowe's.
The Bible says that when God saves us through faith in Jesus Christ, we are permanently changed. We are completely transformed.
And instead of wearing a uniform, we are forever clothed in the righteousness of Jesus Christ. Galatians 3.27 says, For as many as you were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.
[6:47] The Apostle Paul isn't talking about water baptism here, but our spiritual union with Christ when He saves us, when we are baptized, we are indwelt by the Holy Spirit.

The Bible says in salvation we receive a new identity in Jesus. 2 Corinthians 5.17, Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation.
The old has passed away. Behold, the new has come. Our past sins no longer define us. Instead, in Christ we are new creations, completely forgiven and set free to live our lives to honor God.
Our new identity in Christ is a result of our salvation, being born again in our adoption as God's children. John 1.12-13 says, But to all who did receive Him, Jesus Christ, who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God, who were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.
The new identity we have in Christ assures us of God's unconditional love for us as His children. 1 John 3.1, See what kind of love the Father has given to us that we should be called children of God, and so we are.
[8:17] Understanding our identity in Christ also brings a renewed sense to the purpose that He has for us, for our lives. Ephesians 2.10, For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

Understanding our identity in Christ means recognizing that our value, worth, and purpose are understood through our relationship to Him.
And with the Apostle Paul, we ought to be able to say, as he said in Galatians 2.20, I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me.
In the life I now live in the flesh, I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me. In Hebrews chapter 5, verse 1 through chapter 10, verse 18, where we were last week, the writer of Hebrews has been expounding, he's been teaching his readers about Jesus' Melchizedekian priesthood, his superior priesthood.
He's used Old Testament Scriptures to show that Jesus is a better priest who brings his people near to God and saves them completely.
[9:41] He saved them by offering himself as a better sacrifice with better blood, which activated a new covenant having fulfilled the old.

In Christ, believers are totally, completely, and permanently cleansed of their sins, past, present, and future.
In Christ, we are under a new covenant and have a new identity. Unlike an employee who wears a uniform that identifies them but doesn't change their identity and can easily be taken off, our identity in Christ is permanent.
He will never leave us or forsake us. He will not divorce us or abandon us. He knows his sheep by name and no one can snatch them out of his hand.
Although we don't wear an external uniform to display our identity in Christ, our actions, how we relate to one another in the church should identify us as belonging to him as a result of the new transformed life we have in him.
[11:02] In Hebrews chapter 10 verses 19 through 25, our text this morning, the writer of Hebrews explains that the doctrinal truths he has shared to this point are not just things to understand in theory, truths that must be visible, evident, and identifiable in the lives of God's people through the

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ways that they demonstrate their faith in Christ to one another in the church.

And so the main idea for this morning's message is that Jesus transforms who we are and how we demonstrate our faith in him to and with one another.
Jesus transforms who we are and how we demonstrate our faith in him to and with one another.
The world, our culture, continually puts pressure on Christians to conform to its understanding of identity and purpose, which actually leads people to deny their true identity and purpose as given to them by their creator.
Additionally, within evangelicalism, there is emphasis on treating people as attenders or customers instead of members and servants of Christ in the church.
In some churches, all you have to do, all they want you to do is show up, sit down, watch, listen, and leave, but don't forget to give your tithe.
[12:46] When I read the New Testament, I don't see that instruction given to the church. And it certainly falls short of fulfilling the mission the Lord has entrusted to us, his people.

Christianity isn't an external uniform we wear. Being in Christ is who we are. And we need each other to live our mission and to fulfill the purpose that Christ has given to us, to all of us, not just to the elders, not just to the church staff, not just to deacons, but to all who are saved by his grace and are in his body, the church.
Our mission statement at Highland Park is that we exist to develop disciples of Jesus Christ who delight in him and demonstrate his goodness as we declare his gospel to our neighbors and to the nations.
my goal this morning, as it is every sermon I preach, isn't to just fill your mind with a bunch of biblical information, but instruction that I pray the Holy Spirit uses to sanctify you, to renew your mind and your heart and conform your way of life to Christ, to develop you as a disciple of his who delights in him, knowing what you have in him, and that that will cause within you a desire to demonstrate his goodness to save you and change you, bearing fruit that identifies you as belonging to Jesus, declaring his gospel to your neighbors, to the nations, that they also would know Jesus, who he is, what he's done, and that they too would pursue their purpose to make and develop disciples of Jesus Christ.
Brother, sister, Jesus didn't save you to be idle. He didn't save you and tell you to go figure out how to fulfill his purpose and mission for you alone.
[15:05] He didn't give you his word so you could win prizes at Bible memory competitions. He's given his word to you so that you know who he is, that you will know who you are in him and how he's commanded you and enabled you to live and love your brothers and sisters in Christ in his church.

We aren't a club. We aren't a company. We aren't a team. We have a higher calling. We are his church.
We are in Christ. We are sealed by the Holy Spirit. As we've sung this morning, we've been cleansed by his blood. We are forever forgiven.
We have been transformed by him. Our identity is in him and how we demonstrate our faith in him to one another is what identifies us to this world as belonging to him, as being his disciples.
Our text this morning makes a shift from considering aspects of the gospel to implications of the gospel. That shift is marked by two two-word phrases.
[16:28] Jesus. Since we, let us. Since we have Christ, let us act. Let us do. Let us live for Christ like Christ.

If you're here this morning and you don't know who Jesus is, you don't know what Jesus has done, you're in the right place.
You will hear about who he is. You will hear about what he's done. And I hope that today you will see your need for Jesus to save you and that today you realize your true identity in him.
Jesus transforms who we are and how we demonstrate our faith in him to one another in his church. Our text this morning gives us two declarations informing us of what we have in Christ and then declaring to us what we must do because of who we are in Jesus.
And so the first declaration has to do with doctrine. Doctrine. Who we are and what we have in Christ.
[17:42] The word therefore at the beginning of verse 19 connects all that has been said to this summary now that the writer of Hebrews gives in verses 19 through 21.

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These truths this summary are doctrines for the church. Doctrine means instruction.
God has given us his word with instructions truths doctrines to inform the way we should live.
2 Timothy 3 16 through 17 says all scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching for reproof for correction and for training in righteousness that the man of God may be complete equipped for every good work.
Scripture the Bible is given to us by God to instruct us to teach us about him to reprove to correct to orient our lives to him living for him as we become more like him.
[19:01] There used to be a commercial that came on TV depicting a dad putting together a massive swing set for his children.

The commercial begins early in the day. The dad has all his tools out. He's laid all of the different pieces that he's going to put together out and order.
He has the instruction manual in his hand and he tells his wife that the instructions say it should only take a few hours. As the day goes on the dad is looking and he's talking less confidently. differently. He has a confused expression on his face as he looks at what he's built so far and compares it to what he sees in the instruction manual.
He flips the instruction manual upside down thinking either that maybe this will help him better or that maybe he was looking at it the wrong way all this time.
[20:10] In the last scene it's night time. The project that should have been finished in a few hours has taken him all day and he's still not close to being done.

He's put up spotlights in his backyard. He's not giving up. He won't accept his need for help as he pounds pieces of wood together that clearly don't go together in frustration.
Something had gone terribly wrong. Some instruction had been ignored, skipped, or misread. When that commercial would come on in our house Danny would smile and she giggled.
She did that the first few times we watched the commercial together because the dad in that commercial is me. Early on in our marriage it was tested by projects where we had to assemble something together and my refusal to admit that I had ignored, skipped, or misread the instruction book.
It wasn't my fault. It was the person who made the instruction book. Why doesn't this stuff just come together anyways? Why do we have to put it together on our own? Amen.
[21:31] If you could lose your salvation I would have lost it every time we bought something that we had to assemble. thankfully thankfully through the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit I've learned a better method and a better way to follow the instruction manual and to ask for help.

The Bible is God's word. It communicates truth about him to us. He is holy. The truth about who we are apart from him.
We are sinful. The truth about Jesus God's son who is our savior our only hope for salvation. It teaches us how to conform our lives to his ways which are best for us because he loves us and they keep us from exchanging the truth of God for lies that lead us away from him and the identity and the purpose that he's given to us.
These truths, these doctrines must be understood correctly so that they govern our lives in the way that God has intended.
2 Peter 1.20 says, and we have the prophetic word more fully confirmed which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts.
[23:06] Knowing this first of all that no prophecy of scripture comes from someone's own interpretation. There's a right interpretation of everything God says and it is our responsibility to discern that meaning not create an interpretation to suit our tastes and excuse our sin.

God wants us to know him, he's given us his word, the truth, these doctrines so that we can build our lives upon the rock who is Jesus Christ.
Knowing who he is, knowing what he's done for us. The writer of Hebrews summarizes the doctrines, the teachings, the truths that he's given to this point reminding them to his readers of what they have in Christ which should instruct their way of life.
So again, verses 19 through 21 he says, therefore brothers since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain that is through his flesh and since we have a great high priest over the house of God.

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Again, the writer of Hebrews here reminds his readers that in Christ they have access to enter confidently into the holy place by the blood of Jesus.
[24:29] Their access, our access to the Father is no longer restricted by a location like the tabernacle or the temple. We have access to go directly into God's presence in prayer through Jesus Christ our high priest.

We read about that in Hebrews 4, 15-16. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.
Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.
This access we have to the Father comes through and only through Jesus Christ, His Son, who offered Himself as the sacrifice to end all sacrifices because His sacrifice completely, totally, permanently, and eternally redeems us and forgives us of our sins.
He's paved for us a new and living way. Before going to the cross to willingly offer Himself as this sacrifice to atone for our sins, Jesus told His disciples in John 14-6, I am the way and the truth and the life.
[25:58] No one comes to the Father except through Me. Jesus opened this way through the curtain that is through His flesh.

In the tabernacle and later the temple there was a curtain. It was the last barrier restricting access to God's presence.
Only the high priest and only one time a year on the Day of Atonement could enter behind that curtain into the Holy of Holies. The curtain in the temple when Jesus was crucified was 60 feet tall and about four inches thick.
And from the cross when Jesus shouted declared in victory it is finished and He gave up His spirit dying for our sins the Bible says that in that moment the curtain that was in the temple that 60 foot high curtain was supernaturally torn from the top to the bottom in two.
The writer of Hebrews is making an important connection for us between the curtain in the temple which restricted access to God the Father and Jesus' sacrifice for us on the cross.
[27:28] Jesus' flesh as He was led to the cross and while He was on the cross was ripped pierced and torn shedding His blood atoning for our sins suffering and dying in our place giving us access to the Father that by faith in Jesus we receive His righteousness we are cleansed by His blood of our sins and we can confidently enter into God's presence not timidly through a curtain but boldly in Jesus Christ in Christ we are forever forgiven of our sins in Christ we are declared righteous we are sealed by the Holy Spirit in Christ we have eternal life in

Christ we have access to the Father to approach His throne of grace in our time of need we have Jesus as the mediator of a new covenant as it pertains to our salvation there is nothing that Jesus left undone there are no loose ends for us to tie up he's finished that work if you are in Christ your identity is in Christ our faith in him is not a uniform that we put on and take off when we come to and leave church there is no off season there is no vacation there are no days off as it pertains to the Christian life if you you have been transformed you are a new creation and with that you have new desires to live for Jesus to be like Jesus to obey his commands to walk in the new and living way as his disciple willingly submitting to him in all ways as the
Lord of your life and there should be fruit of this there should be evidence of this that you are in Christ the writer of Hebrews summarizes the doctrines in verses 19 through 21 and now in verses 22 through 25 he exhorts his readers to fulfill their Christian duties since they are in Christ since they have Christ since they know who they are and what they have in Christ then let us do what we are able to do what we are commanded to do because we are in Jesus Christ and so the second declaration now after the doctrine is duty duty what we must do because of who we are in Christ! verse 22 ends a long sentence which began in verse 19 with the first of three let us statements verse 22 again says let us draw near with a true heart and full assurance of faith with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water those who are in Christ are to draw near to God boldly confidently and joyfully in the full assurance of their faith in Jesus fully assured that in Christ they are forever forgiven of their sins past!
present! and future! Because the blood of Christ has sprinkled their hearts and their conscience clean by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit however many Christians struggle with this certainty of their salvation they sin they keep sinning and they're tempted to think that God's grace and

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forgiveness has run out or will run out or they feel ashamed of having to ask God in prayer yet again to forgive them when you get really sick really sick none of the medicines that you can get over the counter are working you go to the doctor you tell him or her your symptoms and the doctor helps you get better they want you to get better when you get sick again and you need the doctor's help you don't think
[32:27] I can't go back to the doctor again they've already helped me before I don't know if they'll want to see me again the point I'm trying to make here is that in Christ you have been forgiven you are his adopted child he will keep you you will be seen by him he wants to help you God wants you to be assured of this he wants you to be certain of your salvation which wasn't based on how good you are or were but how gracious he is to you you need to draw near to God by reading his word remembering what you read and trusting in it despite what you might be thinking or feeling about yourself let's look at a couple verses from first

John here's some good ones to read remember and to trust all of it should be read read remembered and trusted but first John 1 9 through 10 says if we confess our sins he is faithful and just to forgive us of our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness not some not a little bit not just bad things you did in the past but all unrighteousness if we say though we have not sinned we make him a liar and his word is not in us continual confession of sin is an indication of genuine salvation brother sister if your sin bothers you if your sin troubles you if you don't try to excuse it or attempt to live your life with it that's evidence that you are saved
God wants you to know for sure and not doubt that in Christ you are saved 1st John 5 13 I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God that you may know that you have eternal life and so we need to preach the gospel to ourselves every day we need to remind ourselves every day of the truth of God's word drawing near to him by reading by studying by meditating and memorizing his word using his word to inform our prayers as his Holy Spirit uses his word to renew our minds inform our actions and keep us from conforming to this world this world by holding fast to the confession that we have made in Christ Jesus our Lord as verse 23 says let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering for he who promised is faithful for the fourth time now in this letter the writer of
Hebrews exhorts his readers to hold on to the faith they confessed without wavering the confessions he refers to here the faith the doctrines the realities about who Jesus is and what Jesus has done which they at one point acknowledged as the truth here the writer of Hebrews exhorts them to hold fast to the confession of their hope the hope they have in who Jesus is the son of God their superior high priest who is the mediator their mediator their advocate!
right now heaven the hope they have in what Jesus has done he offered himself as a superior sacrifice fully atoning for their sin once and for all the hope they have in what Jesus will do he is coming back he will appear a second time not to deal with their sin but to save those who eagerly await him to finish his work of salvation and glorification when we will sin no more verse 24 says and let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works the Greek word translated as stir up in the ESV is the same Greek word used in Acts to describe!
[37:19] the word means contention provoke incite or stimulate it's a strong word the writer of Hebrews uses this word here positively we are to provoke each other in the church to love and good works but this is important motivated by our love for the Lord and our love for those whom he saved in his church love is the mark of Christian discipleship it must be what marks a follower of Jesus Christ look at what Jesus told his disciples in John 13 34 through 35 a new commandment I give to you that you love one another just as

I have loved you you also are to love one another by this all people will know that you are my disciples if you have love for one another Jesus did not say the world will know his followers by their flawless theology but by how they love one another Jesus commands us to love one another just as I loved you how did Jesus love us love love love love has no more than this that someone lay down his life for his friends you are my friends if you do what I command you Jesus laid down his life for us the Bible says that he loves us unconditionally!
Romans 5 8 that he loves us sacrificially 2 Corinthians 5 21 and everything that we read in Hebrews to this point he loves us forgivingly Ephesians 4 32 he loves us eternally Romans 8 38 through 39 and 1 John 3 16 by this we know love that he laid down his life for us and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers do you love the people who are in our church like that Jesus' love is also characterized by his holiness love isn't turning a blind eye to sin love is confronting sin because you

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love that person and you speak the truth and love to them because you care for them because we genuinely love the person that we're talking to the person in the church that you are struggling to love right now is probably the person that you most need to be praying for and that prayer shouldn't be
Lord they need to go I've tried nothing's working they need to go or I'm leaving no that prayer should be Lord you love them you've commanded me to love them help me to love them so that I can be used by you to stir them up to love and good works for your glory so an application here is to commit to pray for that person in this church and having said that now some of you are going to hesitate to tell anybody in this church that you are praying for them now but to love those who don't first love us who do stir up and provoke you in negative ways it's hard it's hard but in
Christ by the indwelling of his Holy Spirit as people who have been reborn and transformed we can do that and we must do it verse 25 says not neglecting to meet together as is the habit of some but encouraging one another all the more as you see the day drawing near we meet Jesus in a special way when we gather together as a church to worship him in the first couple of chapters of revelation Jesus is described as walking among the seven lampstands which represented seven different churches we experience Christ in a special way when we go to church because many of the commands that he's given us to obey can't be obeyed in isolation from other believers outside of the church you don't have to go to church to be a
[43:14] Christian neither does a husband have to go home to be married but in both cases that relationship is going to suffer the writer of Hebrews is writing to Christians who faced persecution for their faith so this is what we need to understand here about the original readers when they gathered together to worship as Christians to worship the Lord that identified them as followers of Jesus Christ and as a result of that they were facing persecution from their community assembling with other believers in worship meant they'd be identified with Christ and they were going to be persecuted for their faith in him arrested potentially martyred nobody would want to do business with them they'd be called all kinds of horrible things they would lose relationships that was the cost they faced for gathering together to worship the

Lord and being identified with Christ and so some of them were tempted to neglect going to church if that wasn't a good excuse for skipping church then certainly an excuse to skip church because you want to sleep in or maybe because you want to avoid someone or something or because you've prioritized something else more than gathering with your brothers and sisters in Christ to worship that isn't a good excuse either now some people physically can't come they have things going on that prevent them from being here and it's our job to reach out to those people and to let them know that we love them that we want them to be here and to do whatever we can to make it possible for them to be with us in person as we worship but some people are in the habit of neglecting church for sinful reasons what should we do when
I was in college my freshman year of college went to a Christian school we had chapel throughout the week and I was in church because I had to be in church and that was a period of time for me where I was running away from the Lord but for the first time I could sleep in on a Sunday and not go to church and so I did one Sunday I was up we had bunk beds and it was three levels and I was at the very top of this level about this close to the ceiling and some of my friends who had gone to church came back into my dorm and hit that ceiling and then they grabbed my mattress and they pulled me off of my bed I didn't want to go back to church with them the next Sunday that strategy did not work it made me angry so what should we do for those who are in the habit of not coming well we should encourage them we should tell them that we miss them that we hope to see them you know what else we should do we should find out why they aren't coming we should remind them of this command and when they do come back we shouldn't say where have you been or reintroduce ourselves to them in a way that will embarrass them we meet together as a church in anticipation of the day when we meet together with the church in the presence of our
Lord worshiping delighting in him together forever Jesus did not intend for us to live the Christian life alone and we cannot fulfill his mission for us as his church in this world by ourselves we need the church we need the church you need the church and if you haven't trusted in Christ as your Lord and Savior what you most need is him he who lived the sinless life that you couldn't live he who died willingly as a sacrifice giving his life shedding his blood on the cross in your place for your! sins he who rose again on the third day he who through salvation changes us completely helping us understand our meaning our purpose our mission in life being gracious to save us and to keep us

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until that day comes when we go to be with him I encourage you implore you turn to Christ and be saved and be a part of his church also for our church right now this is a good time for me to encourage you to be a part of a community group all of the one another's that we have been commanded by our Lord to execute towards one another we have to be in the church to be able to do that community groups gives us another way of doing that to talk about
[49:19] God's word together to pray for one another to be a part of each other's lives to disciple one another and I hope and I pray as a vehicle through which we invite our neighbors to come to hear us talk about Jesus to see the difference that he's made in our lives so if you haven't or if you're not sure if you're going to sign up for community groups I encourage you to do that it's good for our church that we meet in these groups having said that I think this is a way we need to adjust by making a decision on a few things decide decide brother sister in Christ will you draw near to him every day will you commit make time to be near to God in prayer in reading his word decide will you hold fast to the confession of your hope in

Christ no matter what it costs you at work at home in your neighborhood in your community decide will you consider how to stir up others in this church to love in good works when you come into this place will that be a priority that you have a prayer that you have Lord how can I stir up others in this church to love and good works decide will you make church a priority a top priority and then decide will you encourage others in the church!
may may may may in blessing for this church to the glory of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.
Hebrews 10, 19 through 25. Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain that is through his flesh, and since we have a great high priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart and full assurance of faith with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.
Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another in all the more as you see the day drawing near.
[52:31] Let's go to the Lord. with these questions and ask his help to make the right decisions.

Heavenly Father, we thank you for what we have in Jesus.
We thank you for who you have made us to be in Jesus. And Lord, we thank you for your church. We thank you, Lord, to be a part of a body of believers who whom you've saved, who believe that your word is true and who I trust desire as individuals and as a body to do what you have commanded us and to do it for your glory and for your praise.
Lord, I pray that as your church, for our teachers, for our elders, for those who give instruction, that they would hold fast to the confession of their hope, that we as a church, Lord, would hold fast to our confession that you, Jesus, are our Lord and Savior, no matter what consequence there might be.
[54:20] I pray, Lord, that in our church, we would be holy nuisances to one another, to do so in a loving way, to stir up others in this church to love and good works, to care when we haven't seen someone for a while, and to reach out to them instead of assuming why they're not here to find out why, and encourage them to come back.

And that when they come back, Lord, they would be welcomed and that we would rejoice over one who maybe has gone astray, who has been led back home by you.
And Lord, so often with all that we have, with our tithe, with our time, we end up giving you what's left, what's left over, instead of our best.
God, forgive us that we tend to do that. Because Lord, we know that you gave your best for us. And you had to to be able to save us. And so Lord, when it comes to this church, I pray that as your people, we would make it a priority in our lives to be here, to be involved, to be engaged, to know each other, to love each other, to serve each other, that we would accomplish our mission together for you and for your glory, that we would encourage each other every day until that great day when you bring us to you, where we are gathered together with the church, with all the brothers and sisters in Christ whom you've been gracious to save around the world throughout time.
[56:10] What a great day that will be. So Lord, help us to obey what you've commanded and we trust that you will for the glory of your great name in which we pray.

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