
Sermon Notes

March 26, 2017

First Congregational Church of Pomfret

Don't Be Sluggish

Hebrews 6:9-12

We Preach Christ Crucified

- ❖ In every era of the church's history, Satan has bombarded believers with the temptation to water down or modify the message of Christ crucified and risen from the dead
 - the temptation to build our lives around anything other than Jesus Christ and Him crucified
 - for some, it seems safer, easier, or less offensive to build our lives on something other than Christ
- ❖ If Jesus is not the solid rock that forms the foundation of your life, than you do not belong to Him
 - refusing to recognize your need to have your sin dealt with and forgiven by Jesus and to acknowledge Him as your only hope for salvation is a one way road to Hell
 - the example of those in Hebrews 6 who have tasted but not feasted on Christ (those who come so close yet remain so far from Jesus)
- ❖ Following our author's very austere warning to the unconvinced and unconverted, he now comes forward with the most loving of appeals)

This is Addressed to True Believers

- ❖ Shift of tone in v. 9, *in your case, beloved, we feel sure of better things*
- ❖ *Beloved*
 - this term never refers to unbelievers
 - used 60 times in NT (9x applied to Jesus by His Father, 51x to speak of believers!)
- ❖ The *things that belong to salvation*
 - this group exhibits all the traits/true marks of salvation
 - this group is held up as a stellar example for others to imitate
- ❖ Both this group of true believers and the nonbelievers addressed in the previous section come from the same background
 - both hear the same gospel
 - both are exposed to the same manifestations and miracles of the Holy Spirit
 - both see and experience Jesus' church at work
- ❖ The parable of the wheat and the weeds (Matt 13:24-30)
 - true believers and those who merely claim to be believers will always be mixed together in the church until Jesus returns
 - only God knows the true condition of our hearts, who belongs to Him and who doesn't

Things Worth Imitating

- ❖ A diet of solid food (maturity) as opposed to milk (infancy)
- ❖ A focus on internal regeneration and transformation rather than external ceremonies and rituals
- ❖ A reliance upon the one perfect, complete sacrifice of Jesus Christ rather than the repeated sacrifices of the old covenant
- ❖ Allowing the blessed hope we have in Christ to drive and motivate our lives
- ❖ Being made new as opposed to just being enlightened
- ❖ Feasting on salvation as opposed to just tasting it
- ❖ Having the Holy Spirit live inside of us rather than just being a spectator of the Holy Spirit's work in and on others
- ❖ Submitting to and relying on God's Word rather than just hearing it

Words of Encouragement and Exhortation

- ❖ God will never forget His own or overlook any of the work we do for Him in His name
 - our works don't save us but they are evidence of God's grace and power at work in us
 - Ephesians 2:10, Philippians 2:12 *ff.*
- ❖ Another word of exhortation for those who remain "on the fence"

- take a good, hard look at those whom God is changing from the inside out
- how fantastic it would be if you were just as excited, earnest, and diligent to go hard after Jesus as they are
 - come with eagerness and haste
 - don't be sluggish
- in the long run, to hear and NOT accept the gospel is the same as REJECTING it outright (2 Corinthians 6:2)

Personal Application

1. Consider the phrase, "We preach Christ crucified". Are there any words in this phrase that you think are not essential? Why or why not?
2. Read the parable of the wheat and the weeds and Jesus' explanation of it in Matthew 24:24-30, 37-43. Why do you think Jesus wants to warn us that true believers and false believers will be mixed together in His church until He comes back? What danger(s) does Jesus warn us against in this parable?
3. Look at the list of "Things Worth Imitating" that characterize the lives of true believers. Which of these are most evident in your life? Which of these are growth areas for you? What will you do about that?
4. Has studying this section of Hebrews raised any doubts in your mind about the nature of your relationship with Jesus? If you have questions or concerns, please talk them over with a trusted Christian friend or a leader in the church.