

# THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

AUGUST 26TH-27TH, 2023 // VISION

## A NEW AND LIVING WAY (HEBREWS 10:19-25)

The book of Hebrews is an exhortation to persecuted Jewish believers to continue in the grace of Jesus Christ.

- Jesus is better than anything that religion can offer—His identity and completed work have given us access and boldness to enter into the presence of God (“the sanctuary,” vs. 19).
- Jesus as our great High Priest, has given us a “new and living way” to relate to God (vs. 20-21).

### “LET US DRAW NEAR...” (VS. 22)

The blood of Jesus has cleansed and washed us like water. The ordinance of baptism symbolizes this.

- Because we’ve been forgiven, cleansed, and given new life in Jesus, we’re invited to pursue an intimate, close relationship with God.
- Everything we do as Christians is to flow out of this relational connection we have with God.

### “LET US HOLD ON TO THE CONFESSION ...” (VS. 23)

Discouragement, temptation, cultural pressures, and widespread, rampant deception can cause us to waver in what we know to be true about God.

- A renewed confidence in the greatness of Jesus, and the new and living way He’s given us to relate to God, helps us stand strong.
- God is faithful, and He has given us promises!

### “LET US CONSIDER ONE ANOTHER...” (VS. 24)

In our day and age, considering other people has become a lost practice.

- Our lack of empathy, selfishness, consumerism, pride, and ferocious individualism have crept into the church (“...just me and Jesus!”).
- We are commanded to live in Christian community! Christians who try to fly solo will waver in their faith and be spiritually immature/emaciated.

### “...IN ORDER TO PROVOKE LOVE AND GOOD WORKS”

Why are we to “consider one another”?

- When we do, it incites and forces us to learn to love as Jesus commanded us to love.
- Living in Christian community forces us to learn how to forgive, serve, be selfless, and how to live unoffended and gracious lives.
- When we do, it incites and forces us to display our faith through good works—not just talk.

### “NOT NEGLECTING TO GATHER TOGETHER...” (VS. 25)

How is this all supposed to work? Through a serious commitment to regularly gathering with other believers for worship, study, prayer, community, and encouragement.

- Heb. 10:25 might be one of the most ignored, dishonored, and disregarded commands of Scripture in the American church—we see it as a suggestion, but God sees it as a necessity.

### WHY DO WE OFTEN NEGLECT CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY?

1. Poor theology—Church as a building/event, a service to consume, or an optional program.
2. Habitual busyness—Other things take priority in our lives over our obedience to God.
3. Church hurt—For fear of getting hurt again, we disengage and play it safe.
4. Unrealistic expectations—We have idolized an ideal of church that simply doesn’t exist.

### THE CHURCH THAT GOD HAS BUILT HERE.

- We are a nondenominational, Bible-centered, discipleship-focused, simple church.
- We are a campus of the Experience Community Church (Murfreesboro, Shelbyville, Tullahoma).
- We desire to serve our community sacrificially, worship God genuinely, and make disciples faithfully.

### A SIMPLE VISION

- The Experience Community creates authentic disciples of Jesus Christ through Authentic Worship, Authentic Community, and Authentic Community Service.

### WORSHIP

- Corporate worship is an entry point into community and the process of discipleship (Acts 2:46a, Heb. 10:25).
- This is so important! But it’s not the final destination.

### NEXT CLASS

- Next Class happens on the second Monday of every month to help people find their next step in discipleship in our church family.

### DEVELOPMENT CLASSES

- Following Jesus (101)—the foundations of the Christian faith and how to be a disciple. Starts Oct. 3.
- Authentic Discipleship (201)—how to make disciples and live out the great commission (concepts, identity, and practices of a disciple-maker). Starts Feb. 6.

### COMMUNITY (LIFE GROUPS)

- Life Groups meet throughout the week, and Life Group Central (6:30 pm on Wednesdays) is a great place to start! Adam Pitts or adam@experienceccc.com.

### COMMUNITY SERVICE

- Serving in our church: Hospitality, Parking, ECCO Kids, ECCO Nursery, Emerge (special needs ministry), EON, Encounter, Production, Worship, Security.
- Serving in our community: 5000 Ministry, community service events, nonprofit partners.
- Our biggest areas of need are our weekend serve teams: ECCO Nursery, Emerge (special needs ministry), Hospitality, Parking, Security, and Production.

### OUTREACH/MISSIONS

#### OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY

- 5000 Ministry: Community service events: Community Cleaning Day, WeCareCannon, Fall Festival, and Christmas Box Outreach; Nonprofit partnerships: Rescue Squad, Lion’s Club, S.A.V.E., F.C.A., etc.; Reclaimed Jail Ministry (28 inmates baptized!)

#### OUR STATE

- Murfreesboro: February 2009
- Cannon County: August 2017
- Shelbyville: August 2021

- Tullahoma: November 2022
- M.I.T. Program: Our residential training program to launch more churches around the state.
- The Network: A team that supports all campuses.

### OUR NATION

- Redemption Church: San Francisco, Ca.; Sequoia Campus Church: Eugene, Oregon; Hope Church: Delmarva, Delaware; City Church: Albany, Brooklyn, and Staten Island, New York; Garden City Church: Beverly, Massachusetts

### OUR WORLD

- El Salvador: ministry to elementary-age kids
- Uganda: Tara Henson working with street kids, teaching FJ, and training pastors
- Haiti: Jameson and Shelby Toyo
- Israel: Simeon’s Cry (Sean Steckbeck)
- Eastern Europe (EEM): Egypt and other various international missions

### CHURCH NUMBERS AND FINANCES

#### ATTENDANCE (CHILDREN & ADULTS)

- 7,500 avg. a week across all campuses
- 740 avg. a week in Cannon County
- Saturdays: 5 pm.–135, 7 pm.–110
- Sundays: 8 am.–140, 10 am.–250, 12 pm.–105
- The 10 am. is full – if you aren’t currently serving, serve others by attending another service.

#### WHY NOT JUST BUILD???

To expand our sanctuary, the cost would be anywhere between \$800,000–\$1 Million (the Murfreesboro campus has a much bigger and more urgent need for space than we do right now).

- We are a debt-free church, and we want to stay that way. Until God provides us with the financial means, we must be resourceful, creative, and selfless.
- We also hope to plant another campus in the near future to hopefully alleviate some space issues.

#### TOTAL FINANCIAL PICTURE FOR ALL OF ECC:

- 2023 Budget: \$9,800,000
- Estimated expenses (because the church has grown 42%): \$10,400,000
- Projected income: \$12,100,000

#### ALL ECC NETWORK BUDGET

- Murfreesboro: \$5,947,411 • Cannon County: \$737,477 • Shelbyville: \$400,251 • Tullahoma: \$616,872 • Network (covers needs for all campuses): \$2,105,218

#### CANNON COUNTY BUDGET: \$737,477

- Administration: \$432,646.00 • Operations: \$54,573.00 • Worship/Production: \$16,166.00
- Student Ministries: \$40,300.00 • Development: \$52,635.00 • Special events: \$23,340.00 • Benevolence/Missions: \$117,817 (20%)

#### CANNON COUNTY GIVING

- Annual budget for 2023: \$737,477.00
- 2023 YTD giving totals: \$574,415.00

#### HOW ARE WE DOING?

- We will bring in more than we budgeted, but our giving is far below the national average of \$2,262 per person annually (\$1,224 per person).

There are often heated debates over whether or not N.T. Christians have to bring the tithe to God (10%).

- 1 Cor. 16:1–2 suggests proportionate giving (“as God hath prospered him”), and 2 Cor. 8–9 teaches “grace giving.” If we just followed these teachings, we’d all give WELL beyond 10%.
- If believers under the Old Covenant were to bring their tithes, how could Christians under the New Covenant begin with anything less?

If no one gives, the ministry of the church suffers. We don’t give to be blessed; we give because we have already been blessed.

- We give because we love God and want to serve Him, and we give because God has been exceptionally generous to us.
- When we give, God uses our gifts to do incredible things for His Kingdom, and He blesses us in the process!

#### THE CHALLENGE

##### 1. INVEST IN CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

- Serve. Our church cannot effectively provide ministry unless more people step up and serve as volunteers (August 28th, Volunteer Interest Meeting).
- Give. Our church cannot effectively move forward unless more people faithfully tithe and give.
- Serving and giving are both sacrifices—but they’re investments into eternity.

##### 2. CONSIDER OTHERS

- We are commanded to live in Christian community (Heb. 10:25) and consider one another.
- Get into a Life Group (adam@experienceccc.com, Life Group Central, Wed. 6:30 pm), come to Next Class, and sign up for Following Jesus.
- A toxic lack of empathy, selfishness, consumerism, and ferocious individualism cannot creep into this church, or we will die and become irrelevant.

##### 3. PRAY FOR YOUR CHURCH, BE THE CHURCH

- Pray for wisdom for our leaders, supernatural guidance, protection, provision, integrity, humility, and spiritual breakthroughs.
- Live as a disciple of Jesus in this community!
- Invite your unchurched/unbelieving neighbors, coworkers, family members, and friends to church. If you don’t know how, get disciplined!

##### 4. BECAUSE OF JESUS, LET US...

- Draw near to Him—let’s pursue Christ and everything He wants for us, our church, and this community.
- Hold on to our confession—let’s not waver or shrink back in fear if and when it gets difficult or uncomfortable to do this thing called church.
- Consider one another—let’s learn how to live as brothers and sisters, loving others like Jesus.