

PowerPoint can be found on our Faithlife.com group.

“A New and Living Way” (Hebrews 10:19–25)(1.5.20)

LET US PRAY.

Hebrews 10:19–25 (NIV84) (Let’s have them stand.)

19 Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, 20 by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body, 21 and since we have a great priest over the house of God, 22 let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water. 23 Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. 24 And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. 25 Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

The word of God for the people of God.

Title: A New and Living Way

INTRODUCTION:

It is a beautiful thing when a plan comes together. What makes it even better is when you can see the fingerprints of the Holy Spirit on the plan. As we launch a new year, let it be a new and living way.

This week, I created a Faithlife online group for Emmaus and invited every one of you for whom I have an email address. Some of you have already joined the group. One of the features is a shared Bible reading plan. I chose a Chronological Reading Plan, which starts with the first three chapters of Genesis.

The last verse is Genesis 3:24 After he [God] drove the man [Adam] out, he placed on the east side of the Garden of Eden cherubim and a flaming sword flashing back and forth to guard the way to the tree of life. The rest of the Bible is about our quest to return to a daily walk in the Garden of God, enjoying his presence.

Milton S. Terry wrote a book titled The New and Living Way that came from today’s scripture. He closes his book with these poetic words:

O blessed life, unspeakably divine!

This, this is heaven. Our opened eyes now see

The mystery of God in ecstasy

Of vision far transcending all confine

That needs the light of sun and moon to shine.

The temple of the living God are we.

Henceforth in this pure, new, and living way

Walk, O my soul. The sons of light are here,

And from their faces God wipes every tear,

And from his presence they shall never stray.

See how they gather at the heavenly throne!
They banquet by the streams of Paradise,
And sing new songs that ravish all the skies.
Risen with Christ in God they all are one.

BODY:

So, the human race was cast out into the broken world cursed by Adam's and Eve's disobedience.

Human nature has not changed. That nature displayed in the OT is repeated in the NT.

But the Way of God is the Way of Holiness; the way of peace; the way of justice; the way of righteousness.

Jesus warns us about the way we should go.

No! There is no other way. There is One Way and He is Jesus.

In fact, the early Christians were referred to as "people of the Way." There are many examples of this, but I will only provide two verses here. They were people of the way, a people of Jesus.

(Read verse first)

He is Apollos, a learned man, with a thorough knowledge of the Scriptures. But, there was something missing.

He did not know about the baptism of the Holy Spirit. This was the critical power he was missing. We all need the Holy Spirit to live in the way of God.

An important practical application is demonstrated in this verse. More mature Christians took it upon themselves to mentor the younger man; and, equally necessary is a willingness to accept the instruction. In what ways of God do you need instruction?

The most Holy place is also called the Holy of Holies. In the Jerusalem Temple, there were different levels of access. As you got closer to the presence of God in that most Holy Place, it was the most restrictive. Only by the high priest, only once a year, and only with sacrificial blood could he have access to Yahweh's presence. We are told here that Jesus is the great priest over the House of God and it is by Jesus' blood that we have access to Yahweh's presence. And not only on one day each year; but continuously for those that are in the New and Living Way.

Jesus called the Temple, as do the scriptures, a house of prayer. When he was a boy, he told his parents that he was in His Father's house and doing His Father's business. Of course, the Temple has been destroyed and replaced by Jesus. John 2:19, 21 (NIV84) Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days." But the temple he had spoken of was his body. And in Christ Jesus, there are no differing levels of access, male or female, Gentile or Jew, free or slave, all are one in Jesus.

Here is a quote from The Voice paraphrase: "The word translated "church" in English Bibles means literally "assembled of the called"; it implies that members have said "yes" to God's call in their lives. We assemble

because we are called into being by God Himself. Some people, for reasons only they know, choose to live their Christian faiths in isolation. When they do, they cut themselves off from the gifts, encouragement, and vitality of others. And perhaps, just as tragically, they deprive the church of the grace and life God has invested in them.”

The juxtaposition of our heavenly entrance into the presence of God with our earthly assembly MUST elevate the importance of our worshiping together far more than our modern western culture supposes! Something happens in our gathering to worship. The grace of God is at work. It is for the good of the individual believer and for the good of the body. To forsake regular assembling is not only disobedient, it is a strong impediment to the new and living way.

Some people are homebound. Some people have to work on Sunday mornings to support themselves or their families. The importance of us assembling is why I established our Tuesday night Communion Service. It is why we have a couple different Bible studies and a prayer meeting. It is why we have our Coffee House. It is why I have been live streaming the sermon on Facebook.

This week, to start the New Year strong, I have created an online gathering place. The Emmaus Faithlife Community. This will allow us to read through the Bible in a year together. It will allow us to pray over the same scriptures during our daily devotions. We will be able to share immediate prayer requests. There will be discussion forums to wrestle with sermons and scripture. And, I plan to add content regularly to grow us spiritually.

As I said earlier, everyone for whom I have an email address, I sent an invitation. If you have not received an invitation, please provide me your email address. I want to start the reading and prayer plans tomorrow. Let us take a brief look at the Emmaus Faithlife Community now.

Likely you know that when Jesus died on that Calvary Cross, the curtain, that acted as a barrier to the most Holy place was torn from top to bottom. Because Jesus really died on the cross and his blood was actually shed, our sins can be forgiven as our debt has been paid. He who was without sin, became sin on our behalf. So, the new and living way was made possible by Jesus giving up his body as the Lamb of God, the sacrifice that takes away the sin of the world.

Why did I put the bread and cup on this slide? How do I associate this scripture to Holy Communion? Well, first of all Communion connects the saints of all ages, including us, and our God. The assembly communes together. Second, Jesus told his disciples at the Last Supper, take, eat, this is my body, given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.

But there is more. Paul commands us to continue celebrating Holy Communion, and proclaiming the cross, until Jesus’ second coming. The second coming is the approaching Day that is cited in verse 25 of Hebrews 10. There is a strong weaving together of Jesus’ death, the church, His resurrection, His return, and the new and living way. This is a life in the presence of God Almighty.

CONCLUSION:

The way is new because it did not exist and was not even possible until Jesus made the way. It is new because

even after Jesus has come and we have the holy scriptures there is still a strong misconception, and negative tendency, in the human heart and mind. We want to earn our way into the Holy of Holies, into the presence of God. If you doubt this, watch the video I posted on Facebook and the Faithlife Group. Then examine your own actions and those around you.

It is a new way because we have been made new creations; and we are continually being made new through the God's grace in the sanctification process.

It is a new way because we have joined Jesus in His baptism: Romans 6:4 (NIV84) We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.

The way is new because our Lord bathes us by his grace each day.

Lamentations 3:22-23 (NIV84)

22 Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail.

23 They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.

It is a living way because it leads to eternal life. It is a living way because Jesus is the life. It is a living way because the crucified Christ was raised by the power of God. It is a living way because Christ is alive forevermore.

Oswald Chambers closes his yearly devotional with this thought:

"As we go forth into the coming year, let it not be in the haste of impetuous, unremembering delight, nor with the flight of impulsive thoughtlessness, but with the patient power of knowing that the God of Israel will go before us. Our yesterdays present irreparable things to us; it is true that we have lost opportunities which will never return but God can transform this destructive anxiety into a constructive thoughtfulness for the future.

Let the past sleep, but let it sleep on the bosom of Christ.

Leave the Irreparable Past in His hands, and step out into the Irresistible Future with Him."

That is my prayer for us individually and for us as a body of Christ here at Emmaus Church.

Amen and amen. Let us pray.