

## **A True Ring of Confidence!**

*Daniel 12<sup>1-3</sup>; Psalm 16; Hebrews 10<sup>11-25</sup>; Mark 13<sup>1-8</sup>*

*Let us approach with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast to the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who has promised is faithful. [Hebrews 10<sup>22-23</sup>]*

It was tempting, this morning to preach on the text from the Gospel on the text **Do you see these great buildings? Not one stone will be left here upon another; all will be thrown down.** Reminding ourselves as we begin our sojourn in the Hall rather than the Church, that our faith is never in anything architectural!

It was also tempting, having reflected about the commitment of the generations that engaged with war and how those who are in their late teens and early adulthood would respond to a call to arms, to reflect on the changing nature of commitment and preach on the text encouraging Christians to commitment to worship - **not neglecting to meet together as is the habit of some** and taking the challenge to **PROVOKE one another to love and good deeds.**

Rather than those tempting options, I want us to spend some time reflecting on two verses from Hebrews:

### **Let us approach with a true heart in full assurance of faith,**

- ✠ Truth and faith are at the heart of why we are here
- ✠ Being true isn't holding a collection of facts, but having a life in harmony with God's being. One of the most useful things my grandfather taught me was how to get a straight line using a string held taut and a piece of chalk - it was used to paint a water line on a ship and land-lubbers use it to get wallpaper hanging straight. God is the line and the Bible is the chalk - we judge ourselves true against those two.
- ✠ We come to God in faith because we know that there is no conclusive proof that would convince a skeptic that God exists and never enough proof that would convince a person who has known God to deny him. That said, faith is what we put our trust in - something that we come to know through experience, and experience of God builds confidence in God.
- ✠ Assurance isn't holding to a creed and arguing details into submission, but it is being held by God!

### **With our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.**

- ✠ God presses the reset button on us when we become Christians.
- ✠ The heart is generally used as complete inner being of humans - and asking God for forgiveness makes us clean from the inside out!
- ✠ Even our conscience is sorted out - too many Christians carry memories that disable them of things that God has already forgiven!
- ✠ This is probably, too, a reference to the water in Baptism, which is never an optional extra for Christians - the tangible touch of water is a powerful symbol of God's cleansing.

### **Let us hold fast to the confession of our hope without wavering,**

- ✠ Consistency in Christian living is our way of holding fast to our hope. When we let our morals slip, or the basic Christian disciplines of prayer and bible reading and loving living, then we are relaxing our grip on hope.
- ✠ Confession is also key (not in the private confession sense - always important) but in confessing what we believe to be important by how we live and, if necessary, in what we say. If our confession is consistent then we never contradict what we say!

### **For he who has promised is faithful.**

- ✠ It depends on God not on us. That is the most important thing for us to hear and remember. God calls us, God forgives us, God empowers us and God's work is done - through us or in spite of us!
- ✠ God's faithfulness is more reliable than our unfaithfulness - that is the ground of our faith.

When we have our confidence properly focused and fixed on God then everything else falls into place!