

DIGGING DEEPER

A 5-Day Devotional

Connected Life Week 1 - Connected to God Through Christ

Hebrews 10:19-25

The Connected Life Series | Week 1

How to Use This Devotional

This devotional takes Sunday's message on Hebrews 10 and unpacks it across five days. Each day focuses on a specific piece of the text and what it means for where you actually are right now. Read it when you have a few quiet minutes. Sit with the reflection questions honestly. Use the prayer prompt to actually talk to God rather than just think about him.

All Scripture is from the New Living Translation. The goal is simple: go deeper into what Scripture is saying, and let it reach the places in your life that need it.

Day 1 You Were Designed for This

"Even before he made the world, God loved us and chose us in Christ to be holy and without fault in his eyes. God decided in advance to adopt us into his own family by bringing us to himself through Jesus Christ. This is what he wanted to do, and it gave him great pleasure."

Ephesians 1:4-5 (NLT)

Bobby asked the room a direct question on Sunday: did you know you were designed to be in relationship with God? Some people answered yes without hesitation. Others heard it, and something in them pushed back. "Not me," they may have thought. "You do not know what I am like. I am not significant enough for God to actually care about me. I do not even want God, so why would he want me?"

Those thoughts feel like honesty. They feel like humility, even. But Bobby did not soften it. If you doubt that God desires closeness with you, if you minimize it or assume it applies to other people and not to you, you are simply wrong. Not because your feelings do not matter, but because the claim does not rest on how you feel about yourself. It rests on what God actually did.

Look carefully at what Ephesians 1 says. Before he made the world. Before you existed, before you failed at anything, before you had a chance to earn or forfeit anything, God loved you and chose you. He decided in advance to adopt you into his family. And then Paul adds a phrase that is easy to skip past: this is what he wanted to do, and it gave him great pleasure.

That is not the language of obligation. God is not tolerating you. He is not putting up with you because he made a commitment he now has to honor. He wanted this. It gave him pleasure. The desire for closeness with you originated with him, and it started before there was a world for you to be born into.

"You made all the delicate, inner parts of my body and knit me together in my mother's womb. Thank you for making me so wonderfully complex! Your workmanship is marvelous, how well I know it." **Psalms 139:13-14 (NLT)**

REFLECT

1. When you hear that you were designed to be in relationship with God, what is your honest internal reaction? Is there a part of you that pushes back? What is underneath that?

2. Ephesians 1 says God's decision to adopt you happened before the world was made. What changes about how you approach him if that is true, not just as doctrine but as your actual reality?

3. Bobby said this is not just a message for new believers. It is something every Christian has to keep embracing. Where have you drifted from believing that God genuinely wants closeness with you specifically?

PRAY

Read Ephesians 1:4-5 out loud, slowly, and put your own name into it. Then sit quietly and ask God to help you actually believe it, not just agree with it intellectually. Ask him to show you where you have been living as if it applies to others but not to you.

Day 2 What Sin Actually Cost

"At that moment their eyes were opened, and they suddenly felt shame at their nakedness. So they sewed fig leaves together to cover themselves. When the cool evening breezes were blowing, the man and his wife heard the Lord God walking about in the garden. So they hid from the Lord God among the trees." **Genesis 3:7-8 (NLT)**

Before this moment, God walked in the garden with Adam and Eve. That was normal. That was the design. Daily, unhindered, face-to-face closeness with the Creator. And then sin entered, and the very first human response was to hide.

Bobby pointed out something worth noticing in the text. Adam and Eve tried to cover their own shame with fig leaves. Their own effort, their own solution, something they put together themselves to hide what they were feeling. And God's first act on this side of sin was to take those coverings off and replace them with something that required a death. He made them clothing from animals. The first sin required the first sacrifice.

That pattern runs all the way through Scripture. Bobby traced it forward. God instructs Moses to build the Ark of the Covenant and the Tabernacle. Later Solomon builds the Temple. The Ark sits in a room called the Most Holy Place. And access to that room, to the presence of God, is reduced to one priest, once a year, and only after specific ritual cleansing. If it was not done properly, it meant death.

Sit with the arithmetic of that. What was designed to be daily and intimate and available to everyone became an annual visit by one man. Not because God pulled away, but because sin made the distance real. God is love, but he is also holy and just. What is unholy cannot stand in the presence of a holy God. That is the conundrum humanity was stuck in, and there was no human solution to it.

"For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord." **Romans 6:23 (NLT)**

REFLECT

1. Adam and Eve's first instinct after sin was to hide and to cover themselves with their own solution. Where do you still do that? What are your fig leaves?

2. Bobby emphasized that God is love and also holy and just, and that both are true at the same time. Do you tend to lean on one of those and minimize the other? What does that do to your view of God?

3. Access went from daily and open to once a year for one person. What does that history help you appreciate about what you now have through Jesus?

PRAY

Ask God to show you where you are still hiding from him, and where you are still trying to cover something with your own effort rather than bringing it to him. Then thank him that his first response to human sin was to provide a covering himself.

Day 3 The Curtain Is Open

"And so, dear brothers and sisters, we can boldly enter heaven's Most Holy Place because of the blood of Jesus. By his death, Jesus opened a new and life-giving way through the curtain into the Most Holy Place." Hebrews 10:19-20 (NLT)

The curtain in the Temple was not decorative. It was a barrier. It separated the presence of God from everyone who was not the high priest on the one day a year he was permitted to enter. That curtain was a physical statement about the distance sin had created.

And then Jesus died, and Scripture tells us the curtain tore. Not from the bottom, where a person could have reached it, but from the top down. God opened it. The barrier that had stood for centuries came apart because the sacrifice that finally dealt with sin had been made.

Bobby made a point that is worth holding onto: Jesus was not God's backup plan. He did not look at the mess in Genesis 3 and scramble to figure out a response. He was not a last-minute solution to a problem God did not see coming. God always knew there would be separation, and he always had a plan for restoration. Jesus was the plan from the beginning.

That means the access you have right now was not an accident or a concession. It was the point. The whole arc from the garden to the Ark to the Tabernacle to the Temple to the cross was moving toward one thing: getting you back into the presence of God. The curtain is open. The way is new and life-giving. And it stays open, because what opened it does not wear off.

"For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." Romans 10:13 (NLT)

"Jesus told him, I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me." John 14:6 (NLT)

REFLECT

1. Bobby asked how often we live as though God is off in some far room, or as though we can only be near him on Sunday mornings when everyone gathers. Is that true of you? What does your week actually look like in terms of nearness to God?

2. Jesus was not a backup plan. He was the plan before the world was made. How does that change the way you understand your own access to God?

3. The curtain is open and stays open. Is there any part of you that still operates like you have to earn your way back in each time you fail? What would it look like to stop doing that?

PRAY

Picture the curtain torn open from the top down. Not by you. By God. Then bring whatever you have been carrying this week straight into his presence without any preamble or qualification. Just come. That is the point of the open curtain.

Day 4 How Are You Coming to Him

"Let us go right into the presence of God with sincere hearts fully trusting him. For our guilty consciences have been sprinkled with Christ's blood to make us clean, and our bodies have been washed with pure water." **Hebrews 10:22 (NLT)**

If the access is real, then the question becomes practical. How do you actually come to God? Bobby named four patterns and said with some confidence that most people in the room would recognize themselves in one of them.

The beggar comes pleading. God, please, please, please, I really need this, come on, please. Every conversation is desperate and insecure, as if God has to be worn down. The bully-pacifier comes braced for punishment. God, I know I do not deserve this and I am a horrible person, but if you do this I will do that. It treats God as someone standing over an anthill with a magnifying glass, more interested in punishment than love. The stranger stays formal and polite, never getting past small talk, close to God mostly because they are close to people who are close to him. And the performer prays impressive prayers, aware of how it sounds, more focused on the delivery than on whether any of it is genuine.

Each of these is built on a wrong belief about what God is like. The beggar does not believe God is generous. The pacifier does not believe God is good. The stranger does not believe God is personal. The performer does not believe God already accepts them. And every one of them keeps a person at a distance while looking like devotion.

The verse says come with a sincere heart, fully trusting him. Sincere means without pretense. Fully trusting means you are not managing him or performing for him or bracing for impact. And the reason you can do that is stated right in the verse: your conscience has been made clean and you have been washed. The standing is already settled. You are not coming to establish it. You are coming because it is already true.

"So you have not received a spirit that makes you fearful slaves. Instead, you received God's Spirit when he adopted you as his own children. Now we call him, Abba, Father." **Romans 8:15 (NLT)**

REFLECT

1. Which of the four patterns is most like you? The beggar, the bully-pacifier, the stranger, or the performer? Be honest rather than diplomatic.
2. Each pattern is built on a wrong belief about God's character. What does your pattern reveal about what you actually believe God is like when you are not thinking carefully about it?
3. What would it look like this week to come to God with a sincere heart rather than a managed one? What would you have to stop doing?

PRAY

Pray once today in a way that is deliberately unpolished. No performance, no bargaining, no pleading. Just say what is actually true about your week and what you actually need. If that feels uncomfortable, notice that, and ask God why.

Day 5 Anchored Boldness

"Come close to God, and God will come close to you. Wash your hands, you sinners; purify your hearts, for your loyalty is divided between God and the world." **James 4:8 (NLT)**

The word Hebrews uses for boldly is parrhesia. Bobby explained that it came out of a Greek political context, describing a citizen's freedom to speak openly and candidly in a public assembly without fear of punishment or reprisal. You could say what was actually on your mind. You belonged there. Nobody was going to remove you for speaking.

But Bobby also warned that boldness has to be anchored in something real. He named three kinds. False bravado boldness acts like it belongs while knowing it does not, like a kid cussing around friends to fit in. Stupid boldness is rooted in a lie you have convinced yourself is true, like the middle-aged dad saying watch this before getting on the skateboard. Both end badly, because the confidence has nothing underneath it.

Anchored boldness is different. It is confidence rooted in something that is actually real. Bobby used the picture of children with good parents. A newborn does not consider whether it is a convenient time to cry. A toddler interrupts a phone call to say watch what I can do, fully expecting to be welcomed. Nobody teaches them that. They just know they belong. That is the posture God is inviting you into, and it is anchored in adoption, not performance.

Bobby said Jesus is both our access and our advocate. He invites us in and he is the reason we get to stay. That is what makes the boldness anchored. You are not coming in on your own credentials and you are not staying on your own merit. And because of that, James 4:8 is not a demand you have to be strong enough to meet. It is an invitation. Come close, and he comes close. That is the whole thing.

"Let us hold tightly without wavering to the hope we affirm, for God can be trusted to keep his promise." **Hebrews 10:23 (NLT)**

REFLECT

1. What is your boldness before God actually anchored in right now? Your performance, your track record, your feelings about yourself, or Christ?
2. Bobby said Jesus is both our access and our advocate. He invites us in and he is the reason we can stay. Which of those two do you have the harder time believing, and why?
3. As you close this week, what is the one specific way you want to draw close to God that you have not been doing? Not a general intention. Something you will actually start.

PRAY

Read James 4:8 and Hebrews 10:23 together. Then come to God the way a child comes to a good parent. No preamble, no credentials, no performance. Tell him what you want to be different in your life this week, and ask him to help you hold tightly to the hope you have in Christ, whatever season you are walking into.