

Hold Fast; Hebrews 10:23-25

- I. Hold Fast
 - A. To adhere firmly
 - B. To keep in one's possession, not letting go
- II. Confession
 - A. An expression or statement of allegiance as an action; profess
 - B. New International Version, "Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess"
 - C. Profession - we consider our confession that Christ is the Messiah, but do we consider our confession our profession?
 1. A principal calling, vocation, or employment
 2. A calling requiring specialized knowledge and often long and intensive academic preparation
 - D. We almost always consider our vocation our profession
 1. I attended DeVry Institute of Technology for training to be a Systems Analyst; that was the profession I chose to train for
 2. I was a Security Forces Leader and a First Sergeant in the Air Force; that was my profession
 - a) To be a systems analyst required specialized training
 - b) To be a Security Forces Leader in the Air Force required specialized training
 - (1) Security Forces Academy
 - (2) Air Base Ground Defense (level 1 and 2)
 - (3) M-60 Machine Gunners course
 - (4) Law Enforcement course (by correspondence)
 - (5) Non-Commissioned Officer (NCO) Preparatory course
 - (6) NCO Academy
 - (7) SNCO Academy (by correspondence)
 - (8) First Sergeant's Academy
 3. In order to be an Air Force Professional, there was a lot of training and information I had to learn and keep up with
 - E. We confess Christ as our Lord and Savior
 1. When we do, we are committing ourselves to be Christian professionals
 2. Words hold no real meaning without action to back them up
 - a) Without the act of construction we could not call this a building
 - b) Without the actions of love, we would not know what it is or how to define it
 - F. When we confess Christ, we are saying that our actions will show the world that our profession is Christianity
 1. 2 Corinthians 9:10–15; 10 He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness. 11 You will be enriched in every way to be generous in every way, which through us will produce thanksgiving to God. 12 For the ministry of this service is not only supplying the needs of the saints but is also overflowing in many thanksgivings to God. 13 By their approval of this service, they will glorify God because of your submission that comes from your confession of the gospel of Christ, and the generosity of your contribution for them and for all others, 14 while they long for you and pray for you, because of the surpassing grace of God upon you. 15 Thanks be to God for his inexpressible gift!
 2. Our confession (profession) is attached to our offering

3. 1 Timothy 6:11–16; 11 But as for you, O man of God, flee these things. Pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, gentleness. 12 Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called and about which you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses. 13 I charge you in the presence of God, who gives life to all things, and of Christ Jesus, who in his testimony before Pontius Pilate made the good confession, 14 to keep the commandment unstained and free from reproach until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, 15 which he will display at the proper time—he who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords, 16 who alone has immortality, who dwells in unapproachable light, whom no one has ever seen or can see. To him be honor and eternal dominion. Amen.
 4. Our confession (profession) is attached to righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, gentleness, and eternal life
 5. Hebrews 4:14–16; 14 Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. 15 For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. 16 Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.
 6. Our confession (profession) is attached to our rejection of sinful behavior
 - G. Matthew 16:13–16; 13 Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?” 14 And they said, “Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.” 15 He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” 16 Simon Peter replied, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”
 - H. When we confess that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God, we have chosen Christianity as our profession
 - I. And our profession is based in the faithfulness of God
- III. Stirring Up
- A. Acts 15:39; And there arose a sharp disagreement, so that they separated from each other. Barnabas took Mark with him and sailed away to Cyprus,
 1. The Greek word denotes intense emotion, most often with a negative connotation
 2. It is only used twice in the New Testament
 - B. Consider - to notice or observe carefully; to look at in a reflective manner; contemplate
 - C. Carefully thought out
 - D. James 1:23–24; 23 For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks intently at his natural face in a mirror. 24 For he looks at himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like.
 - E. Love tells us to consider the needs of others more than our own
 - F. Do we contemplate, ruminate, reflect, think, concentrate on ways to “stir each other up?”
 - G. “Rousing to activity, provoking”
 - H. What have you (we) done to encourage someone to work and serve in the Kingdom of God?
 - I. Have you sat down and thought about it, put some effort into coming up with a plan?
 - J. Putting a plan together
 1. While we do things on the spur of the moment, we mainly plan things out
 2. Some of us plan all our vacations for the year in January
 3. Some of us plan each day of the week
 4. Day Planners or Organizers are made for just these things

5. Steven Covey's "Seven Habits of Highly Effective People"
 - a) Be proactive
 - b) Begin with the end in mind
 - c) Put first things first
 - d) Think win-win
 - e) Seek first to understand, then to be understood
 - f) Synergize
 - g) Sharpen the Saw
6. We spend an immense amount of time planning our lives
7. We should be planning how to stir up the Body of Christ
- K. To love and good works
 1. Matthew 22:37–40; 37 And he said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. 38 This is the great and first commandment. 39 And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. 40 On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets."
 2. Titus 2:11–15; 11 For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, 12 training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, 13 waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, 14 who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works. 15 Declare these things; exhort and rebuke with all authority. Let no one disregard you.
- L. In order to stir one another up, we must meet
- IV. Meeting Together
 - A. "Neglecting" - to separate connection with someone; forsake, abandon, desert
 1. We cannot stir each other up if we have deserted the assembly of the saints
 2. We don't "go to church," we ARE the church!
 3. And the church assembles on Sunday morning
 - a) To worship the Almighty God, Yahweh, the God of the covenant
 - b) To stir one another up to love and good deeds (not just at the assembly)
 - c) I'm convinced that the way we say things leads to misunderstandings about the Body of Christ
 - d) "Let's go to church" verses "Let's go assemble with the saints" or "The church is meeting this morning"
 4. We can't encourage one another if we have forsaken the church
 5. We can't receive encouragement if we have abandoned the assembly
 - B. We must assemble!
 1. John 20:19; On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being locked where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you."
 2. 1 Corinthians 16:2; On the first day of every week, each of you is to put something aside and store it up, as he may prosper, so that there will be no collecting when I come.
 3. Acts 20:7; On the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul talked with them, intending to depart on the next day, and he prolonged his speech until midnight.
 - C. Part of our meeting together is for encouragement
 1. Spurring each other on to love and good deeds
 2. To remain faithful in light of the events in our lives (there is nothing worth our soul)

D. The day

1. There are basically two main thoughts about what "the day" is
 - a) It is the Destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70
 - b) It is the second coming of Jesus
 - c) There are very good arguments for both of these understandings
2. "A harmony of these two learned opinions, both of which were supported by able argument, may be achieved by understanding the "day" as a reference to the final judgment as TYPIFIED by the fall of Jerusalem, the latter indeed being very near at hand and easily seen by all as "approaching" in the political developments of that period when Hebrews was written." Coffman

E. The focus of this verse is not on "the day," but on meeting together regularly to encourage and love one another

F. We must not neglect our meetings, for they give us strength to remain faithful in this dark and twisted generation

V. Hold Fast

- A. Hold fast to your confession
- B. Stir each other up to love and good deeds
- C. Do not neglect the meeting of the saints