

## Hebrews 4:14-16 – Deciding to Commit – Lesson Summary

I struggle with making decisions. My wife would call it indecisiveness but I prefer to think of it as being thorough. I constantly stress over making a decision because I don't want to make the wrong one. Sometimes I'm just lazy and don't want to take the time. Regardless of what drives my indecisiveness, decisions need to be made. In the final 3 verses of Hebrews chapter 4, the author challenges his listeners to make 3 key decisions as a result of what Christ has done in their lives. Essentially, the author is challenging them to decide to commit to Christ.

The author of Hebrews has spent the first few chapters of his letter challenging his listeners to remember God's promises. In doing so, he's showed how Christ is the fulfillment of all of God's promises. He's proven that God was faithful through Christ. Through all of this he's been asking a simple question. Do you trust the promises of God? For those who answer yes, we should be challenged to make **3 clear decisions**.

First, we should **decide to hold fast** (v.14). The recipients of the letter are facing strong challenges to return to their Jewish faith or pursue the cultural gods around them. Their faith is under attack as others question the supremacy and Lordship of Christ. In the midst of all of these things, the author is reminding them of Christ's faithfulness as well as His call on our life to remain faithful to Him. I'm guessing that many of you can relate to the challenge to hold fast. There are countless things competing for our attention. The promise of financial security, popularity, and satisfaction can seemingly be found in many things. However, the Bible is clear that there is nothing in this world that will satisfy like Christ. Are you holding fast to the promises of God? Are you finding your rest in Him? Hold fast to Christ as He holds fast to you.

Secondly, we should **decide to deny ourselves** (v.15). In this verse the author references Jesus' own temptations. In doing so I believe he makes a clear distinction between temptation and sin. Temptation in and of itself is not sin. Simple logic would suggest that if temptation was sin, and Jesus was tempted, then Jesus sinned. We know this not to be true. Failing to deny yourself in temptation is what leads to sin. In a broken and fallen world we will find temptation. The hope of the Gospel is that we are no longer controlled by it. But this is a decision we must make every day. Are we going to deny ourselves in the midst of temptation or will we satisfy our sinful desires? Jesus denied Himself so that through His Spirit we would have the power to deny ourselves as well.

Finally, we should **decide to draw near** (v.16). I love how the author ends this section of the letter. Having challenged us to hold fast and deny ourselves he now encourages us to draw near to Christ. Just think about that for a moment. The amazing reality of what Christ has done is that we have the freedom to draw near to Him despite our struggle to hold fast to His faithfulness. Despite our continual failures in denying ourselves we are still able to draw near. Because Jesus is the Great High Priest we can now approach our Heavenly Father with confidence trusting that He welcomes us into His presence. Much of Hebrews 5 will unpack the author's description of Jesus as our Great High Priest. The sacrificial system that once required the spilling of an animal's blood has been fully satisfied in the shed blood of Christ. Do you feel free to draw near to Christ? Satan wants nothing more than for you to hide from your Savior in guilt and shame. However, rather than hide, we rejoice because God's promises are true and have found their fulfillment in Christ. Therefore, we hold fast, we deny ourselves, and we draw near to the Savior who died on our behalf.

### Discussion Questions:

- 1) What are some big decisions you have had to make in your life? What are some basic decisions you make every day?
- 2) The author of Hebrews challenges us to hold fast to our confession. How is it hard to hold fast at times? He also challenges us to deny ourselves. What are some of the ways in which you struggle to deny yourself?
- 3) Because of Christ we are told that we can draw near to Christ. What does this look like in your life? Do you believe that you are truly free to draw near to Christ despite your sin? Why or why not?