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A Bowl of “Letus”

Text: Psalm 122:1; Hebrews 10:22-24

One of the grandest invitations that will ever be extended to any one of us, is the invitation to move from a life of self-absorption and first-person-centeredness to the world of *we, us, our.*  We are invited- by a significant other, a family, a school, a fraternal organization, an athletic club, a church- to become part of something else. The psalmist David said it made him glad when somebody said, “*Let’s* go into the house of the Lord”. What an invitation!

In this text in Hebrews 10, the writer (Paul? Barnabas? Clement of Rome? Luke? Origen of Alexandria [c. 184 A.D. - c. 253] famously wrote, “But as to who wrote the epistle, only God knows the truth” calls the readers to a *we* perception of themselves. The writer advocates a corporate, plural self-perception. How might life and faith be different for us all, if we were to see ourselves as part of something greater than ourselves?

**Illus**.

I am not a vegetarian, but I flirt with that dietary choice. I am less and less a carnivore. I eat salad- often! The base of many salads is lettuce. It comes in many varieties. As much as I enjoy lettuce, I dare not *define* myself by it. However, the ideal life of faith is a “letus” life. I want to look at four “let us” passages and challenge us all to begin, or continue, to define ourselves as part of an aggregate. May the church be a bowl of “letus” people!

1. Let us go into the house of the Lord- Psalm 122:1
2. Let us draw near. A word about worship. Cf. 4:16 for an earlier *draw near.*

*How* are we to draw near? Four suggestions in the text:

1. With a true (as in *real* [8:2] ) heart
2. In full assurance of faith. Faith is a crucial element in our adventure of following Jesus. The writer will have much more to say about faith in chapter 11. For now, know that being assured in faith, operating in faith, is part of the way we draw near to God.
3. Having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience.
4. Our bodies washed with pure water. Is this literal baptism? Symbolic? A call to holiness!
5. Let us hold fast our confession. A word about holiness, about perseverance. *Without wavering* (Greek=aklines=without incline).
6. Let us consider one another. A word about body life. Let us be present for one another and have another’s best interests at heart. Let us *provoke* each other, in the best sense of the word. We *incite* each other. We poke the bear. We push each other’s buttons, with intentionality. We stir each other up.

There are some (v. 25) who are not fans of engaging one another. They are isolationists or, at best, corporate worship minimalists. They regularly forsake this idea of coming together to consider one another or vocalize a commonly held confession or worship (draw near) or renew their baptisms or their creedal commitments.

**Closing**

Harrison, whom friends called Harry, was a long-time member of a church in his medium-sized mid-west city. Someone at church ticked Harry off and he decided he was not going to church anymore. The pastor of the church went to meet Harry one winter day. Harry was home alone. Pastor and Harry sat in front of a roaring fire and talked about a wide variety of subjects. When the conversation turned to church and the faith community, Harry told the pastor that he didn't need to come to church. He read his Bible. He prayed daily. Harry said he was doing fine without church people. Without arguing with Harry, the pastor took tongs from the fireplace tools sets and took one flaming log out and placed it on the slate floor in front of the fire. The pastor then said, “Harry, I will not argue that you can’t have a significant time of Bible-reading and prayer when you are alone, but you won’t burn brightly without the rest of us”. Then the pastor and Harry watched that lone log lose its brightness. The pastor picked up the tongs and put that log back with the others. A great fire roared and Harry got the picture.

Oh, how we “logs” need each other’s burning fire. **Let us** celebrate the truth that God has given us, for our growth and for our encouragement, each other.

Amen