

Heb 10:26-31

26 For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, 27 but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries. 28 Anyone who has rejected Moses' law dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. 29 Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace? 30 For we know Him who said, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord. And again, "The Lord will judge His people." 31 It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

God's tolerance for sin does end at some point, and judgment follows as a result.

I mentioned Ananias and Saphira last week.

Other examples would be the flood in Gen 6. After tolerating violence for many generations, God judged.

Israel's rebellion led to exile, 2 kings, 2 chron.

I think of David sinning with Bathsheba then after having her husband Uriah killed, Nathan rebuked David in 2<sup>nd</sup> Samuel 12.

2 Sam 12:10

10 Now therefore, the sword shall never depart from your house, because you have despised Me, and have taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife.'

God didn't end his life, but He sure did discipline him.

- There would be turmoil within his own family.

Example:

Amnon, Tamar, Absalom,

God's grace does not always cancel the consequences of sin.

Amnon's sin was deliberate, he raped his half-sister.

He had a choice, he could have left but he didn't.

To make matters worse, there was no confession nor was there any repentance.

Much like we see in Hebrews,

- Amnon's act was not weakness,
- it was complete defiance.

**Nathan told David** “the sword shall never depart from your house.”

**Verse 30 of Hebrews echoes the same covenant reality,**

- “the Lord will judge His people.”

**In both cases, we see that judgement begins inside of God’s people.**

**Some will receive more than others at the BEMA seat of Christ.**

**In fact, the more we know, the more accountable we are.**

**Twice in proverbs we read,** “There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way to death.”

**Both the proverb and the story of Amnon tie into Hebrews 3:12**

Heb 3:12

Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God;

**Amnon followed the way that seemed right to him, but its end was death.**

- Hebrews warns the believers not to do the same.

1 John 2:19

19 They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us; but they went out that they might be made manifest, that none of them were of us.

**If you’ve surrendered your life to Christ, you belong to Him!**

**Jesus Himself said of His sheep, that no one can snatch them out of His hand.**

**In Romans 2 Paul warns that God’s kindness leads to repentance,**

- but stubbornness stores up wrath
- for the day of judgment.

Heb 10:31

31 It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

- sin is disciplined, not condemned (Heb 12:6)

Jesus has already taken our judgement for us. (Rom 8:1)

**Don’t take advantage of God’s patience,**

- use it as an opportunity for repentance.
- Don’t harden your heart because judgment will come.

**God is patient but not permissive.**

Now we've come to the last section of chapter 10.

**Last week I mentioned several exhortations from Hebrews,**

- don't drift from the word,
- don't doubt the word,
- don't turn dull toward God's word,
- don't despise the word,
- don't drift from the word

**In the section we're going to look at next,**

- the author is encouraging believers
- to move on by recapturing the faith
- and patience they experienced
- when they first received Christ as Lord and Savior.

**What was it like for you when you first came to know Jesus?****The section we'll be looking at next falls into two divisions.**

In verses 32-34 the author

- encourages the believers to look back
- to their previous victories,
- then to live for the present.

**Heb 10:32**

32 But recall the former days in which, after you were illuminated, you endured a great struggle with sufferings:

- look back at the former days in which,
- after you were illuminated (spiritual awakening),

**In other words, think back** to the days when they first came to know the Lord.

**Not know who He is, but to know Him as their Lord and Savior.**

**Psalm 51 is a great psalm.**

To summarize the Psalm, David appeals to God's mercy.

**He openly confesses his sin before God**

- without making excuses.

He acknowledges his sin is against God and against Him only.

He prays for inward cleansing recognizing that God wants genuine repentance.

**David prayed for a restored joy and a willing spirit**

- that he might teach others God's way.

**David recognized that God delights in a humble and contrite heart**

- and that renewed fellowship with Him
- leads to restored worship.

**David prays:**

Ps 51:10-12

10 Create in me a clean heart, O God,  
And renew a steadfast spirit within me.

11 Do not cast me away from Your presence,  
And do not take Your Holy Spirit from me.

12 Restore to me the joy of Your salvation,

**I believe that the restored fellowship with God is thru prayer.**

**The author of Hebrews is telling the believers to look back,**

- to recall the day in which you first placed your faith in Christ.

The author completes the verse with words of encouragement.

**He says:**

you endured a great struggle with sufferings:

Because of your faith you endured the great struggle: (Greek *athlēsis*)

We get our English word "athletics" from "*athlēsis*."

The word implies intense pressure and courage over time.

**Their faith was tested and true.**

**The Hebrew believer's faith was tested thru**

- the many trials they'd endured in the past,
- sufferings and persecutions,
- public reproach, etc

**They're ready to go out and conquer the world.**

When people lose their faith, their courage is weakened.

**When Peter walked on water** his eyes were on Jesus.

**But when the wind got louder and the waves began to crash,**

- his faith turned to fear.

**His focus shifted from Jesus to danger.**

**What about Elijah on Mt Carmel, when Ahab sent for the children of Israel**

- who were faltering between two opinions.

**Elijah tells them, "If the Lord is God, follow Him;**

- but if Baal, follow him.

Elijah was one prophet, but Baal's prophets were 450.

**Elijah challenges them to call on their gods and Elijah himself would call on his God**

- and whichever consumed the two bulls with fire,
- that was the true God.

The God of Elijah consumed the burnt sacrifice

- and all that was in the trench.

**Elijah showed courage and faith after he'd seen**

- the extraordinary power of God.

**However, in the very next chapter of kings,**

- Elijah receives one threat from Jezebel
- and what does he do, he runs and hides,
- even asking God to take his life.

**What causes a person today to lose his faith?**

- Not remaining in the word and in prayer.

**God is in the business of restoring our faith**

- by meeting us exactly where we're at.

**When Elijah was afraid and depressed, God didn't lecture him**

- or give him a sermon on restoration.

Instead, He sent an angel with food and water to restore his depleted body.

**When Thomas doubted Jesus, he didn't receive a lecture.**

- Instead, Jesus invited him to touch His wounds.

**God in His grace has a way of reminding us of who He is**

- before changing our perspective.

Before telling Elijah what to do next, He reveals who He is.

1 Kings 19:11-12

11 Then He said, "Go out, and stand on the mountain before the Lord." And behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind tore into the mountains and broke the rocks in pieces before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake; 12 and after the earthquake a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire; and after the fire a still small voice.

Jesus said to the messengers of John the Baptist, "Go and tell John what you see and hear," (Matt 11)

**They saw the blind receive sight,**

- the lame walked,
- lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear,
- the dead were raised and
- the poor have the gospel preached to them.

This wasn't a new doctrine preached to them, it was fulfilled scripture.

Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God.

Jesus didn't tell Peter, "oh ye of little faith, now you'll get what you deserve!" No!

Matt 14:31

31 And immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and caught him, and said to him, "O you of little faith, why did you doubt?"

What do we learn from this verse?

**Jesus didn't wait to rescue him, it was instant.**

Also, notice correction came after the rescue, not before.

**Jesus reached down to Peter since Peter's focus was now shifted.**

- Jesus held on to Peter and saved him.

**Peter's faith wavered when his fear replaced his focus.**

- Notice what Jesus asked Peter.
- Why did you doubt?

The Greek word is “distazō” and it carries the idea

- of hesitation or divided thinking.

Peter didn’t suddenly lose his confidence in Christ,

- but the circumstances around him divided his attention.

The storm became more real to him at the time

- than Christ’s command to him.

And that’s what happens to people at times.

You may have faith, and something causes you to divert your attention

- to something else, thus removing
- your focus from Christ.

Peter hadn’t completely lost his faith

- because he emphatically cried out,
- “Lord, save me!”

His weakened faith didn’t define him, nor did it disqualify him.

Corrie Ten Boom, “There is no pit so deep, that God’s love is not deeper still.”

Heb 11:1

1 Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

Now that I’ve taken you down a path of faith, let’s get back to Hebrews 10.

Heb 10:32-33

32 But recall the former days in which, after you were illuminated, you endured a great struggle with sufferings: 33 partly while you were made a spectacle both by reproaches and tribulations, and partly while you became companions of those who were so treated;

We get our English word “theatre” from spectacle.

- It means to be an actor in a theatre.

Stephen (crown) was martyred because of his faith in Christ.

Acts 6 tells us that those in attendance saw Stephen’s face

- as the face of an angel.

Why, God’s peace was upon him and

- he’d soon receive his crown.

**Amazingly, in the book of Acts, the believers counted it worthy**

- to suffer for Christ.

Heb 10:34

34 for you had compassion on me in my chains, and joyfully accepted the plundering of your goods, knowing that you have a better and an enduring possession for yourselves in heaven.

**The NLT reads:**

Heb 10:34

34 You suffered along with those who were thrown into jail, and when all you owned was taken from you, you accepted it with joy. You knew there were better things waiting for you that will last forever.

**Their hope wasn't in their home, it wasn't in their finances,**

- it was solely on God.

**It had to be on the Lord because the author said,**

- “you had compassion on me in my chains.”

Not many people will put their life on the line for someone else.

**During the first century, aiding prisoners often exposed visitors to danger,**

- since prisoners were often detained for their faith.

**The believing Hebrews evidently weren't too concerned about that**

- since the author said to them,

“you have a better and enduring possession for yourselves in heaven.”

**Is your faith strong enough that you value eternal realities**

- over your temporary security here on earth?

**And that's where the author takes them.**

- In light of what you've lost,
- look forward and live for the present.

Heb 10:35

35 Therefore do not cast away your confidence, which has great reward.

The word for “cast away” is the same word used to describe the blind man

- whom Jesus healed in Mark 10.

Mark 10:46-52

46 Now they came to Jericho. As He went out of Jericho with His disciples and a great multitude, blind Bartimaeus, the son of Timaeus, sat by the road begging. 47 And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out and say, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!"

48 Then many warned him to be quiet; but he cried out all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!"

49 So Jesus stood still and commanded him to be called.

Then they called the blind man, saying to him, "Be of good cheer. Rise, He is calling you."

50 And throwing aside his garment, he rose and came to Jesus.

51 So Jesus answered and said to him, "What do you want Me to do for you?"

The blind man said to Him, "Rabboni, that I may receive my sight."

52 Then Jesus said to him, "Go your way; your faith has made you well." And immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus on the road.

**Notice the blind man's response, he threw the garment aside!**

**He was blind, but he had enough faith to know,**

- "hey, I will not need this anymore."
- He knew restoration was coming.

He was ready to leave that behind to follow Jesus.

**When we come to Jesus, we have to be prepared to leave our past behind.**

**Bartimaeus had the faith needed to move, before the proof. He believed Jesus and**

- was ready to leave his security behind.

Peter did the same by leaving his nets.

Matthew left the tax booth.

**And we just read in Hebrews of believers leaving their goods**

- and ready to move forward in Christ.

**So the author of Hebrews says,**

do not cast away your confidence, which has great reward.

**The beggar threw his garment,**

- the Hebrews were told
- not to throw away their confidence.

**How does a believer move forward?**

- Don't throw away your confidence.

**In verse 36 he says, we have need of endurance/patience.**

Heb 10:36-37

36 For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise:

37 "For yet a little while,  
And He who is coming will come and will not tarry.

**We also need endurance.**

- That's the power to withstand hardship or stress.
- It's remaining under the weight, instead of escaping it:

**"The Bitter End:"**

Getting antsy during a day-long church seminar, a friend of mine leaned over to the man seated next to him and whispered, "Are you going to stay to the bitter end?" To which the man replied, smiling, "I am the bitter end."<sup>1</sup>

David Roper

Circumstances may seem bitter at times, especially when we're on survival mode.

**Things may seem to drag and drag. And that's what often makes endurance difficult.**

- This is taking too long,
- Fatigue sets in,
- You become irritated,
- Or you get restless.

**The problem is not always external circumstances,**

- sometimes it's me, I'm the bitter end!

We get to choose whether we'll become bitter or become better.

Hebrews warned of a hard heart in chapter 3.

**Verse 39 of this chapter warns about shrinking back**


---

<sup>1</sup> Hodge, E. (ed.) (1997) *Today's Best Illustrations*. Christianity Today International (Today's Best Illustrations).

- and verse 3 of chapter 12
- warns about growing weary.

Heb 10:37-38

37 "For yet a little while,  
And He who is coming will come and will not tarry.  
38 Now the just shall live by faith;  
But if anyone draws back,  
My soul has no pleasure in him."

Don't become tired waiting for the Lord.

**And don't become inwardly bitter, but remain faithful**

- because the best is yet to come.

Heb 10:39

39 But we are not of those who draw back (shrink back) to perdition, but of those who believe to the saving of the soul.

**People can respond in one of two ways when facing persecution.**

- They can shrink back or
- they can persevere thru faith.

**And faith is not a one time decision like surrendering your life to Christ.**

- It's an ongoing trust
- which is going to stand under pressure.

We saw in verse 22 that faith draws near to God.

Verse 23 says to hold fast the confession of our hope,

Verses 32-34 speak of faith enduring thru the sufferings,

And in verse 36 believers are encouraged to wait for the promise;