



SUNDAY MORNING

AT BETHANY BAPTIST CHURCH

Title: The Danger of Playing Church

Passage: Hebrews 10:26-31

Speaker: Pastor Dan Preston

Introduction: This morning, we come to the final and most sobering warning in Hebrews. After showing that Jesus is better than all, the writer gives a clear caution: it is possible to hear the truth, be around the truth, and even appear to follow it, yet never truly be saved. When confronted with the gospel, there are only two responses, belief or rejection. There is no middle ground. This passage calls us to examine ourselves, because one day what is real will be revealed.

I. The Characteristics of Apostasy (Verse 26)

There are two very clear characteristics of apostasy given:

1. There is sufficient knowledge to be saved.

An apostate knows the truth, but they have never received the truth in a way that changes their life.

“They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us...” (1 John 2:19)

The problem is not a lack of direction, it’s a refusal to follow it.

2. There is a willful and deliberate denial of the truth.

What makes apostasy so dangerous is not that the truth is unclear, it is that the heart refuses to submit to it.



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It is possible to sit in church week after week, to hear sermon after sermon, and still never truly come to Christ.

II. The Causes of Apostasy

There are influences, pressures, and decisions along the way that slowly move a person from exposure of truth to rejection of it.

1. Persecution

What drives a true believer closer to Christ will often drive a false professor away from Him.

A true believer may struggle, but they hold on. An unbeliever eventually lets go.

Persecution has always had a separating effect. It strengthens what is real and exposes what is not.

2. False Teachers

“For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears.” (2 Timothy 4:3)

People will not reject truth because they cannot understand it, they will reject it because they do not want to live by it.

If a person is not grounded, if they are not truly converted, they will drift toward whatever message feels easiest.

3. Temptation

If a person does not have a true relationship with Christ, they do not have the spiritual resources to stand.

Temptation begins to pull them away, and instead of running to Christ, they begin to move further from Him.

4. Neglect



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A person can put off responding to the gospel for so long that their heart becomes hardened to it.

Scripture makes it clear every time truth is heard and rejected, the heart becomes a little less sensitive. Until eventually, what once stirred them no longer moves them at all.

III. The Results of Apostasy (Verses 26-31)

If someone hears the gospel, understands it, and deliberately turns away, they have rejected the only means God has provided for the forgiveness of sin.

For the one who rejects Christ, there is nothing left to look forward to but judgment.

To turn from Christ is to trample the Son of God underfoot. It is to count the blood of the covenant as an unholy thing.

This is not passive unbelief, it is personal rejection. It is rejecting the Father who sent the Son, rejecting the Son who shed His blood, and rejecting the Spirit who draws and convicts. It is a rejection of the entire work of God in salvation.

Conclusion: When you step back, the message is clear: it is possible to be around the truth and still be lost. The question is not what you've heard, but what you've done with it. Have you truly come to Christ in faith? Not just knowing about Him, but trusting Him. Because one day, what is real will be revealed. If you've never responded, today is the day, you don't have to keep pretending. And if you've been drifting, don't take lightly what you have in Him. So the question remains: are you truly saved, or just playing church? What you do with Jesus Christ determines everything.

