

Warnings

Contempt

Hebrews 10:26-31

May 3, 2026 am

HDBC

This is the fourth in our series looking at the warning passages in the book of Hebrews. I want to confess something. Even though I was well aware of what each of these passages teach, I was not prepared for the weight that I felt while preaching these sermons.

Each one is a serious warning to unbelievers who are at risk of missing salvation. They are **strong, compelling warnings**, but they are **offered in love and accompanied by the gracious invitation to be saved** and avoid judgment. In other words, the very presence of the warning is an indication of the love and grace of God.

Last Sunday afternoon as I was feeling the weight of the previous three warnings I began to sense the Spirit of God leading me to make a slight pivot in my plans for the last two sermons in this series. So, I prayed and listened.

What I sensed is that the Lord still wanted me to preach the next warning, but to add a more positive case for heeding it & all the warnings in Hebrews. I've offered the negative motivation . . . **avoid judgment**. And that is legitimate, as a motive. But there is also a more compelling and positive motivation for heeding these warnings.

It centers on the person and work of Jesus, specifically in light of the Old Testament. Hebrews takes us back to the requirements of the law, the principles of worship and the sacrificial systems in the Old Testament and makes the case that they all point to Jesus. It further demonstrates that **Jesus is superior** to them in every possible way.

So, let's first do a quick look at the warning. Then I'm going to take you back to the first three verses of chapter one.

The Warning (Hebrews 10:26-31) Notice two things:

1. The target audience (characteristics of those he is writing about)

1) They willfully continue in sin. (26)

For if we go on sinning willfully . . .

This is not describing a person who commits a sin, then confesses and repents. These defiantly resist the standard of God and act as if they are under no one's authority. **They are the kings and queens of their own little kingdoms.** They do what they want, when they want, and answer to no one. If there is a conscience, they ignore it.

2) They know the truth. (26)

After receiving the knowledge of the truth.

This group has been exposed to the gospel and they know the truth. They have no claim of ignorance. They know.

3) They will die in their sins, unforgiven. (26-29)

The language is strong, graphic and horrifying. The writer points out that under the Old Testament law one who violated the law could be condemned to death on the testimony of 2-3 witnesses. They were violating the law of God and deserved punishment.

Then he asked the question, *how much more so for those who trample underfoot the Son of God.* It was one thing to snub the law of Moses. It is worse thing to show contempt for the Son of God who gave His life for you. It is an ***insult to the Spirit of grace.***

There no longer remains a sacrifice for sins - If you reject the sacrifice of Jesus as your means of salvation, there is no other. There is no plan B. Jesus is the only way.

A Certain terrifying expectation – It is certain, inescapable. It is terrifying, not something to be laughed at or scoffed. It is should be anticipated.

Fury of a fire which will consume – Some suggest that the fires described in judgment are only symbolic. The Bible does not indicate that, but if it is so, then the use of fire as a symbol means the reality is as bad or worse.

Adversaries – Those who reject Jesus find themselves in an adversarial relationship with their creator.

2. The principles of judgment (notice three things)

1) The judgment is justified

The use of **vengeance** and **repay** are interesting. They tie the judge and the judgment directly to the one being judge and his action. Both words indicate that the judgment is specific and directed because the sins were specific and directed.

Our sins are not simply evil or bad in some generic sense. **They are a direct insult to the pure heart and nature of God.** When God judges it is because His holiness and righteousness have been rejected and snubbed.

If I take vengeance on another it is because that person has done something to harm me. It is personal and specific. All our sins are against God. But keep in mind, our vengeance is flawed and limited. This is why the Bible calls upon us to leave that to God. Vengeance with God is justified, proper, and pure.

2) The judgment is relational

Note that it says the Lord will judge **His people**. In what way are these His people? The writer probably has in mind that these were Hebrew people. Part of the nation God had chosen to be especially and uniquely His. Of course we can also make the argument that every human being belongs to God in the sense that God is the creator of every human life.

3) The judgment is terrifying

It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God. We will all find ourselves in the hands of God one way or the other. **Jesus said of those who follow Him, they are safe in the hands of God.** But here the writer of Hebrews says those same hands that keep believers safe will bring judgment on the wicked.

The point of the writer is this; those who persist in snubbing their noses at God and his Son, should realize the terror that one day they will find themselves in His hands of judgment. Casual contempt for the things of God will one day turn into terror at the judgment.

Three critical questions to consider:

First, why is God justified in bringing judgment on sinners?

Second, why is God justified in offering forgiveness to sinners?

Third, why should a person respond to the call of Jesus to be saved?

The answer to all three questions is exactly the same.

The person and work of Jesus.

So, what does Hebrews say about who Jesus is and what He has done? We have a great summary in the first three verses of Hebrews one. There are **seven things** revealed about Jesus that are positive and compelling. Those seven things answer the three questions.

Because of who Jesus is and what He has done . . .

God is justified to bring judgment on sinners,

God is justified to offer forgiveness to sinners,

There is a motivation for sinners to trust Jesus and respond in faith.

The Person and Work of Jesus - Hebrews 1:1-3

So, what do we learn about Jesus that would compel us to consider His call to trust Him for the forgiveness of our sins and to make us right with God? Seven things it says about Him.

1. He is the messenger of God (1-2)

Prior to Jesus, God delivered His messages to people in a great variety of ways. **Prophets, nature, angels, dreams/visions, and more.** But all of these were incomplete. God's full and perfect revelation was to come through His Son. All the gaps in the O.T. revelations have been filled in Jesus.

2. He is the heir of all things (2)

The heir is the one who owns all that his father owns. In our experience ownership happens at the death of the parent. Since God never dies, Jesus is the co-owner of all things with His father.

3. He is the creator of the world (2)

He is the agent of creation. Nothing came into being apart from Jesus. There is an interesting thing to note here.

World – is not the normal word for world (*kosmos*). It is the word ***aiōnas***. Commonly translated as **ages**. Jesus not only created the physical earth and universe, but also time and space and energy. This word wonderfully portrays the nature of our ever-expanding, constantly changing universe. And it indicates that each expansion, each change is the result of His creative work.

Stephen Hawking, wrote in his book, A Brief History of Time, that our galaxy is an average-sized spiral galaxy that it is over 100,000 light years across (about six hundred trillion miles). It is only one of a hundred trillion that can be seen through modern telescopes. Galaxies contain one hundred trillion stars. The distance between these galaxies is about three million light years.

And Jesus created it all.

4. He is the revelation of God (3)

Not only is Jesus the primary messenger of God, but He is the one who perfectly reveals what God is like. If you want to know what God is like, look to Jesus. Listen to His words, pay attention to His actions, and pay

attention to His nature. Jesus is the perfect imprint of God in time and space. He perfectly reveals God.

5. He holds everything together (3)

Upholds – to support, to maintain. Present tense (ongoing action).

If the physical laws of the universe varied we would have a problem.

The surface temperature of the sun is 12,000 degrees Fahrenheit. If we were a little closer we would burn up. If we were further away we would freeze. Earth is tilted at an angle of 23 degrees which gives us the four seasons. If it were not tilted, vapors from the oceans would move north and south and develop into monstrous continents of ice.

If the moon did not retain its exact distance from the earth the ocean tides would inundate the land completely, twice a day. If the ocean floors were a few feet deeper than they are, the carbon dioxide and oxygen balance of the earth's atmosphere would be completely upset. If the atmosphere thinned, many of the meteors which now harmlessly burn up when they hit the atmosphere would constantly bombard us.

If He were to take his hand off for one moment the entire universe would lapse into chaos.

6. He made purification of sins (3)

He had made purification of sins.

What a statement! He took the penalty for our sins, thus purifying us. This was an **incredible act of love and sacrifice**. In that one act He dealt a death blow to the power of sin. He robbed Hell of millions of potential inhabitants and opened the door to Heaven for all who would trust Him.

7. He sat down at the right hand of God (3)

Unlike the O.T. priests who had to come to work day after day to offer sacrifices, He did so once and for all. His one act of purification was sufficient.

No seats in the temple or tabernacle. The priests were always standing. Always working. Never finished. Jesus, the perfect high priest is able to sit down because he has completed his work.

When he declared It is finished just before he died on the cross, it was a statement of a completed task. He had finished the assignment. He had completely paid the debt for our sins. More next week.

Jesus is Greater than all others.

He puzzled the trained doctors of his day.

He walked on the stormy seas and spoke them into submission.

He never wrote a book, but all the libraries of all the world could not hold the books necessary to tell everything about him.

He never practiced medicine, but he healed more broken bodies and broken hearts than all the doctors of all the ages.

Throughout history great men and women have come and gone, yet he lives forever.

Herod could not kill him. Satan could not seduce him.

Death could not destroy him. The grave could not hold him.

He is supreme over all others. That's a compelling reason to consider his claims and answer His call for you to trust and follow Him.