

The Five Warnings of Hebrews

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CHAPTER 6

THE DANGER OF DENYING, Hebrews 10:22-25

"Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;) And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching" (Hebrews 10:22-25).

Today we are considering the fifth and final warning in the book of Hebrews. These warnings are an integral part of the message of the Epistle. They take the truth expounded and relate it to life and action.

The book of Hebrews may be looked upon as in three parts -- all concerning the Son and His superior salvation.

- I. His Person, 1:1-4:13.
- II. His Work, 4:14-10:18.
- III. His Outwork, 10:19-13:25.

The first concerns His LIFE -- what He was from all eternity past.

The second concerns His DEATH -- what He did once for all in a definite point of time.

The third concerns His RESURRECTION LIFE -- what He will be for all eternity to come.

Who He is.

What He did.

What He can do for you.

The Son -- eternal.

The Saviour -- perfect.

The Shepherd -- great.

He is Prophet -- the REVEALER. "As such He represents GOD to man."

He is Priest -- the SACRIFICER. "As such He represents man to GOD."

He is King -- the Sovereign. "As such He represents man to man."

As Prophet, He was crowned with thorns (John 19:2).
As Priest, He is crowned with glory and honor (Hebrews 2:9).
As King, He will be crowned with many crowns (Rev. 19:12).

Beginning at 10:19 we commence the last section of the book. This is the application of the doctrine. It is our work in light of His work.

We have superior privileges (Hebrews 10:19-21), but with these come also greater responsibilities (10:22-25).

We are exhorted to enter into these greater privileges (10:22) to hold fast to our profession of CHRIST as Saviour because GOD's promises will come to pass (10:23), and

We are exhorted to encourage one another, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together (10:24-25).

The reason we must do these things is because if we willfully sin having full knowledge of the sin and its consequences, GOD is forced to chasten us (10:26-29) because of His very nature (10:30-31). He cannot and will not let His children get by with this any more than we would let our own children get by with this.

The Hebrews are thus encouraged to persevere in patience (10:32-39). They have previously endured (10:32-34) so they should continue to patiently persevere (10:35-36) because the Word of the Lord stands sure (10:37) and all who please GOD must patiently endure, living by faith (10:38-39).

In fact, real faith produces patient endurance (11:1-3), and this is seen in every era of the Old Testament (11:4-40).

The implication is, to go back to the Temple of Jerusalem is not to be joined to the faithful company of the Old Testament at all, but is to depart from them.

All of the Old Testament saints listed in Hebrews 11 are a witness to us that the race CAN be run (12:1), and the only way to have rest is through patient endurance even as was true of the Lord JESUS CHRIST (12:2). When we consider CHRIST and His sufferings, our sufferings and struggles are mild (12:3-4).

But GOD has a purpose in the believer receiving discipline with patient endurance, and that is the maturity of the child (12:5-11).

So the believer has an obligation to weaker ones in the assembly (12:12-13) and to himself (12:14). He must know the three dangers that are before him (12:15-16) which may be illustrated by Esau's decision which was irrevocable even though he regretted it later. Esau had neither faith nor patient endurance, and he was cut off by ONE ACT from the place of blessing (12:17).

By application, if the Hebrews return to the old system of the Temple, they go to that of utter "terror" (12:18-22), and they leave in contrast the place of privilege and grace, and the heavenly

city which is the reward of those who faithfully endure (12:22-24).

Therefore, there must be a final warning. Abel's blood spoke continually on earth; CHRIST's blood is greater and speaks continually from Heaven that He shall come, judge, bring in the new age with its new covenant (12:25-27). So patiently endure, offering spiritual worship as a believer-priest, knowing GOD purifies dress (12:28-29).

This carries us through the fifth warning.

Now let us look at the context to this final warning in detail.

Our responsibility in light of all these facts Presented, 12:12-29.

1. The Exhortation, 12:12-17

:12 -- "**Wherefore**," in light of all of these facts presented, this conclusion goes back all the way to the willful sin in 10:26. In light of it and the truth presented from 10:26 to 12:11 the exhortation is given.

"Lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees."

Here is our relationship to others in the body.

(1) Hands -- we are to lift them up in prayer even as Moses did (Exodus 17:11-12) in order to win the victory for others. We are not to be defeated and discouraged. We are not to criticize someone else; we are to pray for them.

(2) Knees -- feeble knees will not hold you up in the day of battle (Ezekiel 7:17). We are to be strong in battle and not terrified by the adversary.

:13 -- "**And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed.**"

(3) Feet -- The children of Israel wandered around in circles for 38 years without ever going anywhere. We are to make straight paths for our feet. We are to go on.

We are to look unto JESUS, and setting our eyes on Him, not wander from the course set before us

"**Lame**" here is "*to be put out of joint*" and it speaks of the shuffle of the paralytic. Some in the body were paralysed, and they were traveling along with the greatest of difficulty. The figure of the body is used to represent the church and its spiritual condition and it shows that the lame person is spiritually lame. This person is to be spiritually healed so that the whole body may move out and move on together, without some being left behind.

:14 -- "**Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.**"

Here is the injunction to each person individually rather than collectively as in the preceding verses.

"Peace" indicates there is to be no quarrel, no animosity between ourselves and anyone else.

"Holiness" signifies we are to be set apart for the Lord.

The one is our personal relationship with others; and the second is our personal relationship with the Lord Himself.

:15 -- **"Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of GOD."**

This word **"looking diligently"** signifies searching out carefully or minutely just like the Israelites searched their homes before the Passover to rid them of all leaven. It is constant spiritual oversight by each one of us of our own lives. The reason is three-fold, brought out by the three occurrences of the word "lest." There are three dangers that every believer may face and for which he must be constantly on guard.

These three dangers are:

(1) **"Lest any man fail of the grace of GOD."**

This is failure on the part of the child of GOD to appropriate grace. Whenever I fail to appropriate grace for the needs of the day, I will fail when testing and temptation come. GOD has provided grace to meet it, but I have failed to appropriate it. I will then react according to my flesh.

If GOD brings something into our lives, He will also give us grace to overcome it and gain the victory (II Corinthians 12:9), rather than to be overcome by it. **"As our days, so shall our strength be."**

These Hebrew Christians were going through trials and testings, but they had failed to appropriate GOD's grace so as to stand up under the testing. Thus they were living defeated lives. They had failed of the grace of GOD.

(2) **"Lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled."**

This is open infidelity. Bitterness in the heart leads to murmuring with the tongue. And murmuring is one of the most dangerous sins because it always affects others and leavens the whole camp. It starts with one, but it ends defiling many. This is what happened in Israel over and over again.

So it is always, when I fail to appropriate grace, there will be a root of bitterness in my heart against GOD who has allowed this "trouble" to come, and it will ultimately come out in my speech.

(3) **"Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat**

sold his birthright."

This final step and condition is open contempt of what is our responsibility or our privilege. The entire passage hinges on this one illustration. It is very significant.

There are two obstacles to holiness that are presented here: fornication and profaneness. Esau represents the latter, and this is also the danger of the Hebrews. "A little bit of material food" emphasizes for how little Esau sold his birthright.

Now the birthright and its significance to Esau can only be understood as one understands that this was not merely being heir of flocks and herds, and Esau rejected this. This is not it. GOD had made a covenant with Abraham, and that covenant promise was going to be fulfilled through Isaac's heirs. Esau was the one in the direct line, and being the elder son of Isaac would have received the elder son portion, i.e., two-thirds.

But he surrendered for himself and his descendants the covenant promises of GOD for one meal. That is what he thought of GOD's promises, and that is how much he wanted to wait, or patiently endure for them.

~ end of chapter 6 ~
