

The Five Warnings of Hebrews

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CHAPTER 5

THE DANGER OF DESPISING, Hebrews 10:26-31

"For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace? For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."

Each warning in Hebrews is progressively worse.

- There is the danger of drifting away from the truth, Ch. 2:1-4.
- There is the danger of not entering into His rest, Ch. 3-4
- There is the danger of not going on to maturity, Ch. 5-6.

All these dangers are ONLY for the child of GOD, not for the child of the world. The danger of the unsaved is not to be saved and thus go to the lake of fire. The writer of Hebrews is not writing to his people, Israel, who are unbelievers. Matthew has done that. He is writing to those who are believers, who have accepted the Lord JESUS CHRIST and His sacrifice for their sins.

They made a good confession and, even in the midst of suffering, were faithful to the Lord. But persecution has continued and intensified. They had suffered the loss of all their material wealth.

What was their problem? They needed to patiently endure. They needed to hold fast and not give up thinking that it is not worth while. One of the key words of the book in Hebrews, therefore, is "**patience**" or "*patient endurance*."

So the author, after reprimanding his hearers for NOT being teachers of the Word, even though they had been saved long enough to be teaching, and still needing to be taught the milk, urges them along with himself "*to go on to maturity*." The reason "for" doing this is because it is impossible for "anyone" who is saved if they should defect from the faith to renew them again to an initial repentance. No one can be saved but once. No one can have his past forgiven but once.

After coming to CHRIST, everything we do will come before the judgment seat of CHRIST and it will be rewarded if it is good, or burnt if it is good-for-nothing.

This is why there is the need to GO ON and a warning against going back. You can NEVER regain wasted years. Thus the illustration of Hebrews 6:7-8 fits perfectly. All we produce is either for blessing or burning. It is not the believer that will be burned, but what he has produced. Often we take the blessings of the rain and sunshine and yet only produce thorns and briers.

:9 -- The writer stands persuaded of better things from these Hebrew believers than "**thorns and briers**" and things to be rejected, even though he has been forced to speak in such strong language to them.

:10 -- Moreover, they have produced "**good works**" and are continuing to do so now. It is not that these things are not appreciated.

:11 -- But there must be the Continuing and Perseverance. Now he is not saying that they are saved by perseverance, but this is the only way to receive a "full reward" for each year's harvest. It is not enough to be satisfied with one year, or even a partial crop.

:12 -- "**Slothful**" goes back to 5:11 (Of whom we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing) and means "dull of hearing" showing this whole section is one unit of truth. Their need was for continued "faith" as believers and "patience" realizing that the promises are for another day.

:13 -- Then he begins to talk about GOD's promises.

:14 -- The whole nation of Israel came from this one promise.

:15 -- Abraham had to go through patient endurance in order to obtain the promise. He is an example of the faithful. GOD's promises are never immediately rewarded, but this in no way signifies that they are not sure.

:16 -- This is the kind of an affirmation men make, and GOD also made the same to us. Nothing is higher than GOD. He is the highest authority and His Word settles and confirms all. There can be no argument against it.

:17 -- GOD gave His immutable Word and promise, and, as if that were not enough, He gave an oath besides.

:18 -- What is true of Abraham is true for us. The things we have believed are true. Our need is for patient endurance. We have fled for refuge to the Lord JESUS CHRIST.

A "hope" is set before us. Now remember that hope in Scripture never contain ANY element of doubt as with our English word. Rather it is an anticipated expectation which requires "waiting" for it's fulfillment. The waiting for the Lord's return is "**the blessed hope**" of the believer. Our waiting for the promises GOD has made to be reality is not faith, but hope. Faith believed them; hope clings to them; love is to characterize our life while we wait.

:19 -- Our hope goes right on into the very presence of GOD because JESUS CHRIST is there.

:20 -- And He is the guarantee that we will ultimately be there bodily ourselves. Thus He is our forerunner.

With the mention of Melchisedec, the writer resumes his teaching which he interrupted to give this warning and exhortation.

II. THE SUPERIORITY OF THE WORK OF THE Son, 4:14-10:18.

A. As the Great High Priest, 4:14-7:28. "**after the order of Melchisedec.**"

B. As the True Tabernacle, 8:1-9:11. "**Not made with hands.**"

C. As the Perfect Sacrifice, 9:12-10:18. "**once for all.**"

It is not enough to know. Knowledge brings responsibility. Because of the superiority of the Son and of His work, we have a superior walk and far superior privileges in this age. But never, never forget that hand-in-hand with superior privileges comes superior responsibilities.

A. Exhortation, 10:19-39.

1. In light of superior privileges, 10:19-25.

2. In light of greater discipline, 10:26-31.

3. In light of former endurance, 10:32-39.

Listen to our superior privileges in this dispensation.

:19 -- We can enter into the Holy of Holies. No one in Israel could do this but the high priest alone, and he could only do this once in the year and then only according to strict, specific instructions. He entered in "with fear." Something of that fear is given in the fact that a rope was tied around his ankle. If anything went wrong, he was pulled out. No one else dared go in.

:20 -- The high priest went around the veil; we go THROUGH the veil -- the sacrifice of His body and by means of His shed blood. Anyone that does not like the blood of JESUS CHRIST has NO access to GOD.

:21 -- GOD's house today is so superior to His house of Israel. They came in by natural birth; we by spiritual birth. They have a high priest that is subject to death; we have one who will never die. Theirs was imperfect and sinful; our High Priest is sinless. And on and on we could go.

:22 -- The exhortation is to come. When a person in Israel was consecrated into the office of the priesthood, the blood of the sacrificial offering was sprinkled upon him, and he was totally bathed in water. Both acts are spiritual works of GOD's operations today in which the believer becomes a believer-priest who ministers under the Great High Priest, the Lord JESUS CHRIST.

Not everyone in the Old Testament could be a priest, but only those related by birth to Aaron. However, every child of GOD today can be a believer-priest and consecrated to offer spiritual

sacrifices to GOD because he is related by the new birth to the Lord JESUS CHRIST.

:23 -- We are to stand erect and firm in our profession of the Lord JESUS CHRIST and not be tottering between two opinions or positions. He is faithful that promised. He has never failed to keep His word. Why do you think He will now?

:24 -- Here is the relation of one who is strong in clinging to the promises, in relation to one who is weak in faith. The fleshly reaction of the sin nature is to criticise them and push them ever further down. The Spirit's operation is just the reverse.

:25 -- Here is an explanation of good works in this crisis period.

Negatively it is not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together as some are doing. Did you realize that missing Church attendance is a lack of a good work?

Positively it is exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the day approaching.

The day was the day of judgment upon Jerusalem in A.D. 70 which was a prefigure of the final judgment upon Israel before the Second Coming of CHRIST.

THE FOURTH WARNING.

This brings us to the FOURTH WARNING, 10:26-31.

It seems to me babyish to have to stop at this point and teach you that the writer of Hebrews is talking to SAVED people. However, I have learned not to take anything for granted.

(1) The writer of Hebrews nowhere in any passage ever says any word about unbelievers except as illustration. It is a book from beginning to end who every word is written to Christian believers.

Concerning these believers the author says the JESUS CHRIST is "**the author of eternal salvation**" (5:9).

"He is able also to save them to the uttermost" i.e., to the very end, "**that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them**" (7:25).

"**For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified**" (10:14).

Thus he is writing to believers who are not only SAVED, but ETERNALLY SAVED.

(2) The preceding context is dealing only with believers who have access to GOD through the blood of CHRIST.

Moreover, verse 26 continues with a "for," a word that gives an explanation of why we are encouraged to exhort one another and not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together.

The three exhortations to steadfastness (10:22-25) can ONLY be for the born again believers, not for unsaved or even professors. The need of the unsaved is to ACCEPT CHRIST!

(3) The context following reveals the same truth (10:32-39). Here we find encouragement to persevere in patience. Unbelievers do not need patient endurance; THEY NEED CHRIST.

(a) "We" (10:26). He includes himself along with them.

(b) "**Receive full knowledge of the truth**" (10:26). Only a believer can come to full knowledge of the truth for the natural man cannot even know the spiritual things of the Word.

"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (I Corinthians 2:14).

(c) "**There remaineth no more sacrifice for sins**" (10:26) shows that they were saved or else the sacrifices of CHRIST could avail for them.

(d) The illustration of verse 10:28 shows they were saved, for those with Moses were blood redeemed people and under the blood of the covenant of the law.

(e) "**The blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified**" shows they are believers (10:29).

The blood is applied to believers when they are saved. This is the sprinkling mentioned previously. The application of the blood of GOD's Son is that which saves us and sets us apart as believers. We are then under the blood of the covenant, and out from under wrath. No unbeliever is under the blood, nor set apart (sanctified) by the blood. The blood on the houses of Israel set them apart from unbelievers, so the same is true here.

(f) "**The Spirit of Grace**" (10:29) shows they are believers. The HOLY SPIRIT is longsuffering with unbelievers but grace is received through the HOLY SPIRIT only with believers. We are saved by grace through faith. Grace is available to unbelievers, but we who are believers have been recipients of it. Only a believer can, then, "insult" the grace of the Spirit of Grace which is the thing involved here. The word has the idea in it of arrogance and willful injury, and it would involve the refusal by the believer to heed the Spirit's gracious wooings not to commit this specific sin. To go ahead and sin after the gracious operation of the Spirit would be a slap to Him, and He would be grieved.

(g) Finally, the use of the quotation in Hebrews 10:30, "**The Lord shall judge his people,**" shows that this is a reference to believers. Judgment here is not on the world, or unbelievers, but on GOD's own people who are His children.

The second problem is the nature of the sin. What sin is this that the cross of CHRIST does not cover in time.

(1) The nature of the sin (10:26).

It is a voluntary sin which the believers wills to commit after he has been saved and come to full knowledge of the truth. Now everytime a believer sins it is because he "willed" to sin. He did not have to sin. This is the doctrine of Romans 6, 7, and 8.

This act here, however, is something different. It is present tense and may be paraphrased "*if we keep on sinning willfully after that we have received full knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins.*" This sin is, then, a deliberate, premeditated sinning with full knowledge that it is wrong.

(2) The action involved.

It is such an act that involves a repudiation of former actions that were good, spiritual, joyful, and for which they were fully aware of future rewards (10:32-35).

(3) The consequences of the act.

It would involved a repudiation of their previous confession of JESUS CHRIST as their Saviour (10:23; cf. 3:1 ; 4:14).

(4) The sin itself.

By comparing 10:32-37 with 10:23-25 we may correctly say the sin is:

- (a) A separation of the believer from other believers permanently, and
- (b) A return of the separated believer to the Temple and all it entails in order to escape the present persecution that was upon them.

(5) The sin involved a DENUNCIATION of:

- (a) The Person of CHRIST (Hebrews 1:1-4:13),
- (b) The Work of CHRIST (Hebrews 4:14-10:18), and
- (c) The Ministry of the HOLY SPIRIT and GOD in the life of the believer (Hebrews 10:19-13:25).

This is why verse 29 states all three categories.

The final question is what is the nature of the judgment?

It just comes down to this. Desiring to escape man's judgment, they will fall into the judgment of GOD.

- (1) The judgment cannot be loss of eternal salvation or of eternal life (10:39). If it is possible to lose eternal salvation, then it is not an eternal salvation.
- (2) The judgment DOES involve loss of spiritual rewards (10:35-36).
- (3) The judgment DOES involve physical death for this is certain to come if they continue and persist in sinning (10:28-29).
- (4) The judgment may be that the believer who returns to the Temple and to the City of Jerusalem will be involved in the judgment our Lord prophecied would come upon the city and

the Temple (10:25-27). This is why we find in Hebrews 13:13-14 the exhortation to go outside the city bearing His reproach.

Is it possible for a believer today to be guilty of the same sin?

It most certainly is.

We are saved by the blood of CHRIST and the eternal guilt of sin is removed forever, but it is possible to neglect this so great salvation and to carelessly drift from it through indifference.

It is possible to stop short of a life of rest and peace which the Lord has planned for us as His child, simply because we never go on living a life of faith and therefore never come to experience the best that GOD has for us.

It is possible to never mature in the Lord and never grow up, but to be infants in spiritual things all of our lives. Such a person has years of wasted service where all that is produced is "good-for-nothing" but for burning.

It is also possible to sin willfully or deliberately with full understanding of the sin and the consequences of our action, and have the hand of GOD discipline us in time in life even to the point of physical death.

We are saved by grace, but grace does not mean that we can do anything we want.

~ end of chapter 5 ~
