

**Jesus, Our Great High Priest Forever**  
**(Week 19)**  
**Hebrews 10:26-39**  
**“Faith that Endures”**

**Introduction**

As we have said earlier in this study, there are a total of five warnings in the book of *Hebrews*. The fourth of these warnings is found in **Chapter 10**. It is without question the most frightful and sobering warning in the entire book and possibly in all of scripture. The fourth warning in *Hebrews* is a warning against apostasy (turning away from the faith). Many have misinterpreted the intent of the two key verses of this sobering passage which read:

**“For if we deliberately go on sinning after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a terrifying expectation of judgment and the fury of a fire about to consume the adversaries.”**  
**Hebrews 10:26-27**

Many have interpreted these verses to be speaking to Christians, who commit sin after they have been saved, and therefore, lose their salvation. First of all, it is not possible for a true believer in Christ to “lose their salvation” for it was given to them as a gift of grace. We are forgiven simply by asking to be forgiven. We are ALL sinners, and even after we have received salvation, any one of us, who is truly honest about the subject, will readily admit that we have not attained perfection.

**“If we say, ‘We have no sin,’ we are deceiving ourselves, and the truth is not in us.”**  
**1 John 1:8**

So you see, Christians, ALL Christians mind you, struggle with sin. So this warning in **Hebrews 10** is not saying that if you ever commit a sin, after you have been saved, then your name will be erased from The Lambs Book of Life (as some denominations are still teaching). No, we must read what the writer is saying in it's proper context. He has been speaking to a group of Jewish believers, some of whom are considering going back to Judaism, because of the persecutions that they have suffered for their faith in Christ. While some of the readers were absolutely sold out believers in Jesus and completely secure, others were “on the fence”, as it were, in regards to making a real commitment to Christ. They had all received the truth of the gospel message, and yet, some were still having second thoughts, and were seriously considering turning their backs on Christ, and going back to their *Old Testament* roots. To do so would be disastrous for them, and therefore, the preacher gives them a very strong warning indeed. Better to instill in someone a fear of fire, than to see them burn alive. It is actually far worse for someone who has been shown the truth to fall away, than it is for those who have never been enlightened. The sin of apostasy is a terrible sin indeed. It is a reproach upon God Himself, and it will never be taken lightly.

There is a recurring theme in the book of *Hebrews*. Those who are really “born again believers” will still be believers when the end comes. Christianity isn't about how you start out, nearly as much as it is about how you finish. Anyone who has had a real and personal encounter with Jesus, and sees Him for Who He truly is, will be forever changed as a result. Many others may have an emotional response to His truth, but it is only a superficial one. Simply put, if it doesn't last, then it was never real to begin with!

Over the years in ministry, I have witnessed several who have seemingly made a public profession of faith, only to see them disappear and return to their old and sinful habits. Were these people truly “saved”, and then “lost again”? Not hardly. They proved their lack of genuine faith by laying it aside so easily. The writer of *Hebrews* admonishes any who will listen that every true believer must have an: **Enduring Profession**, and will be **Enduring in Persecution**, in order to obtain an **Enduring Possession**.

**Enduring Profession (of Faith vs. 26-31)**

**"For if we deliberately go on sinning after receiving knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a terrifying expectation of judgement and the fury of a fire about to consume the adversaries. Any one who disregarded the Law of Moses died without mercy, based on the testimony of two to three witnesses. How much worse punishment do you think one will deserve who has trampled on the Son of God, who has regarded as profane the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and who has insulted the Spirit of grace? For we know the One Who has said 'Vengeance belongs to Me; I will repay', and again, The LORD will judge His people. It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of The Living God."**

**Hebrews 10:26-31**

Imagine sitting on a church pew Sunday after Sunday, hearing of the forgiveness and grace freely offered through the blood of Christ. Imagine knowing that you could be forever changed from the inside out and given the power to be free forever from the bondage of your sin. Imagine knowing all these marvelous truths, and yet, still longing for your old way of life. What a tragedy it is for those to know of the way out of sin forever, and yet, refuse it for the love of this world. This is the heart of the apostate. While a child of God will set his heart on reaching the very summits of heaven, the unregenerate heart longs for the sewers of hell. It is certainly true what the scriptures say about such a person.

**"As the dog returns to its vomit, so also a fool repeats his foolishness."**

**Proverbs 26:11**

Wow! And who said that *The Bible* wasn't very descriptive? Pretty much says it all doesn't it? Do you know how you can tell a real Christian from a pretender? The real ones want to get as far away from their sin as they possibly can. Doesn't mean that they aren't tempted, and it certainly doesn't mean that they never stumble, but a true follower of Christ will be disgusted by sin. Make no mistake concerning what this verse in *Proverbs* is saying. The fool isn't disgusted by his sin at all, but instead, he runs to it with a voracious appetite, just as a dog would eat its own vomit.

Jesus gave His life to free us from sin. If we still long for our old sins, then we are not His. In fact, if we want to return to our old ways, we are proving by our selfish desires that we would rather have our sin than Christ. To do so is to **"walk on the blood of Jesus" (vs. 29)**. In the case of the first century Jews to which this letter was written, they were considering forsaking Christ to go back to the old sacrificial system of Judaism, but many today in the church are forsaking Him for **much** less. You see, it doesn't matter what you turn to when you turn away from Christ. *What matters is that you have turned away from Christ!* To forsake Him for anything else is not only sin, its damnable sin. To reject Christ is to spend an eternity in hell, separated from His love and grace... forever. This is what the preacher means when he says, **"It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of The Living God." (vs 31)**. God will take your rejection of His Son as a personal insult.

I cannot help but think of poor Lot's wife in **Genesis 19**. She was offered the same deliverance that Lot was given, the opportunity to escape the wrath of God that was soon to be poured out upon the wicked city of Sodom. They were commanded by the angel to flee from that place, and not look back, but Lot's wife just wanted to cast one more wanton gaze upon what she had left behind. Her lustful heart was no doubt longing for all her "prized possessions", and the so called "friends" that were back in the city living it up, as if there were no consequences for their sin. Her longing to "return to her vomit" cost Lot's wife her life. This is what it means to be an apostate, to know the truth and still prefer the sin. When a person so chooses, there is no sacrifice left that can forgive them. They have traded the only hope that could be offered, salvation by grace through faith in Christ, for the vileness of the very sins they had pretended to leave behind. The true believer in Jesus will have an Enduring Profession of Faith. Though the Child of God is far from perfection, he certainly is longs for perfection. Just listen to the words of The Apostle Paul:

**"Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and reaching forward to what is ahead. I pursue as my goal the prize promised by God's heavenly call in Christ Jesus."**  
**Philippians 3:13-14**

Does that describe the desires of your heart this morning? If it doesn't, then I must warn you, you are either a backslidden believer... or you are not a believer at all. None of us have the discernment to truly know the difference, but God does. So be forewarned. Just because you go to church doesn't necessarily mean that you are right with God. The question is... do you belong to Jesus? Do not allow yourself to be drawn to the light of the gospel, and then fall back into the hopelessness from whence you came. **"For if we deliberately go on sinning after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a terrifying expectation of judgement and the fury of a fire about to consume the adversaries."** (vs. 26-27). If you walk away from Jesus, for whatever reason, then you have walked away from your only hope of forgiveness. Stay firmly connected to Christ (**John 15**). He has called us to an Enduring Profession of Faith!

### **Enduring in Persecution (vs. 32-34)**

**"Remember the earlier days when, after you had been enlightened, you endured a hard struggle with sufferings. Sometimes you were publicly exposed to taunts and afflictions, and at other times, you were companions of those who were treated that way. For you sympathized with the prisoners and accepted with joy the confiscation of your possessions..."**  
**Hebrews 10:32-34**

Not only will a true believer never forsake Christ by returning to their former sins, they won't be driven away from Him by persecution. The early church was all too familiar with hatred from the non-believers. Their possessions were sometimes confiscated, and, in many cases, those who professed the name of Christ were imprisoned, or even executed, for their faith. Kinda takes away our excuses for walking away from **our** faith doesn't it? After all, about the worst that can happen to a believer where we live is that people may not like us. Why, they might even say bad things about us! Thankfully, we live in a country that, for now at least, allows people to worship as they choose. I am becoming more and more concerned, however, that this is about to change. I fully expect to see Christians imprisoned for their faith in the near future, due to the rising trend of viciousness expressed at those who try and live out their Christian faith. As it stands today, in many places around the world, Christians are being persecuted, and even martyred, for their faith in Christ. It seems hopelessly naive to think that the world's disdain for us won't eventually bring similar realities here to America. Jesus promises us that the world **will** in fact despise us:

**"If the world hates you, understand that it hated Me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own. However, because you are not of this world, but I have chosen you out of it, the world hates you."**  
**John 15:18-19**

To follow Christ is to expect to be scorned for it. If no one out there despises you for being a Christian, then trust me, you're not doing it right! As long as we are willing to keep silent about our faith, we can avoid most confrontation. But, we are not called to be silent. We are called to be His **witnesses** (**Acts 1:8**). The mark of a true believer is that they will remain a believer no matter who hates them for it, and they will never be ashamed to proclaim the name of Jesus! The writer of *Hebrews* reminds his readers that they have endured through intense persecutions, because they know that something far better awaits them. Those who have an Enduring Profession, and are Enduring in Persecution, are to be rewarded with an Enduring Possession!

**Enduring Possession (vs. 34- 39)**

**“...because you know that you yourselves have a better possession. So don’t throw away your confidence which has a great reward. For you need endurance, so that after you have done God’s will, you may receive what was promised. For yet in a very little while, The Coming One will come and not delay. But my righteous one will live by faith; and if he draws back, I have no pleasure in him. But we are not those who draw back and are destroyed, but those who have faith and are saved.”**

**Hebrews 10:34b-39**

The words “endure” and “endurance” are repeated several times throughout this passage. It is imperative that a believer endure to the end, so that they may receive the inheritance that God has promised to each of His adopted children. No one, who turns back in apostasy, will ever enter the kingdom of Heaven, for God will take no pleasure in those who “draw back” (**vs. 38**). The word used here is actually a nautical term that refers to a sailor taking in sail. Those who reach a certain point in the journey, but “take in their sails” and refuse to finish the course will be destroyed. Again, Christianity is not about how you start, but how you finish.

There is a great eternal reward for those who have truly devoted themselves to follow Christ. Oh, they will indeed falter from time to time, but they will never fall back into a life of sin. The Holy Spirit will see to that. To know Christ is to be adopted by God Himself, and His Spirit will put to death the sin that is within us.

**“Everyone who has been born of God does not sin, because His seed remains in him; he is not able to sin, because he has been born of God.”**

**1 John 3:9**

The phrase “does not sin” in this verse actually means to be given over deliberately to sin. The born again child of God will indeed struggle with sin from time to time, but he cannot live in sin, for The Spirit inside them simply will not allow it. Either God will cut your life short (1 John 5:16-17), or bring you back to repentance when you sin (Hebrews 12:5-8), but one way or the other, He will not allow you to embarrass “the family”. To the one who has truly been “born again” God will see to it that they are sanctified completely from sin. As believers, we are not yet perfected, but we **will be**, when our Father has completed the work that He started in us (**Philippians 1:6**). There is a verse in *Proverbs* that I dearly love. It helps me to remember that God will help me to finally “get there”:

**“Though a righteous person falls seven times, he will get back up. But when trouble strikes the wicked, that’s the end of them.”**

**Proverbs 24:16**

You see, Christian, you have been declared righteous because of your faith. Don’t turn back now. God has your enduring possession waiting for you, when you finish the race. My prayer for everyone here this morning is that we will all be as those the writer of *Hebrews* describes at the end of this passage:

**“But we are not those who draw back and are destroyed, but those who have faith and are saved.”**

**Hebrews 10:39**

And **ALL** of God’s people said... **TRUTH!!!**