

Finishing Well

Lesson #12

Warning #4 Hebrews 10:26-39 Sin Willfully April 7, 2021

Hebrews was written to Christian believers who had come out of Judaism. They had waited for a Messiah who would come and take away their sins, establish a new covenant so powerful that God would forget their sins forever. He is writing to those who are believers, who have accepted the Lord Jesus Christ and His sacrifice for their sins.

Problem: The Christians, facing increasing persecution under Nero, were tempted to turn or depart from their faith and move back toward the Mosaic Law.

Many of the early Jewish believers were slipping back into the rites and rituals of Judaism to escape the mounting persecution under Nero.

The writer to the Hebrews showed these Jewish Christian believers that, though they were faced with suffering, they were indeed following a better way . . . and they should persevere. Continue in the grace of Christ! It will be worth it all when we see Jesus!

Between warnings 3 & 4 are over 3 chapters which emphasize the priestly work of Jesus Christ and how He ever lives to make intercession for us.

Hebrews 10 emphasizes the perfect sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Three benefits are presented to explain why the sacrifice of Jesus Christ is superior to the old covenant sacrifices.

A. Christ's Sacrifice Takes Away Sin Heb. 10:1-10

No matter what kind of religion a man has, if it cannot deal with sin, it is of no value.

By nature, man is a sinner, and by choice, he proves that his nature is sinful.

"We are not sinners because we sin. We sin because we are sinners." [Rom. 3:23]

1. The Need for a Better Sacrifice Heb. 10:1-4

- Old covenant sacrifices were ordained by God and observed for hundreds of years.
- The law was only "a shadow of good things to come." It was not the reality itself. Col. 2:17
- It was temporary and could accomplish nothing permanent. Repeated day after day
- The Day of Atonement did not accomplish "remission of sin," but a "reminder of sin."
- Sin was covered but not cleansed.
- The people did not have God's inward witness of forgiveness and acceptance.

2. The Provision of the Better Sacrifice Heb. 10:5-9

Heb. 10:5 Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me:

In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure.

Ps. 40:6 Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened: burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required.

- Opened Ear > indicates one's willingness to hear only the voice of his master and submit to His will in all things

- If a freed bondservant shall plainly say, I love my master...I will not go out free. Then his master shall bore his ear through with an awl. He shall serve him forever. [Ex. 21:5-6]
- The perfect submission of the Son to the Father required that He become a man, with a very special human body prepared by His Father.

Heb. 10:7 Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart.

Psalm 40:7 "Lo, I come . . . to do thy will, O God. . . .

- Despising the shame, Jesus delighted in the cross, so forgiveness and eternal life, He could provide to those who trust in His name.
- Jesus Christ is the fulfillment of the old covenant sacrifices. [Matt. 5:17]
- God gave His Son a prepared body that the Son might serve God and fulfill His will on earth. Our Lord often referred to this truth [John 4:34; 5:30; 6:38; 17:4].
- No amount of sacrifices could substitute for obedience
I Sam. 15:22, Ps. 51:16-17; Isa. 1:11, 19; Jer. 6:19-20; Hos. 6:6; Amos 5:20-21
- Jesus came to do the Father's will. [John 6:38] Through His death and resurrection, Jesus Christ has taken away the first covenant and established the second.
- Why go back to a covenant that has been taken away?
Why go back to sacrifices that are inferior?

3. The Effectiveness of the Better Sacrifice Heb. 10:10

- Believers have been set apart by the offering of Christ's body once for all.
- An old covenant worshipper had to be purified from ceremonial defilement repeatedly. But a new covenant saint is set apart finally and completely.

A. Christ's Sacrifice Takes Away Sin

B. Christ's Sacrifice Need Not Be Repeated Heb. 10:11-18

The writer contrasted the old covenant high priest with Jesus Christ, our Great High Priest. The ministry of the priests in the tabernacle and temple was never done and never different: they offered the same sacrifices day after day. This constant repetition was proof that their sacrifices did not take away sins. What tens of thousands of animal sacrifices could not accomplish, Jesus accomplished with one sacrifice forever! The fact that Jesus sat down after He ascended to the Father is proof that His work was completed [Heb. 1:3, 13; 8:1].

- "Sat down" Psalm 110:1: "Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool." Christ is in the place of exaltation and victory.

When He returns, He shall overcome every enemy and establish His righteous kingdom.

Heb. 10:14 For by the one offering He has perfected forever *and* completely cleansed those who are being sanctified [bringing each believer to spiritual completion and maturity]. Amplified

Col. 2:10 Believers are "complete in him.

How do we know personally that we have this perfect standing before God?

Heb. 10:15-18 Because of the witness of the Holy Spirit through the Word

Heb. 10:16-17 The witness of the Spirit is based on the work of the Son and is given through the words of Scripture.

Note: The old covenant worshipper could not say that he had "no more consciousness of sins" [Heb. 10:2]. But the new covenant believer can say that his sins and iniquities are remembered no more. There is "no more offering for sin" [Heb. 10:18] and no more remembrance of sin!

A. Christ's Sacrifice Takes Away Sin

B. Christ's Sacrifice Need Not Be Repeated

C. Christ's Sacrifice Opens the Way to God Heb. 10:19-39 Superior Privileges

No old covenant worshipper would have been bold enough to try to enter the Holy of Holies in the tabernacle. Even the high priest entered the Holy of Holies only once a year. The thick veil that separated the holy place from the Holy of Holies was a barrier between people and God. Only the death of Christ could tear that veil [Mark 15:38] and open the way into the heavenly sanctuary where God dwells.

1. A Gracious Invitation Heb. 10:19-25

Let us draw near.... Let us hold fast.... Let us consider one another.

➤ The open way into God's presence is new.

It is not part of the old covenant that grows old and is ready to vanish away. [Heb. 8:13]

➤ It is **LIVING** because Christ ever lives to make intercession for us. [Heb. 7:25]

➤ We are invited to **DWELL** in the presence of God every moment of every day!

Let Us Draw Near Heb. 10:22 Faith

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.

➤ Fellowship with God demands purity. I John 1:5-2:2

Let Us Hold Fast Heb. 10:23 Hope

➤ The Jewish Christians were tempted to forsake their confession of Jesus Christ by going back to the old covenant worship.

The writer exhorted them: Let us hold fast the confession of our Hope without wavering, for He who promised *is* faithful.

[There is no manuscript evidence for the word faith. The Greek word is hope.]

In Hebrews there is an emphasis on the Glorious Hope Of The Believer.

Heb. 2:10 God is "bringing many sons unto glory"

Heb. 3:1 Believers are "partakers of the heavenly calling"

Heb. 3:6 and therefore can rejoice in hope.

Heb. 6:11-12, 19-20 Hope is one of the main themes

Heb. 9:28 We are looking for Christ to return.

Heb. 13:14 We are seeking that city that is yet to come

When a believer has his hope fixed on Christ and relies on the faithfulness of God, then he will not waver. Instead of looking back, we should look ahead to the coming of the Lord.

Rom 5:2b rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

Col. 3:3-4 For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.

⁴ When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.

Let Us Consider One Another Heb. 10:24-25 Love

Heb. 10:24 And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:

Fellowship with other Christians in the local assembly is vital.

Note: The emphasis is not on what a believer gets from the assembly, but rather on what he can contribute to the assembly. Faithfulness in church attendance encourages others and provokes them to love and good works.

The three great Christian virtues are evidenced here: faith [Heb. 10:22], hope [Heb. 10:23], and love [Heb. 10:24]. They are the fruit of our fellowship with God in His heavenly sanctuary.

One of the strong motives for faithfulness is the soon coming of Jesus Christ.

Heb. 10:25 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.

The only other place the word translated "assembling" [Heb. 10:25] is used in the NT is in

II Thess. 2:1. It is translated "gathering" and deals with the coming of Christ.

Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him,

2. A Solemn Exhortation Heb. 10:26-31

Warning #4

The believer who begins to drift from the Word

Heb. 2:1-4

will start to doubt the Word; faith waver

Heb. 3:7-4:13

He will become dull toward the Word; lazy; immature

Heb. 5:11-6:20

Results in despising the Word; willful sin

Heb. 10:26-31

Heb. 10:26 For if we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remains no more sacrifice for sins,

- The tense of the verb indicates: "For if we willfully go on sinning."
- This exhortation is not dealing with one particular act of sin, but with an attitude that leads to repeated disobedience.

You have entered into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, and now you are turning away from knowledge? [knowledge = epignosis; full knowledge, discernment; not newcomers to the faith; full knowledge of His glory].

- They have a mature understanding of the blessings and the glory of the coming age.

Heb. 10:26-28 For if we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remains no more sacrifice for sins, But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. ²⁸ He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses:

Under the old covenant, there were no sacrifices for deliberate and willful sins.

Ex. 21:12-14; Num. 15:27-31.

➤ Presumptuous sinners who despised Moses' law and broke it were executed [Deut. 17:1-7]. This explains why David prayed as he did in Psalm 51. Because he deliberately sinned "with a high hand," he should have been slain, but he cried out for God's mercy.

- David knew that even a multitude of sacrifices could not save him.
- All he could offer was the sacrifice of a broken and contrite heart [Ps. 51:16-17].

[See v. 26-28 above]

Heb. 10:29 Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall HE be thought worthy, who hath trodden underfoot 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?

Question: How does an arrogant attitude affect a believer's relationship with God?

It is as though he trods Jesus Christ underfoot, cheapens the precious blood that saved him ["an unholy thing" [Heb. 10:29] = "a common thing"], and insults the Holy Spirit.

- This is the opposite of the exhortation given in Hebrews 10:19-25!

Instead of having a bold profession of faith, hope, and love, a backslidden believer so lives that his actions and attitudes bring disgrace to the name of Christ.

Heb. 10:30-31 For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongs 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.

What can this kind of Christian expect from God? He can expect severe discipline.

[Chastening is the theme of Heb. 12.] There is no need to "water down" words such as "judgment and fiery indignation" [Heb. 10:27], or "sorer punishment" [Heb. 10:29].

The history of Israel revealed that hardly anybody who was saved out of Egypt by the blood of the lamb entered into the promised inheritance. Nearly all of them died in the wilderness.

I John 5:16 "There is a sin unto death." Some of the Corinthian believers were disciplined and their lives taken because of their presumptuous sins [I Cor. 11:30, where "sleep" means "died"].

God does not always take the life of a rebellious believer, but He always deals with him.

- "The Lord shall judge his people" [Heb. 10:30, quoted from Deut. 32:35]

Note: The examples given in this passage involve people who died because of their willful sins. "In stating that this exhortation applies to believers today, but that it does not involve loss of salvation, I am not suggesting that chastening is unimportant. On the contrary, it is important that every Christian obey God and please the Father in all things. Dr. William Culbertson, late president of the Moody Bible Institute, used to warn us about "the sad consequences of forgiven sins." God forgave David's sins, but David suffered the sad consequences for years afterward [II Sam. 12:7-15].

II Sam. 12:9-10 David had "despised the commandment of the Lord" and God dealt with him.

Wherefore hast thou despised the commandment of the LORD, to do evil in his sight? thou hast killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword, and hast taken his wife to be thy wife, and hast slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon. ¹⁰ Now therefore the sword shall never depart from thine house; because thou hast despised me, and hast taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be thy wife.

➤ Despise = #959 = bazah = contempt; *raise the head loftily and disdainfully*

Heb. 5:11-14 The author reprimanded his hearers for not being teachers of the Word even though they had been saved long enough to be teaching. They still needed to be taught the milk. He urged them along with himself to "go on to maturity." [Heb. 6:1]

Why is maturity important? Heb. 6:4-8

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 be born again but once.

After coming to Christ, everything we do will come before the Judgment Seat Of Christ.

Eph. 4:1 I beseech you, walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called.

Consider: "If you willfully sin, remember that the next scheduled event is an encounter with Christ the Judge."

I Cor. 3:11, 14-15 For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

If the WORK that anyone builds on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward.

If anyone's WORK is burned up, he shall suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire.

That is why there is a warning against going back. All we produce after justification 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 briars.

Heb. 6:9-12 The writer is persuaded of better things from them than "thorns and briars."

But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak. ¹⁰ For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labor of love, which you have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister.

¹¹And we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end: ¹² That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

- He exhorts them to continue and persevere because this is the only way to receive a "full reward" for each years' harvest. It is not enough to be satisfied with one year or a partial crop. Their need was for continued faith as believers and patience realizing that the promises are for another day.

Abraham had to go through patient endurance in order to obtain the promise.

Heb. 6:13-15 For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he sware by himself, ¹⁴ Saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee.

¹⁵ And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise.

- God gave His immutable Word, a promise and He gave an oath. [6:13-17]
- Our need is for patient endurance. He set a hope before us.
- Hope is an anticipated expectation which requires waiting for its fulfillment.

The waiting for the Lord's return is waiting for the blessed hope of the believer.

Titus 2:13 Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ;

- 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.

3. An Encouraging Confirmation Heb. 10:32-39 Persevere In Patience

³²But call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions; partly by being made a public spectacle through insults and distress, and partly by becoming companions with those who were so treated.

For you showed sympathy to the prisoners and accepted joyfully the seizure of your property, knowing that you have for yourselves a better and lasting possession.

Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward.

For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. [Note: Unbelievers do not need patient endurance. They need Christ!]

For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry.

Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. But WE are not of THEM who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.

The writer did not expect them to despise God's Word and experience the chastening of God! In fact, as in Hebrews 6, the writer shifted the pronouns from "we" in Hebrews 10:26 to "he" in Hebrews 10:29 and "them" in Hebrews 10:39. Even in the midst of suffering, they were faithful to the Lord, but persecution has continued and intensified. They had suffered the loss of all their material wealth. When they were not being persecuted themselves, they courageously identified with the other Christians who were in danger, even to the point of sharing their bonds (imprisonment).

At that time, they had great confidence and hope, but now they were in danger of casting away that confidence and going back into their old religion.

Heb. 10:38 "The just shall live by faith."

This is the theme of Hebrews 11–13. The believer who lives by faith will "go on to perfection" [Heb. 6:1]. But the believer who lives by sight will "draw back unto perdition" [Heb. 10:39].

What is "perdition" in this context? The Greek word translated "perdition" is used about twenty times in the New Testament and is translated by different words:

Acts 8:20	perish	Acts 25:16	die
Rom. 9:22	destruction	Matt. 26:8	waste

Wiersbe: I personally believe that "waste" is the best translation for this word in Hebrews 10:39. A believer who does not walk by faith goes back into the old ways and wastes his life.

"The saving of the soul" is the opposite of "waste."

People who turned their backs on God's will and, like Israel, spent years "wandering in the wilderness" of waste.

Wiersbe: To walk by faith means to obey God's Word and live for Jesus Christ.

We lose our lives for His sake—but we save them. [our soul]

Matt. 16:24-28 Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.

²⁵ For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it.

²⁶ For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?

²⁷ For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works.

Problem? They needed to patiently endure, to hold fast in the race of faith

Heb. 12:2 Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. It will be worth it all when we see Jesus!

Devotion From Spurgeon

Christian, Jesus does not suffer so as to exclude your suffering. He bears a cross, not that you may escape it, but that you may endure it. Christ exempts you from sin, but not from sorrow. Remember that and expect to suffer.

But let us comfort ourselves with this thought, that in our case, as in Simon's, *it is not our cross, but Christ's cross which we carry*. When you are molested for your piety; when your religion brings the trial of cruel mockings upon you, then remember it is not *your* cross, it is *Christ's* cross; and how delightful is it to carry the cross of our Lord Jesus!

You carry the cross after him. You have blessed company; your path is marked with the footprints of your Lord. The mark of his blood-red shoulder is upon your heavy burden. 'Tis *his* cross, and he goes before you as a shepherd goes before his sheep.

Take up your cross daily and follow him.

Do not forget, also, *that you bear this cross in partnership*. It is the opinion of some that Simon only carried one end of the cross, and not the whole of it. That is very possible; Christ may have carried the heavier part, against the transverse beam, and Simon may have borne the lighter end. Certainly it is so with you; you do but carry the light end of the cross, Christ bore the heavier end.

Remember, *though Simon had to bear the cross for a very little while, it gave him lasting honor*. Even so the cross we carry is only for a little while at most, and then we shall receive the crown, the glory. Surely we should love the cross, and, instead of shrinking from it, *count it very dear*, when it works out for us "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."