

August 15, 2021

“A Patient, Persevering Faith”
Lesson 2 of Unit

Hebrews 10:23-36

Intro

The letter to the Hebrews reads a lot like a sermon being preached. The main thrust of chapters 2-12 (most of the 13-chapter letter) are arguments about why faith in Christ is the logical conclusion of the Old Testament. Christ is the fulfillment of, the improvement on, the first covenant. In today's passage, the writer (who isn't known for sure) encourages Jewish Christians about the value of holding on to their faith in Jesus.

Read Hebrews 10:23-27

1. vs. 23: The “hope we profess” seems to be referring to salvation and baptism (see 10:22)
 - A person being baptized confesses to belief in Jesus as the Christ, the one who died as a sacrifice for a person's sins
 - Also included are a confession of Christ's divinity
 - The Jewish Christians being written to in Hebrews are facing great persecution
 - Many are considering going back to strictly Judaism to avoid persecution
 - The writer reminds them of Jesus, and the hope they professed in His salvation work

2. vs. 24: Believers are directed to “consider one another”
 - The general concept is that Christians are to be actively seeking how to aid each other
 - This supports the value that Christianity is not meant to be lived alone
 - We need the support of other believers to live this life
 - Therefore, we are called on to support other believers to help them as well
 - Being a disciple is a group effort as well as an individual one

 - The specific direction is “toward love and good deeds”
 - Love here means concrete action—doing something, not just feeling something
 - The specific action is “good deeds”
 - Whatever helps a fellow believer is a good deed

3. vs. 25: This verse is part of the sentence begun in verse 24, and therefore is connected in meaning
 - It instructs believers not to give up meeting together
 - Where can we best encourage each other? At church, where we meet regularly
 - The writer says to encourage each other
 - Implied is the idea of continuing to meet for fellowship at church
 - This is where we can be sure of seeing each other and connecting
 - Notice that love and good deeds (vs. 24) are connected to worshipping together (vs.25)

 - The verse finishes with a warning—The Day is coming
 - The Day refers to Jesus' Second Coming, the Day of Judgment
 - Believers are to ready daily for this Second Coming
 - We are to encourage each other because we know this event is coming

4. vs. 26: These next two verses connect in idea to Hebrews 6:4-8

Both talk about the negative consequences of giving up on faith in Christ once begun
“keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth”

This verse is warning against treating lightly one’s salvation in Christ

This letter is written to Jewish Christians who are in this very situation

The writer is encouraging them not to give up their faith despite challenging events

“No sacrifice for sins is left”

The Jews formerly tried animal sacrifices; those didn’t atone eternally

They have since put their faith in Jesus’ blood—that does atone eternally

If they give up their faith in Christ, there is no other sacrifice which can atone for
their sins—they will be lost

5. vs. 27: Here is the consequence for turning away from Christ’s sacrifice

“a fearful expectation of judgment”

Christians know God’s power and authority

They fear God in righteousness, thus avoiding negative judgment

Non-believers don’t fear God now, and do as they please

They will face a “fearful...judgment” on the Day of Judgment (vs. 25)

They have made themselves “enemies of God”

Read Hebrews 10:28-31

6. vs. 28: The writer uses an OT example to support the idea developed in vs. 26-27

People who rejected the Law of Moses were put to death

The sin of idolatry needed 2-3 witnesses (Deut. 17:2-7)

Putting anyone or anything else above Christ is idolatry

To reject the law was apostasy, a rejection of the holiness of God

This is his set-up for the next verse

7. vs. 29: The writer has just said, “Look at the punishment for apostasy under the old covenant.”

Now he says, “If that was bad, how much worse will the punishment be for thinking and
acting like Christ’s blood isn’t sufficient for salvation?”

The texts says those doing this are treating it as something common

The blood of Christ is holy, the only thing that removes our sins from us

He refers to “insulting the Spirit of Grace”

The word spirit is capitalized, indicating the Holy Spirit

This phrase is only used here and in Zechariah 12:10

It refers here to the power given to us to follow Christ, to endure difficulties
in our spiritual lives

We are giving up a tremendous power and resources if we do this

8. vs. 30: “We know Him” says the writer, and then quotes two OT passages

The implication is that we know God speaks the truth, and does what He says

If He has said He will “repay” and “judge”, then He wil

9. vs. 31: This verse serves as a reminder and a conclusion to what has been said in this section
God is true to what He says
It is dreadful / fearful to fall into God's hands if we are His enemies

Read Hebrews 10:32-36

10. vs. 32: The writer calls for his readers/hearers to remember their spiritual past
After coming to Christ, they suffered persecution then, too
His phrasing indicates the thought of, "If you endured it once then, you can face up to it again now."
11. vs. 33-34: These two verses list the several ways these believers suffered in the past
Publicly humiliated by insults and persecution
Standing with others who were mistreated
Sent to prison
Had property confiscated
- The reason to bring these up seems to be the same as in vs. 32: "If you handled these trials with joy then, you can do the same again now."
12. vs. 35-36: The conclusion which has been stated in ideas before
Don't give up now
You had confidence in God before; have it now
Persevere now so that you will receive God's blessings
Confidence in God's care will help to persevere

Application: This lesson really applies to every believer from every time. God is always faithful to us; we are the ones who struggle to stay faithful to Him. Today's passage reminds us in the 21st Century to continue to "hang in there", despite whatever challenges or sufferings we experience. Don't give up now. God is still faithful, and He still cares for His people.

Prayer: Father God, as we experience trials and pressure, help us to remain faithful to You, and to remember where we began with You and what You have done in our lives, starting with salvation and through each day of our walk. We ask for the strength through the Holy Spirit to live each day in a way that honors You. In Jesus' name, Amen.