

# An Examination of Hebrews 10:26-31 and its Larger Context

1. **Passages which give sober warnings:** We must understand that the book of Hebrews was written to Jewish believers. They were evidently being pressured to give up their Christianity and return to pure Judaism. Hebrews was written to persuade them to go on to maturity in Christ (Heb. 6:1), for there is no means of salvation other than Jesus.
2. **Hebrews 10:26-31. (We will look at the broader context: 10:19-39.)**
  - a. The writer states that he and his readers have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus (Heb. 10:19-20).
  - b. The writer acknowledges that he and his readers have a great priest over the house of God (Heb. 10:21).
  - c. He urges his readers, 22 “let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith” (Heb. 10:22).
  - d. He states that drawing near with full assurance of faith must include “having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water” (Heb. 10:22). An “evil conscience” will prevent this drawing near.
  - e. He urges them to hold fast the confession of their faith in Jesus, not because we are faithful, but because God, who has made the promises of salvation, is faithful: 23 “Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful” (Heb. 10:23).
  - f. He urges his readers to motivate one another toward love and good works: 24 and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds” (Heb. 10:24).
  - g. This process of mutual stimulation cannot occur if we do not meet together regularly, so he states further, 25 “not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near” (Heb. 10:25).
  - h. What is the value of leaving Christianity and going back to Judaism under fear of persecution? The options are anything but comforting:
    - i. If we do not follow Jesus, there is no other sacrifice for sins. 26 “For if we go on sinning willfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins” (Heb. 10:26).
    - ii. If we leave Jesus, there is only the expectation of judgment: 27 “but a

terrifying expectation of judgment and the fury of a fire which will consume the adversaries” (Heb. 10:27).

- iii. Under the Law of Moses, the Old Covenant, punishment was severe: 28 Anyone who has set aside the Law of Moses dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses” (Heb. 10:28). This punishment was physical death.
- iv. If we leave Jesus, the author of the New Covenant, how much more severe will the punishment be (Heb. 10:29-31). 29 How much severer punishment do you think he will deserve who has trampled under foot the Son of God, and has regarded as unclean the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has insulted the Spirit of grace? 30 For we know Him who said, “Vengeance is Mine, I will repay.” And again, “The Lord will judge His people.” 31 It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God.
  - (1) If people are contemplating leaving Jesus and Christianity, the judgment for forsaking the New Covenant will be infinitely more severe.
  - (2) In fact, the judgment will be not merely physical death but Second Death in the Lake of Fire (Rev. 10:11-15).
- v. The writer encourages his readers to remember the former days. When they first trusted in Jesus, they had endured many sufferings (Heb. 10:32-33).
- vi. He reminds them that they had joyfully accepted the seizure of their property because they knew they had a better and lasting possession (Heb. 10:34).
- vii. He urges them not to throw away their confidence, which has a great reward (Heb. 10:35).
- viii. They need to have endurance in their Christian life so they can receive their reward (Heb. 10:36).
- ix. God has no pleasure in those who shrink back from following Jesus (Heb. 10:37-38).
- x. This is important: The writer is convinced that his readers are not among those who shrink back to destruction, but of those who have faith to the preserving of their souls (Heb. 10:39)!

- xi. In summary, it is safe to say that the writer of Hebrews encouraged his readers, no matter how difficult the persecution they faced, to continue to follow Jesus and mature in Him, because there is no other means of salvation outside of Jesus. He was also convinced his readers would continue to follow Jesus.