

A Call to Endure

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[0 : 00] Having said that, would you open up your Bibles to Hebrews chapter 10.! And we continue on in our series in the book of Hebrews.

! Hebrews chapter 10. And I'm going to be reading verses 19 through 39. Hear God's word. Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the day drawing near. For if we go on sinning deliberately after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a fearful expectation of judgment and a fury of fire that will consume the adversaries.

Anyone who has set aside the law of Moses dies without mercy on the evidence of two or three witnesses. How much worse punishment do you think will be deserved by the one who has trampled underfoot the Son of God and has profaned the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified and has outraged the Spirit of grace?

[1 : 40] For we know him who said, Vengeance is mine, I will repay. And again, the Lord will judge his people. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. But recall the former days when, after you were enlightened, you endured a hard struggle with sufferings, sometimes being publicly exposed to reproach and affliction, and sometimes being partners with those so treated, for you had compassion on those in prison, and you joyfully accepted the plundering of your property since you knew that you yourselves had a better possession and an abiding one.

Therefore, do not throw away your confidence, which has a great reward, for you have need of endurance, so that when you've done the will of God, you may receive what is promised for yet a little while, and the coming one will come and will not delay, but my righteous one shall live by faith, and if he shrinks back, my soul has no pleasure in him.

But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who have faith and preserve their souls. May God bless the hearing of his word.

Jesus said this in John 16 to his disciples. In the world, you will have tribulation.

And so if you're a follower of Jesus Christ, you will experience hardship as a direct result of following Jesus.

[3 : 19] Maybe it's because we're claiming that Jesus is the only way to heaven, and in so doing, we're saying that all other claims on all other religions are false claims.

That can be offensive to people. Certainly unpopular. When we claim that the Bible, every word is God-breathed in all authoritative on all matters, that can sound archaic to people.

We can catch some heat for that. Particularly nowadays on issues of sexuality. It is pride month.

And so when we make the claim that God's design for marriage, biblically, is only between one man and one woman for life, that's starting to show up as hate speech for people.

We can catch heat for that. When we say that there's a real hell where people will experience eternal conscious torment as a just punishment for their sins, that can land you in some kind of charge of emotional abuse.

If you are a genuine follower of Jesus Christ, seeking to live for Christ, you will regularly experience hardship.

[4 : 47] Whether it's from your family, extended family, whether it's from your workplace, whether it's from the school you attend, on your team, to be faithful to Jesus will cost you in the eyes of the world.

Now, the original recipients of this letter, the book of Hebrews, they were Christians and they were experiencing hardship for Christ. We get a sense of that in verse 32.

You endured a hard struggle with sufferings in their former days. They were becoming weary and faint-hearted. And when you are regularly catching heat for being a follower of Jesus from the world, the temptation is to throw in the towel.

The temptation is to blend back in to the culture. And for the original audience, it was going back to Old Covenant Judaism.

That was a safe place to go. So, for us, the temptation is just to blend back into our culture. Just to give in, not stand against.

[6 : 05] To give up, instead of pressing in. To check out, instead of pressing on. what we need, brothers and sisters, when we encounter hardship, and we will, we will need endurance.

Christian endurance. Eugene Peterson wrote a book with the title, A Long Obedience in the Same Direction. It's a great definition of endurance.

A Long Obedience to Christ in the Same Direction of Holiness. It is a really good definition. A Long Obedience in the Same Direction.

Christian, you need endurance. You need to persevere. So there are three points this morning from this text I want you to see regarding endurance.

Christ is the foundation of our endurance. Apostasy, number two, is the opposite of endurance. And three, faith is at the heart of endurance.

[7 : 13] So we're going to look at Christ the grounds, apostasy the opposite of endurance, and faith which is at the heart of endurance. Brothers and sisters, we need endurance. Faith fueled endurance.

So if you come into the room, you've been catching heat for Christ, feeling a little burnt out, on the verge of giving up, maybe just want to blend in, it's good that you're here.

So let's look at this first point, Christ the foundation of our endurance, in verses 19 through 25. The writer begins this particular call to endure with a reminder that Christ is the foundation of our faith.

And he does it with what's called a since-then argument. He's saying, since this is true, then you need to do this. So let me unpack that for you.

In verse 19, we see the first since. Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain that is through his flesh, what he's talking about is the once-for-all sacrifice of Jesus Christ, his death.

[8 : 28] Christ's death has opened up a way for us, his followers, to come into God's presence all the time. Since that is true, so that's the first foundation.

There's a second foundational truth. There's another since. Verse 21, And since we have a great high priest, great priest over the house of God, not a Levitical high priest who needs to sacrifice sin for himself and then die, this is Jesus, totally God, totally man, the priest in the order of Melchizedek who ever lives to make intercession for us.

And so what we have here in these two senses are two foundations that we will endure from. The first is Christ's once and for all death which gives us access to God's very presence.

And second, Christ's ongoing priesthood, his interceding for us to give grace to us in time of need. These are two foundations in which we live from. When I was in high school, I built decks during the summertime.

[9 : 56] And I was the post hole digger and I would take post hole and dig down about 42 inches and then I would mix concrete, pour it in, and we would come out with a footer that you would build the deck on.

And oftentimes, these decks had two footers and you would build the deck upon these foundations. And so what we're being given here are two foundations in which we live out our lives.

Christ's once and for all death that gives us access to God's presence and Christ's ongoing intercession as our ever living priest.

In fact, these are the two unique features of the new covenant. So now let's turn to talking about the since then.

If this is true, if these are true, then we are being urged to live a certain way in this section. And they show up as three let us statements. You ready?

[11 : 03] First one is in verse 22. Because this is who Christ is, because the new covenant is the new covenant, let us draw near with a true heart and full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

In other words, because Christ has done this, let's draw near to God because we can. So the way that we live out these foundational truths is by actually drawing near to God through Christ. Now this is why this matters for endurance. You need grace to endure. And when you draw near to God, you draw near to the throne of grace, Hebrews 4.16, to be given help in time of need. The second let us statement is let us hold fast. Verse 23, for you hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering. For he who promised is faithful. That word hope, let us hold fast the confession of our hope. Hope is a forward-looking faith. In chapter 11, verse 1, if you just look over to the next chapter, we read this, now faith is the assurance of things hoped for.

[12:26] The conviction of things not seen. Hope is being confident of what God has promised and being confident in God's character that he is faithful to his promises.

The confession of our hope, what's being talked about here, is having to do with a particular day. You can see it down in verse 25, the last clause, and all the more as you see the day drawing near. The confession of our hope has to do with that day. Down the line. If you turn back in your Bibles to Hebrews 9.28, we get more clarity of what this confession of our hope is.

So Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin, but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him.

The confession of our hope is the coming of Christ, the promised return of Christ. And then we see that played out in the rest of the passage in Hebrews chapter 10. We see it in verse 34.

[13:36] At the end, since you knew yourselves had a better possession and abiding one. That's talking about a future possession. Verse 35, at the end, which has a great reward, a reward that's going to be given to us at the coming of Christ.

Verse 36, after you've done the will of God, you may receive what is promised. And then look at verse 37, get a little while and the coming one will come and will not delay.

The confession of our hope. There's a number of truths we can confess when it comes to our hope. A number of promises. I'm going to give you one that is five words.

And this is Jesus speaking at the end of your Bible. Now, surely I am coming soon. That's a confession of hope where you're saying, yes, Lord Jesus, come Lord Jesus.

We're confessing that as our hope. We are saying, I believe that. That Jesus is going to come and he's going to return and when he does, he's going to judge, he's going to make all wrongs right, he's going to reward those who've been faithful to him.

[14:44] this hope fuels endurance. So grace, we draw near to the throne of grace because we are in need of grace to endure and hope puts something in our hearts that will help us to endure and the last let us is in verses 24 and 25.

We need each other to endure. Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering for you promises faithful. Then in verse 24, That word stir up, some English translations, they translate it provoke, just to spur on.

Have you ever been at a stoplight behind somebody and you can see that they're on their phone in the stoplight goes from red to light to red to green while they're on their phone?

What do you do? Here's what I do. I give them a honk. I say, let's go. We got places to be. It's gone from red to green.

I spur them on. I stir them up. I provoke them. So this idea of stirring each other up is giving each other a honk.

[16:18] telling us to move forward. Let's go. Stop drifting. Press in to encourage one another.

We can't lose sight of that day. The day that Jesus returns and judges all and gives out rewards when we see him face to face. We encourage one another with that day.

We give each other a honk. Surely, I am coming soon. It prods us on. What's interesting about this particular, these particular verses, we're told how.

And let us consider how to stir one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together. In other words, we stir one another up by gathering together on a regular basis, by coming together every Sunday.

It is a way we encourage one another. It's a way we hold fast to the confession of our hope. It's a way that we draw near to God together. This gathering is an encouraging gathering.

[17:29] It's an enduring gathering. It's together following Jesus. It presses us on. We need each other to stir one another up, to give each other a honk from time to time.

Let's go. Let's not get distracted. Let's stay on target with that day. When we take these all together, when you see this, let us draw near.

Let us stir up. Let us hold fast. When you take them all together, you realize these are ways of talking about endurance. How we endure together.

And so we've seen the since, and now we've seen the then. Since Christ's once and for all sacrifice and his ongoing priesthood intercession, then let us do this, and let us do this, and let us do this.

And we will endure. Christ is the foundation of our endurance. But now, let's talk about the opposite of our endurance.

[18 : 41] It's called apostasy. And we see this in verses 26 through 31. Apostasy is something that the writer of Hebrews has been talking about all throughout the letter.

He's provided a number of warnings. This is the fourth warning of five in the book of Hebrews. And apostasy is a frightening spiritual condition.

You can see it in verse 31 where we read, it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. It is a fearful thing for someone who is apostatized to fall into the hands of the living God.

If you're wondering what apostasy is, it's the phrase in this section talking about it is if we go on sinning deliberately. And that word apostasy actually means no faith.

It refers to people who once professed Christ and then deny Him. it's the opposite of endurance.

When Jesus spoke the parable of the soils in Matthew 13, He described a sower sowing seed and that seed falls on four different soils.

[19 : 55] One was a path and the birds come and take up the seed. The next soil was this kind of rocky soil that the seed kind of roots very shallow, shoots up and then the heat just makes it shrivel.

Doesn't produce fruit. The next soil is weed soil. It gets choked out. Doesn't produce fruit. The fourth soil is the soil where that seed it shoots up, lays its roots and it produces a harvest 30, 60, 100 fold.

That's the Christian. Every other soil is a non-Christian. And in verse 26 through 31 what we have is another kind of an argument.

An if-then argument where the writer is saying if this case is true, if you go on sinning deliberately after you receive the knowledge of the truth, then this is what is going to happen.

This is going to be the result of that. So let's look at this if-then argument, this warning. In verse 26 we read, if we go on sinning deliberately after receiving the knowledge of the truth, the knowledge of the truth of course is the gospel.

[21 : 18] The gospel of Jesus Christ, the new covenant that's been established in Christ through His once for all death, sacrifice, and His ongoing priesthood.

sinning deliberately is actually not talking about after you become a Christian you gossip or you struggle with lust.

It's not that. What's being talked about here is going back to an old covenant sacrificial system in priesthood and tabernacle.

Going back to something that can't save. Rejecting rejecting the knowledge of the truth. That's what the sinning deliberately is getting at.

And it happens uniquely when there's hardship. When we start suffering, people start suffering for Christ and they professed Christ, that can just shrivel them and it shows they were never rooted to begin with.

[22 : 25] Jesus actually describes it Himself in Matthew 13. Let me read it to you. This is Him explaining, interpreting the second soil. As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy.

Yet He has no root in Himself but endures for a while and when tribulation or persecution arises on account of the world, He immediately falls away.

What we're talking about here, this warning is somewhat hypothetical, describing someone who has professed Christ but then the heat comes and they fall away.

Now, they were never a Christian to begin with. And what results from that is we see in the rest of the section.

there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins. They remain in their sins. They've rejected the once for all sacrifice of Christ and therefore they're under God's wrath.

[23 : 35] That's why we read in verse 27, no longer remains a sacrifice but a fearful expectation of judgment in a fury of fire that will consume the adversaries.

God's wrath poured out. Did you notice that the one who professes Christ, who's received the knowledge of the truth but goes on sinning deliberately, they're being equated with an adversary of God here.

This is serious business. And in verses 28 and 29, what the writer does is he compares, makes a comparison of punishments from lesser to greater in order to make his point that the rejection of Christ is a terrible thing in God's eyes.

Here's how he does it. Verse 28, anyone who has set aside the law of Moses dies without mercy on the evidence of two or three witnesses. What he's saying is this, hey, even back in the Old Covenant, if you rejected Moses' law, then you would die without mercy.

Severe punishment. And then he goes to verse 29 and he goes from lesser to greater and he says, how much worse punishment do you think will be deserved by the one who has trampled underfoot the Son of God and has profaned the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified?

[25 : 15] Quote unquote sanctified? And has outraged the spirit of grace? You see, what he's saying is, hey, it was stiff punishment for the Old Covenant.

It is even worse if you reject Christ. If you have professed him and reject him, it is far worse for you. trampling the Son of God.

God, totally God, totally man, trampling him underfoot. Do you know what you trample underfoot? Things you don't care about. Profaning the blood of the covenant that we're profaning just to make common.

It's just like anything else. No big deal. It's you're making common the blood of Jesus. The one who's totally God and totally man who shed his blood in order to establish this new covenant, you just make it into no big deal.

And then outraging the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of grace, the one we read in 914, we read this, how much more will the blood of Christ who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God.

[26 : 34] It is outrageous to the Holy Spirit. to profess Christ and then reject him. We're moving into the category of Mark 3, a blasphemy against the Holy Spirit.

This is terribly serious. Apostasy is outrageous to God.

God. And just to further make his point, what we see in verse 30 is the writer of Hebrews quoting from Deuteronomy 32, verses 35 and 36, saying, vengeance is mine, I will repay.

Saying, the Lord will judge his people. And what he's doing there is he's saying, those who claim to profess Christ and then reject Christ will be judged by Christ.

He can't pull one over. He sees it all and he's going to keep his people pure. more. So we've got to ask the question, why is this warning here?

[27 : 44] I believe this warning is here to function like it did in chapter 6. This is a real possibility but this church was not there yet.

So he's warning them. Saying, hey, if you continue down this road, it's like a dad whose teenager has started spending time with some just outright fools.

People who just don't fear God. And that wise dad sits his son down and he says to his son, son, I love you. I don't want you going down this path with these people because it's only going to harm you because the scripture says, he who is wise walks with the wise but a companion of fools will suffer harm.

So here's this wise dad saying to his son, don't go down that way. The author of Hebrews is doing something similar with that church he wrote to in God with us. If you're starting to drift, if you want to throw the towel in, if you're starting to feel kind of like, I'm not sure if I want to do this Christianity thing anymore, this should sober you up.

Don't go down that road. Here's the obvious statement, apostasy is the very opposite of a long obedience in the same direction.

[29 : 15] It's the opposite of faith enduring to the end. It does not please God, it provokes God. And so we can't think lightly of apostasy and we can't just write it off quickly theologically, we got to take it seriously.

The stakes are high. I mean, we're talking about trampling the Son of God. Here's what this should do. Here's how this should motivate those who are eagerly awaiting the Lord Jesus Christ.

It should make you say something like this, apostasy is not an option. no matter how hard it gets, apostasy is not an option.

I'm not going to trample my Lord. I'm not going to profane His blood. I'm not going to outrage the Holy Spirit. So if you've been drifting, if you've been wanting to blend in, if you've been thinking about giving up on Christ, heed the warning.

You don't want to go down that road. But instead, instead of letting hardship for Christ drive you away from Christ, let hardship for Christ drive you to Christ, to press into Him.

[30 : 41] And that's where faith comes in. Third point, at the heart of our endurance is faith. And we see this in verses 32 through 39.

The opposite of an apostasy that leads to falling away is a faith that endures to the end. And we must endure.

What is faith? Just look at 11.1. Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. Faith is actively, not passively, actively trusting in who God is and His promises. You're actively trusting in that. Think of your heart, your inner being, that part of you that does your thinking and where you trust from, where you believe from.

Think of your heart as an engine of endurance. confidence. And what your heart needs is fuel. It's like a combustion engine.

[31 : 49] You need gasoline. And the gasoline that will fuel your engine of endurance is the truth of who God is and His promises. promises. But you also need faith, trust.

It's a spark. When your faith meets God's truth of who He is and His promises, it combusts. strength is given, hope is born, and now you're able to endure.

So when you think about those five words, surely I am coming soon, when those in your heart are met by faith, you're like, let's go. This explosion this combustion is of hope and it endures.

You know what? When you are trusting actively in God's promises, you can endure just about anything. There's a then and now to this passage.

[33 : 08] The then starts in verse 32 and goes through 34. The writer points this early church to something he knows about them.

He says, but recall the former days when after you were enlightened, after you became Christians, you endured, you pressed on. A hard struggle with sufferings.

He knows they've done it before. Sometimes being publicly exposed to reproach and affliction, that means they were humiliated publicly for their following of Jesus, and sometimes being partners, the word is koinonia, sometimes being partners with those so treated, you just weren't kind of publicly humiliated yourself, but you were associating with those who were being publicly humiliated.

How so? Look at verse 34, for you had compassion on those in prison. Here's what was going on in this church. They were suffering. There were people who were being arrested and put in prison.

And so now you have some church members visiting other church members in prison, and they were starting to catch heat for it. It doesn't end there.

[34 : 26] And you joyfully accepted the plundering of your property. You joyfully accepted the plundering of your property.

Their hardship and their struggle was reaching to a point where their private property was being taken from them because they were followers of Jesus.

And they joyfully accepted that. How does that work? Since you knew that's faith language, that you yourselves had a better possession in an abiding one, that's promise language.

They joyfully accepted the plundering of their property because they were exercising faith in God's promises. They had a better possession and abiding one, a heavenly one.

That was them. And they had been suffering a long time and now they had grown weary and discouraged and they're thinking about throwing in the towel. And so this writer says, hey, I know that was true of you.

[35 : 45] Verse 35, he moves from then to now. Therefore, do not throw away your confidence. Don't throw away your confidence in what Christ has done.

Don't throw that away, which has great reward. Promises of God. God. He's affirming the genuineness of their faith and saying, don't throw it out.

Don't let hardship for Christ cause you to give up on Christ. Rather, let the hardship drive you to Christ, to trust more in his promises. What we're learning here is this.

What he puts his finger on is 36. Don't throw away your confidence. You need endurance. That's what you need.

To this weary church, he says, you need endurance. You need a long obedience in the same direction. Don't give up on Christ. Pressed into Christ.

[36 : 55] Endure. And what he does is he points them to a promise. For you have need of endurance so that when you have done the will of God by faith, you may receive what is promised.

And so what he does here is he shows us how to endure. He quotes a passage from Habakkuk 2, 3 and 4.

And he adjusts it a little bit to apply it to Christ. He says, yet a little while and the coming one will come and will not delay. That's a reference to the coming of Jesus. But my righteous one shall live by faith and if he shrinks back my soul has no pleasure in him.

In other words, here's the promise. Jesus is coming back and the call is to exercise faith in that, to believe in that, to trust in that, and you will endure as a result of that.

In verse 39, we have a summary, glory, but we are not of those who shrink back, those who sin deliberately after receiving the knowledge of the truth and go to destruction, but of those who have faith and preserve their souls, those who endure by faith.

[38 : 17] We trust in God's promises. Here's a pop quiz. Can you identify right now in your head a promise God has made to you that you've yet to receive?

Can you name something? Can you say something like, yeah, yeah, yeah, right there. Resurrection body, it's coming. I can bank on it.

Or you go, yep, yep, yep, treats of gold, it's coming. I want to give you one. I've been giving it to you. It's a five-word promise.

Surely, I am coming soon. Let that promise sink into your heart and meet it with faith and let it combust so that you endure, so that you press on to the end.

God's need it. You will need it. You will not be able to endure hardship for Christ without regularly reminding yourself of what is true about God and his promises.

[39 : 32] You need it. We need it. And we do this. We do this together. There are a lot of promises you can tuck away in your heart. Start with that one.

How about this week? You just spend time this week thinking of those five words. Surely, I am coming soon. As you're walking into your place of employment, as you're walking in a variety of different contexts,!

Jesus said it, in the world you will have tribulation. As followers of Jesus, we will suffer for him and we must endure. Christ is the foundation of endurance.

Apostasy is the opposite of endurance. Have nothing to do with that. And faith is at the heart of endurance, trusting in who God is and his promises.

Surely, I am coming soon. And in just a couple weeks, you're going to get to see the greatest example of endurance. Jesus, who for the joy set before him, endured the cross.

[40 : 49] Let's pray. God in heaven, would you fuel our hearts with the truth of your word and would you stir up faith in us to endure to press on.

God, thank you so much for Hebrews. Thank you for your desire for us to hold fast to Christ all the way to the end. Lord, we want to as well.

Would you help us this week to do just that? To endure by faith for your name's sake.

Amen. amen. Thank you so much,