

## HEBREWS

### “NO TURNING BACK”

#### Hebrews Lesson 16

**Ice Breaker:** Have you ever quit something only to find out later you were almost to the pay off when you quit? Explain.

**INTRO:** In this passage, the writer of Hebrews makes his main point of the entire letter... don't quit! You're on the right path and you're almost there!

**READ: Hebrews 10:19-39**

*19 Therefore, brothers, **since we have** confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, 20 by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body, 21 and **since we have** a great priest over the house of God, **22 let us draw near to God** with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, **having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water.** 23 Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. 24 **And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds.** 25 Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.*

*26 If we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, **no sacrifice for sins is left,** 27 but only a fearful expectation of judgment and of raging fire that will consume the enemies of God. 28 Anyone who rejected the law of Moses died without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. 29 How much more severely do you think a man deserves to be punished who has trampled the Son of God under foot, who has treated as an unholy thing the blood of the covenant that sanctified him, and who has insulted the Spirit of grace? 30 For we know him who said, “It is mine to avenge; I will repay,” and again, “The Lord will judge his people.” 31 It is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.*

*32 Remember those earlier days after you had received the light, when you **stood your ground** in a great contest **in the face of suffering.** 33 Sometimes you were **publicly exposed to insult and persecution; at other times you stood side by side with those who were so treated.** 34 You **sympathized with those in prison and joyfully accepted the confiscation of your property,** because you knew that you yourselves had better and lasting possessions.*

*35 So do not throw away your confidence; it will be richly rewarded. 36 You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what he has promised. 37 For in just a very little while, “He who is coming will come and will not delay. 38 But my righteous one will live by faith. And if he shrinks back, I will not be pleased with him.” 39 **But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who believe and are saved.***

Q: In verse 19-25 the writer says, “since we have” and “let us” several times. He reminds us that wherever there is privilege there is responsibility. What are the privileges he tells us we have?

- **“... we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus...” (vs. 19)**
  - In the old order, only the priest could go into the Holy of Holies.
    - Now, Jesus has gone in and takes us with Him.
- **“... we have a great priest over the house of God...” (vs. 21)**
  - We have an advantage... Jesus is representing us!
- **“... having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water. (vs. 22)**
  - This is the same imagery as when the priests entered the tabernacle. The writer is depicting us as priests qualified for the privilege of entering the holy of holies.
    - When priests entered the tabernacle the first thing they would do was offer an animal sacrifice on the alter, which corresponds to our having our consciences cleansed with Jesus’ blood. (Ex. 29:42)
    - Then they would wash in a bronze basin before they could enter the tent of meeting, which corresponds to our being baptized. (Ex. 30:17-20; 1Peter 3:20-22)
  - No one could approach God until they were qualified. Because of Jesus, we are now qualified!

Q: What are the responsibilities he tells us we have?

- **“...let us draw near to God...” (vs. 22)**
  - Drawing near to God has two purposes I could find in scripture:
    - Serving (Ezk. 40:46; 45:4)
    - Worship (Heb. 10:1)
- **“...Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess...” (vs. 23)**
- **“...let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds.” (vs. 24)**
  - The word “spur” means “stir up” or “provoke”.
  - This is stronger than making subtle suggestions!
- **“Let us not give up meeting together... let us encourage one another...” (vs. 25)**

Q: Verse 26 says, **“If we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, no sacrifice for sins is left...”** What does this mean?

- Some people have understood this to mean that Jesus’ sacrifice can only be applied to you once. If you sin after you are saved, you lose your salvation.
  - Matt. 18:22 we are told to forgive up to 70 times 7.
  - God wants us to hold His standard, not a higher standard than His.
- This is written to Christians at a time when the temple was still standing. Some of them were thinking of going back to Judaism.
  - When he says, “If we deliberately keep on sinning”, I think he means giving up on living to please God, going back to pleasing themselves (deliberately sinning) and relying on sacrifices to make them right with God.
  - When he says, “no sacrifice for sins is left”, I think he is saying God doesn’t accepting the sacrifices of Judaism anymore.
- I think what he is teaching is this:

- If you hope to live under religion, (depending on sacrifice and offering, rejecting doing the will of God) you're going back to a system that doesn't exist anymore.
- If it isn't there any more, there is no sacrifice for sins left.

Q: In verses 32-34, the writer encourages his readers to remember their earlier days in the faith. Why is it so important to remember what it was like at the beginning of our walk with Jesus?

- As relationships go on, sometimes people forget what brought them together in the first place. Remembering can renew and/or rekindle the romance.
  - In Rev. 2:4-5, Jesus said the same thing to the church in Ephesus.
  - Jesus told the Ephesians they had forsaken their first love. He told them to repent and do the things they did at first.
- The original readers of this letter had started off being all in for the Kingdom. They gladly sacrificed everything and endured anything for Jesus.
  - In verse 35 he tells them they had it right and it is about to pay off, so don't quit now!

APPLICATION ASSIGNMENT: *Answer the following questions as best you can, then get with your discipler/discipleship group and discuss your answers.*

1. Have you ever been tempted to give up being serious about obeying Jesus?
  - a. If so, what was causing you to feel that way?
  - b. How has hanging on paid off?
2. How seriously have you taken your responsibilities found in verses 22 through 25?
  - a. What does this tell you about how seriously you have taken your privileges found in verses 19 through 22?
3. Think back to days right after you were baptized. How have your attitudes and actions changed since then?
  - a. Have you "shrunk back"? If, so how?
  - b. Is there anything you used to do that you need to start doing again?