

A CLOSER LOOK AT OUR PASSAGE (10:26-31)

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 someone deserves to be punished

who has trampled the Son of God underfoot,

who has treated as an unholy thing the blood of the covenant that sanctified them,

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.

1. If verses 19-25 represent the appropriate response to God’s grace, verse 26 represents the worst possible response to God’s grace. How does the writer of Hebrews describe the worst possible response to God’s grace?
2. According to the writer of Hebrews, what can we expect “If we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of truth?”
3. Do you think the writer of Hebrews is describing a genuine believer who has lost their faith or someone who may think they are a genuine believer, when in reality they are not? Explain your answer?
4. What are some things that might mistakenly lead someone to think they have genuine faith, when in reality they do not (Look at Matthew 7:21-23 to make this discussion even more interesting)?
5. Verse 29 describes the ultimate effect of deliberate and defiant sin. According to the writer of Hebrews what are we doing when “we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of truth?”
6. How does this passage reveal the depth of our sin?
7. How does this passage reveal the depth of God’s love for us?
8. What is the best possible response to this and every other warning passage in Hebrews?

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LOOK TO JESUS

A FEARFUL EXPECTATION | HEBREWS 10:26-31

We all respond differently to warnings. Some of us blow right past them as if they were mere annoyances, while others take them to heart.

One of the key features of the book of Hebrews are its “warning passages.” There are five in all. We have already tackled the three. This study revolves around the fourth, and perhaps most intense of the warning passages in Hebrews. The warning passages will take your breath away. They have caused many otherwise secure believers, to doubt their salvation, and have led many to conclude that a genuine believer can lose their salvation.

In order to consider the warning passages in their proper context, we need to understand how the writer of Hebrews describes genuine faith, look at the passage in context, and to the best of our ability apply the warning to our journey of faith.

GENUINE FAITH IN HEBREWS

HEBREWS 3:6 But Christ is faithful as the Son over God's house. And we are his house, if indeed we hold firmly to our confidence and the hope in which we glory.

HEBREWS 3:14 We have come to share in Christ, if indeed we hold our original conviction firmly to the very end.

COLOSSIANS 1:21-23 Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. ²² But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation—²³ if you continue in your faith, established and firm, and do not move from the hope held out in the gospel.

1. The writer of Hebrews employs two critical “if indeed” statements to qualify our security as a believer. In 3:6 he tells us, “We are his house, if indeed...,” and in 3:14 he tells us, “We have come to share in Christ, if indeed...”
According to the writer of Hebrews what is the ultimate proof of genuine faith?
2. Unless we are tempted to think the writer of Hebrews is unique in his qualification of genuine faith, we find a similar statement in Paul. “He has reconciled you by Christ’s physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation—if... (Colossians 1:21-23).
According to Paul what is the foundation of our security?
3. With these passages in mind, how would you describe a genuine believer?
4. Why might we expect someone who has genuinely placed their faith in Christ “to hold firmly to their confidence (Hebrews 3:6),” “hold their original conviction firmly to the end (Hebrews 3:14), and “continue in their faith, established and firm and not to move from the hope held out in the gospel (Colossians 1:23)?

OUR PASSAGE IN CONTEXT (10:19-25)

HEBREWS 10:19-25 Therefore, brothers and sisters, 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 and with the full assurance that faith brings, 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 not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

Before we look at Hebrews 10:26-31, we need to observe the immediate context. Hebrews 10:19-20 represents a major turn in the argument of Hebrews. The writer of Hebrews has laid a theological foundation by describing how Christ has fulfilled the images of tabernacle, priesthood and sacrifice. In the following chapters he will describe how we should build on that foundation. Hebrews 10:19-25 describes the appropriate response to God’s grace. Our author describes the appropriate response to God’s grace in three powerful statements that begin with the phrase “let us..”

1. How would you describe the three appropriate responses?
2. Why are each of these important?
3. Which of these are we most likely to take for granted?