

## STUDIES IN THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS

### STUDY NUMBER EIGHTEEN - HEBREWS 10:19-39

#### TEXT:

v.19 Having therefore, brethren, confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus,

v.20 by a new and living way which opened for us through the veil, that is, His flesh.

v.21 And since [we are having] a great priest over the house of God,

v.22 let us keep on drawing near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having had our hearts sprinkled [clean] from an evil conscience and our body having been washed with pure water.

v.23 Let us constantly be holding fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful;

v.24 and let us be considering how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds,

v.25 not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging [one another]; and so much the more as you are seeing the day drawing near.

v.26 For if we go on sinning intentionally after having received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer is remaining a sacrifice for sins,

v.27 but a certain terrifying expectation of judgment, and the fury of a fire which is about to be consuming the adversaries.

v.28 Anyone who set aside the Law of Moses is dying without mercy on [the testimony of] two or three witnesses.

v.29 How much greater a punishment are you thinking one will deserve who trampled under foot the Son of God, and regarded as common (unclean) the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and insulted the Spirit of grace?

v.30 For we are knowing Him who said, "Vengeance belongs to me, I will repay." And again, "The Lord will judge His people."

v.31 It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

v.32 But constantly be remembering the former days, in which, after being enlightened, you endured a hard (great) struggle with sufferings,

v.33 partly, by being exposed as a public spectacle to insults and persecutions, and partly by becoming sharers with those who are being treated in the same way.

v.34 For you showed sympathy to the prisoners, and accepted with joy the seizure of your property, knowing that you are having for yourselves a better possession and an abiding one.

v.35 Therefore, do not throw away your confidence, which is having a great reward.

v.36 For you are having need of perseverance, in order that, having done the will of God, you may receive what was promised.

v.37 For yet in a very little while, He who is coming will come, and will not delay.

v.38 But my righteous one shall live by faith; and if he shrinks back, my soul is having no pleasure in him.

v.39 But we are not of the shrinking back kind to destruction, but of those who are having faith to the preserving of the soul.

## INTRODUCTION:

### (Only Angels Can Wing It: The Rest of Us Have to Practice by Liz Curtis Higgs)

The August 1994 issue of *Redbook* featured the cover headline, "115 Ways to Be Thin, Rich, Loved . . . and Happy." That's us, looking for joy by the numbers. We tell ourselves, "Just let me get to Tip #115, and I'll be home free!" Oh, sister.  
p. 3

### (Standing Tall by Steve Farrar)

Two psychiatrists were at a convention. "What was your most difficult case?" one asked the other.

"Once I had a patient who lived in a pure fantasy world," replied his colleague. "He believed that a wildly rich uncle in South America was going to leave him a fortune. All day long he waited for a make-believe letter to arrive from a fictitious attorney. He never went out or did anything. He just sat around and waited."

"What was the result." [sic]

"It was an eight-year struggle, but I finally cured him. And then that stupid letter arrived . . ."

p. 200

### (Carpe Diem by Tony Campolo)

Once, when I was riding in a car with a rigid fundamentalist on the way to a speaking engagement, we came over the crest of a hill and there, spread out before us, was a magnificent vista of mountains and sky. I was so taken by what I saw that I said out loud, "God, that's beautiful."

My uptight religious traveling partner responded with strong disapproval. "I wish you wouldn't talk like that around me," he muttered.

He didn't even realize I wasn't talking to him. I was talking to God, and he thought I was using profanity.

p. 83

(Just As Long As I'm Riding Up Front: More Stories I Couldn't Tell While I Was a Pastor by Bruce McIver)

For instance, Emily's parents Shannon and George are graduates of Baylor University. Like most Baylor grads they are avid, sometimes fanatical, supporters of the "Baylor Bears." Emily has attended Baylor University football games since she was a toddler. Happily, she's been so absorbed in the theatrics--marching bands, cheerleaders, and live bears--she hasn't known or worried about the scores. May her childhood innocence continue!

When she was three years old, she came home one day from Sunday school, sat down in her high chair to eat her lunch, and volunteered to sing her "new song:"

Zacchaeus was a wee little man,  
A wee little man was he;  
He climbed up in a sycamore tree  
The Savior for to see.  
And when the Savior came that way  
He looked up in the tree and said . . .  
Sic 'em, Bears!

p. 80

(Heaven Help Us! Truths About Eternity That Will Help You Live Today by Steven J. Lawson)

Two Texans were trying to impress each other with the size of their ranches. One asked the other, "What's the name of your ranch?"

The rancher replied, "The Rocking R, ABC, Flying W, Circle C, Bar, Stable Four, Box D, Rolling M, Rainbow's End, Silver Spur Ranch."

The first Texas was impressed and exclaimed, "Whew! That's sure some name! How many head of cattle do you run?"

The rancher answered, "Not many. Very few survive the branding."  
pp. 164-5

Elisa Morgan, president of MOPS International (Mothers of Pre-Schoolers), shared this insight into a child's view of the world:

### TODDLER'S CREED

*If I want it, it's mine.  
 If I give it to you and change my  
 mind later, it's mine.  
 If I can take it away from you,  
 it's mine.  
 If I had it a little while ago,  
 it's mine.  
 If it's mine, it will never belong to  
 anyone else, no matter what.  
 If we are building something together,  
 all the pieces are mine.  
 If it looks just like mine,  
 it is mine.*

(From *Our Daily Bread*, Tuesday, October 3, 1995)

(Masculine Journey by Robert Hicks)

One modern tragedy affecting men is that they are burning out at such alarming rates. They are in such a hurry to get wherever they are headed. As an old country preacher said, they are "hurryin' big for little reasons."

p. 153

(Living Free in Christ by Neil T. Anderson)

If You Believe You Can, You Can

If you think you are beaten--you are.  
 If you think you dare not--you don't.  
 If you want to win but think you can't,  
 It is almost a cinch you won't.  
 If you think you'll lose--you're lost.  
 For out of the world we find  
 That success begins with a fellow's will;  
 It's all in the state of mind.  
 Life's battles don't always go  
 To the stronger or the faster man;  
 But sooner or later the man that wins  
 Is the one who thinks he can.

p. 272

(When Heaven Is Silent by Ronald Dunn)

For years, I've looked for the baseball card collection I had when I was a kid. I started saving them in 1948--Hank Greenberg, Bob Feller, Mickey Mantle. Do you know how much those cards are worth today? I kept them in my Cub Scout scrapbook. But I can't find them anywhere. My mother died before I realized how valuable they were, so it was too late to ask her. I hate to think about what must have happened--Mom threw them away when I went off to college. But how was I to know that Mickey Mantle's rookie card would someday be worth thousands of dollars?

I can't believe that I sold my '65 Mustang for \$400! But who would have imagined that it would be worth ten times that now? I'm telling my children: Don't throw away *anything!* Save it all; buy a storage garage if you have to, but don't throw stuff away.

My problem is that I can't always tell the difference between treasure and trash. Through the years I have thrown away a lot of treasures because at the time they looked like trash. We all have.

And we will probably continue to do so, because we are positive we can tell the difference. After all, I know trash when I see it. I know a curse when I see one, and I know a blessing when I see one. Are you trying to tell me *this* is a blessing? Hah! This is definitely a curse, and I'm getting rid of it as soon as I can.

You see, we humans have a fatal flaw: We believe we can accurately interpret every event and experience in our lives. But kings sometimes come to our door dressed as beggars, and blessings as curses, and we often entertain angels unaware.

It would be nice if we could see ahead and know what to save and what to throw away, what is trash and what is treasure, and what junk will become antiques.

pp. 33-34

This is certainly true of these Hebrew believers as they are contemplating throwing away all the precious things they have in the Lord Jesus Christ and going back under Judaism.

The writer has finished the MAIN ARGUMENT of the book in showing the SUPERIORITY OF CHRIST IN EVERY WAY.

He is superior to:

ANGELS,

MOSES, and  
THE LAW.

His Priesthood is:

SUPERIOR TO THE LEVITICAL PRIESTHOOD, and is  
BASED ON A BETTER COVENANT.

He functions in a heavenly sanctuary.

He has made a perfect sacrifice of Himself for sin.

We now come to that section of the PRACTICAL APPLICATION of the preimence of the Son in the walk of the believer.

This is the title that was given to this section in MY SEMINARY LECTURE NOTES. It was divided into 3 PARTS:

1. EXHORTATIONS (vv. 19-25)
2. A WARNING (vv. 26-31)
3. AN ENCOURAGEMENT (vv. 32-39)

Wiersbe, summarizing verses 19-25, titles the section:

***Faithfulness*** (19-25). The same Savior who died for you now lives for you and invites you to come into His presence to worship and to share your needs. The Old Testament high priest could go behind the veil only once a year, but we can come into God's presence any time. Be sure that you are cleansed and prepared to meet Him. You can trust Him: "He who promised is faithful" (v. 23). p. 819



Stedman says:

It is this true faith which the book of Hebrews so masterfully sets forth before us. It reveals clearly the difference between the false and the true. The false way of living as a Christian is to believe and try harder. That is the Avis Car Rental motto “We Try Harder,” and it appears in the common attitude, “I’ll do my best and God will do the rest.” Now that sounds deceptively pious, even sanctimonious and very Christian, but it is utterly false! As we have been seeing in Hebrews, the true way is to believe and fully trust, for God is in you, both to will and to work His good pleasure. Your willing is therefore His willing, unless He shows you differently; your working is His working, unless He shows you otherwise.

p. 163

More precisely, verses 19 through 39 reveal a provision which creates privilege, a presumption which invites punishment, and a fortitude which reveals faith. That is our guide to understanding.

In a nutshell, the secret of Christian living is described in this first section, **the provision which creates privilege.**

p. 164

G. Campbell Morgan says:

For our present meditation the whole of this paragraph is needed, revealing as it does privileges and responsibilities, resulting from the fact of the finality of the speech of God to men through His Son.

p. 105

Griffith Thomas says:

The argument is now closed. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is the perfect and perpetual Priest. Because He is Son, He is priest; and because He is priest, He is a perfect Savior (chap. 5:9; 7:25). Now comes the application (10:19 to 13:25); we are to experience and enjoy all these great realities. Spiritual wealth, like every other form of riches, does not consist merely in possession but in knowledge and use. Grace needs appropriation if it is to be operative. We see here, as before (4:14-16), the association of “having” and “let us”; because we possess, we ought to use and enjoy.

p. 130

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Westcott says:

Having established his theoretical view of the relation of Christianity to Judaism, as its complete fulfilment, the substance answering to the shadow, the writer of the Epistle at once goes on to enforce the practical consequences of his conclusions. The privileges must be used: the duties must be discharged. The faith is not for speculation but for life.  
p. 317

The application of the lessons to be drawn from the view which the Apostle has given of the absolute supremacy of the Christian Faith over the preparatory system of Judaism begins with a vivid picture of the position of the Hebrews, (1) of their privileges and duties (19-25), (2) of their perils (26-31), and (3) of their encouragements (32-39).  
p. 317

Lane titles this section:

**The Fourth Warning: The Peril of Disloyalty to Christ  
(10:19-39)**  
p. 271

He says further:

This section represents a high point in the writer's message to his friends. In a climactic parenetic passage he summarizes his thematic exposition of Christ as priest and sacrifice and earnestly appeals for the community to apply the blessings of Christ's high priestly ministry to its own daily life.  
p. 281

J. Vernon McGee says:

Hebrews 10:19-25 is the practical section of this chapter, and it speaks of privilege and responsibility.  
p. 574

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Kistemaker says:

The epistle basically consists of two parts: a dogmatic section (1:1-10:18) and a practical section (10:19-13:25). In the first segment exhorting is the exception; teaching the rule. In the last segment the emphasis is on exhorting and admonishing, with some teaching in chapter 11.

p. 286

Delitzsch summarizes the whole passage of 10:19-39 by saying:

*Exhortation to approach the newly opened heavenly sanctuary with full assurance of faith; to hold fast the confession of our well-assured hope; to exercise mutual vigilance over one another, in expectation of the inevitable day of judgment which will overtake with its penalties all those who willfully apostatize from the once received truth; and to abide in the steadfastness of former days of trial, so as not finally to lose the recompense of reward which that day will bring to those who live by faith.*

p. 168

DeHaan says:

The Epistle to the Hebrews contains two sections dealing with this subject of believers sinning willfully and falling short of God's best for them. The first section, Hebrews six, we have studied. The second section is Hebrews 10:26-39. These two constitute one solemn warning against "falling away" and "sinning willfully." Both are related to the sin unto death, both have to do with rewards or loss of rewards, and both point to the Judgment Seat of Christ. And between these two grave warnings the Holy Spirit gives us the only defense against the danger of incurring the chastening and judgment of God. Between Hebrews six and ten we have three chapters, seven, eight and nine, which give the most complete and exhaustive picture of Jesus Christ, our interceding High Priest in heaven.

pp. 134-5

English observes:

Henceforth in this epistle, the groundwork of doctrine having been laid, the practical results of the principles that have been proposed are set forth, and the believer in Christ is admonished to live accordingly, that is, to know by daily, personal experience what his nearness to God and privileges really are.  
p. 304

Macaulay says:

The epistle to the Hebrews has set forth the excellencies of Christ over all Old Testament ministers, and the exceeding blessings which fall to those who by faith in Him are brought within the new covenant. Now at this point the sacred writer recalls the chief privilege which the priestly ministry of Christ has secured for us and exhorts us to improve our opportunities, and adopt such life procedures as are wholly compatible with our new and glorious position.  
pp. 144-5

Phillips prepares us for this passage by saying:

Three great themes occupy this closing section of the great argument based on the superior provisions of Calvary. There is a tremendous word of welcome, there is a terrible word of warning, and there is a timely word of wisdom. The believer today has an access to God far greater than anything allowed by the Levitical ritual, and he therefore needs to avail himself of it.  
p. 140

Hughes says:

So we come here to the great turning-point in Hebrews where the writer turns from the *explanation* of the superiority of the person and work of Christ to the *application* of it in the lives of the storm-tossed church. The shift can be stated in various ways: from *doctrine* to *duty*, from *creed* to *conduct*, from *precept* to *practice*, from *instruction* to *exhortation*, all of which mean one thing--the writer becomes very explicit regarding how Christians ought to live.

In making transition from instruction to exhortation, the preacher assumes that the foregoing ten chapters, truly believed, ought to have produced a profound dual confidence: confidence in one's *access* to God, and confidence in one's *advocate* before God.

p. 29

v.19 Having therefore, brethren, confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus,

### 2 Corinthians 7:1

Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

“HAVING THEREFORE, BRETHREN”

This helps us recognize the fact that these are genuine believers.

### John 1:12

But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name,

“HAVING THEREFORE, BRETHREN, CONFIDENCE”

This “CONFIDENCE” is the:

ABSENCE OF APPREHENSION and the FEAR OF REJECTION.

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“HAVING THEREFORE, BRETHREN, CONFIDENCE TO ENTER THE HOLY PLACE BY THE BLOOD OF JESUS”

Just as the high priest could only come into the Holy of Holies on the Day of Atonement with the blood of the lamb, so we can come into “THE HOLY PLACE,” into the very presence of God Himself, “BY THE BLOOD OF JESUS.”

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

The central assertion of these verses is in the words, **Therefore, brothers . . . let us draw near to God.** The intervening material, beginning with the word **since**, gives the basis for the author’s call to approach God. The readers are New-Covenant people (“brothers”) who should **have confidence** . . . to come into the very presence of God.  
p. 804

Kistemaker says:

Note that the author of Hebrews writes, “by the blood of Jesus.” He uses the name *Jesus* as a reminder that Jesus saves his people from sin (Matt. 1:21) and that Jesus “is not ashamed to call them brothers” (Heb. 2:11). The writer, too, belongs to the family of Jesus and for that reason addresses his readers as “brothers” (see 3:1, 12; 13:22).  
p. 286

Lane says:

“Therefore, brothers, since we have,” indicates that the writer is building on what has preceded. The inferential particle *oun*, “therefore,” sums up the entire argument to this point, . . .  
p. 282

Westcott says:

The writer sums up briefly the blessings which he has shewn to belong to Christians. They have an entrance to the Divine Presence in virtue of Christ's Blood, a way made by the Incarnation, and an availing personal Advocate, a Priest over the house of God.

p. 318

Bruce says:

The invitation to “approach the throne of grace with confidence” has already been issued in this epistle (4:16); on that occasion the invitation was based on the assurance that the high priest who has passed through the heavens is one whose own experiences of temptation enable him to sympathize with his people in their trials. Now a further assurance is given: the way by which this high priest has entered into the presence of God is a way which remains open for his people to follow him there.

p. 249

Lenski says:

This is “the entrance of the Sanctuary in connection with the blood of Jesus”; the phrase modifies “the entrance of the Sanctuary” and needs no article because only this one entrance exists. There is not an entrance connected with Jesus’ blood and one or more others apart from his blood.

p. 343

What the writer says is that the entrance is open for us in connection with Jesus’ blood; his blood has opened it for us so that it shall never be closed. Any uncertainty, doubt, or hesitation on our part on that score are removed.

p. 343

Owen says:

The word “boldness” describes the state and frame of mind of the worshippers under the gospel state; they have the right, privilege, liberty, and confidence unto and in their access unto God. This is the liberty to enter into the immediate gracious presence of God Himself in Christ Jesus; whatever was typically represented in the most holy place of old, we have access unto. This is the great fundamental privilege of the gospel, that all believers in all their holy worship have liberty, boldness, and confidence to enter into the gracious presence of God.

p. 196

This “*blood of Jesus*”--that is, the “sacrifice of Himself,” removed and took away all causes of distance between God and believers; it made atonement for them, answered the law, removed the curse, broke down the partition wall, or “the law of commandments contained in ordinances,” wherein were all the prohibitions of approaching unto God with boldness.

p. 197

Pink says:

“The apostle’s great argument is concluded, and the result is placed before us in a very short summary. We have boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way; and we have in the heavenly sanctuary a great Priest over the house of God. All difficulties have been removed, perfectly and forever. We have access; and He who is the way is also the end of the way; He is even now our great Priest, interceding for us, and our all-sufficient Mediator, providing us with every needful help.

p. 87

Hession in his commentary says:

One verse of the hymn “There is life for a look” is a perfect commentary on this:

Then doubt not thy welcome, since God has declared  
 There remaineth no more to be done,  
 That once in the end of the age He appeared  
 And completed the work He begun.

p. 114

Stedman says:

Looking carefully at that passage you note twice the phrase, *we have*. And following these there is repeated three times the phrase, *let us*. *We have* marks provision; *let us* is privilege.

p. 164

English correctly observes:

“Brethren” only, those who have fixed their faith and hope in the Son of God and His sacrificial and atoning death for sin, may be addressed and spoken of as “having therefore . . . boldness to enter into the holy places.”

p. 305

English says further:

Having confidence in Christ, having absolute faith in His blood and its atoning, cleansing value, we approach the throne with utmost assurance and boldness. Were we to try to go into the divine presence through our own character, or works, or religious association, we should be so affrighted, trembling with awe and fear, that ere we should be annihilated by God’s mighty judgment, we might well expire of ourselves! But resting in Christ, entering the holy places “by the blood of Jesus,” fear vanishes and we look up with confidence, assured that all is well.

p. 306

G. Campbell Morgan says:

The recognition of privilege is seen in the repetition of the word “Having” twice over, and that of responsibility in the repetition of the words “Let us” three times. In this way let us consider the matter, beginning then with the privileges referred to.

p. 106

(Halftime: Changing Your Game Plan from Success to Significance by Bob Buford)

If one advances confidently in the direction of his dreams, and endeavors to live the life which he has imagined, he will meet with a success unexpected in common hours. He will pass an invisible boundary; new, universal, and more liberal laws will begin to establish themselves around and within him; and he will live with the license of a higher order of beings.

**Henry David Thoreau**

p. 117

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v.20 by a new and living way which opened for us through the veil, that is, His flesh.

In verse 19 we read:

“Having therefore, brethren, confidence to enter the holy place”

1. “by the blood of Jesus”

And now:

2. “BY A NEW AND LIVING WAY.”

#### Hebrews 4:14-16

Since then we are having a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us be holding fast our confession. For we are not having a high priest who is not able to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore be drawing near with confidence to the throne of grace, in order that we may receive mercy and may find grace to help in time of need.

This is a “NEW AND LIVING WAY.” It is fresh and cannot grow old. Every believer can tread this path.

Lightfoot points out:

This way is the new and living way which He opened for us through the curtain, that is, through His flesh. The terms modifying “way” are meaningful. The way is “new”, a word that very often means fresh, like fresh grapes, fresh olives, fresh fish, fresh water. The term also refers to some event that has recently happened. The two conceptions coalesce. The new way has been recently made accessible and is perennially fresh. The way is likewise a “living” way because it brings life from God. It is a way not scattered with dead sacrifices but made accessible by the living Christ, who himself cleared the path. He opened it up. The word can mean to make a way that was not there before. The implied contrast is not between a new, unfrequented path and an old one, familiar and well-trodden, but rather, between a new way and no way at all.

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Montefiore in Black's commentary says:

The way to heaven is **new** because Jesus only opened it up at the consummation of the age (ix. 26) and it is **living** because it is the way opened up through death of him who lives for ever (ix. 14).

p. 172

F. B. Meyer says:

The way stands open still for every trembling seeker. It is *new*, because, though myriads have trodden it, it is as fresh as ever for each new priestly foot. It is *living*, because it is through the living Saviour that we come to God.

p. 38

MacArthur, speaking on the word "NEW" in verse 20, says:

[It] is used only once in the New Testament. Its original meaning was "freshly slaughtered." Jesus is the new way, the freshly slaughtered sacrifice, who opens the way to God. It seems contradictory that the freshly slaughtered way would also be the **living way**. But Jesus' death conquered death and gives life. His death is the only way to life that is everlasting.

p. 261

Draper says:

Note that he says "for us." It was not for the angels that Jesus came into this life. He did not become the high priest of celestial beings or of the created beings of the animal kingdom. He did so for us. It is man who stands unique in all of creation. The coming of Jesus Christ was for man personally. We cannot escape the personal nature of the coming of Christ and the Christian faith. It was for us that Jesus died.

p. 267

Draper says further:

Conversion is the taking away of the distorted thoughts, the disappointment, the discouragement, and the disillusionment of life we experience in our sinful flesh. Conversion is the taking away of all of these things, and exchanging them for redemption, purification, cleansing, forgiveness, and access into the holiest place of all, even the very presence of God. That's conversion. That's what is declared here. It is for each of us, and we are encouraged to experience it personally.

This conversion is a new way. It is not an old way. It is not a matter of keeping tradition or going through rituals. We do not gain access to God through the blood of beasts or the ceremonies of religion. We do it a new way, through the blood of Jesus Christ. The old way had many sacrifices, many feasts, many days, and many years. The new way is one, once-for-all sacrifice.

This conversion experience is not only a new way, it is a living way. The religion of the Jew, just like all the religions of mankind, is dead. No man finds life in religion, he only finds death. A man becomes a slave to the rituals, traditions, and ceremonies of lifeless religion. There is nothing in religion itself to bring meaning, purpose, forgiveness, and eternity into the heart of man. But this way, this conversion, is a living way. It banishes despair and replaces it with hope. It is a new and living way.

pp. 268-9

Wiersbe says:

This open way into God's presence is "new" (recent, fresh) and not a part of the Old Covenant that "waxeth [grows] old [and] is ready to vanish away" (8:13). It is "living" because Christ "ever liveth to make intercession" for us (7:25). Christ is the new and living way! We come to God through Him, our High Priest over the house of God. When His flesh was torn on the cross, and His life sacrificed, God tore the veil in the temple. This symbolized the new and living way now opened for all who believe.

p. 114

Barclay says:

Before the Holy of Holies in the Tabernacle the veil hung. That veil shut off and screened off the presence of God. In order that men should enter into the presence of God that veil would have to be rent in twain so that the presence might be revealed. Now Jesus' flesh is that which veiled His godhead. Charles Wesley in his great hymn appealed to men:

“Veiled in flesh the godhead see.”

It was when the flesh of Christ was rent upon the Cross that men really saw God. All Jesus' life shows us God; but it is on the Cross that the love of God is really and finally revealed. As the rending of the Tabernacle veil opened the way to the presence of God, so the rending of the flesh of Christ revealed the full greatness of the love of God. In Jesus, then, we have one who opens up the way to God, by showing us the love of God, and by bringing to God the perfect sacrifice of perfect obedience.

pp. 133-4

Wuest says:

The word “new” in the Greek text is very interesting. It is *prospathon*, made up of *pros* meaning “near to,” and *phatos* from *pephamai* the perfect of *phenein* “to kill.” The original meaning of the total word is “newly-slain.” Here the contrast is between the “old-slain road” of the earthly tabernacle where the high priest would sprinkle the blood of the sacrificial animal seven times on the ground as he approached the mercy seat in the Holy of Holies (Lev. 16:14), and the freshly-slain road into the Holy of Holies of heaven, sprinkled with the blood of the Lamb of God. Over this latter road is the Jewish recipient of this letter urged to come. The old road to the mercy seat of the tabernacle in Israel was a dead road. There was no life there. It was all symbolism, an index-finger pointing to the reality with which this first-century Jew was then faced. In the new road was life.

p. 179

Griffith Thomas says:

The reference to the way as “new and living” is unusually interesting, because it tells of the perpetual freshness of the offering of Christ. The word translated “new” means freshly slaughtered, and suggests that the sacrifice of Christ never grows old. As Luther says: “It seems but yesterday that Jesus died on the cross.” We are accustomed to express this when we sing:

Dear dying Lamb, Thy precious blood  
Shall never lose its power,  
Till all the ransomed Church of God  
Be saved, to sin no more.

p. 131

Macaulay says:

First, the way is a new one. The word translated “new” originally means “newly slain,” and although it had already become weakened to mean simply “new” when the New Testament was written, we should like to think that the Holy Spirit may have had the older sense in mind when He breathed this particular word into the mind of the writer. Christ, newly come from the cross, is the way to God.

We are not here contrasting the new way to God with an older way to God. It is a new way inaugurated where there was no road.

p. 146

Lenski says:

This whole statement aims to strike the readers squarely. No Jew, except the high priest, ever got to enter the Holy of Holies of the Tabernacle; the people had no way to the actual mercy seat. But these readers now have the actual entrance into the heavenly Sanctuary; they may pass in with joyful confidence. Yet they are thinking of turning from this entrance, turning back to Judaism, where even the earthly Holy of Holies is closed to them. How can they think of doing such a thing?

p. 346

Owen says:

It is called a “*new way*,” because it was newly made, prepared, and consecrated; because it belongs unto the new covenant; and because it admits of no decays, for it is always new as unto its use and efficacy as in the days of its first preparation. It is also said to be a *living way*, and that because of its opposition unto the way into the holiest in the tabernacle, which was *by death*-by the blood of the sacrifices, and entrance into it was death to any who should make use of it, the high priest only excepted.

p. 197

Bruce says:

The way by which they enter the presence of God is a new way, which did not exist until he opened it up and entered thereby himself. It is thus a new way; it is also a “living way.” For in effect the ever-living Christ himself, as his people’s sacrifice and priest, is the way to God; the present passage is our author’s counterpart to the affirmation of John 14:6: “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but by me.” It is a way which (to continue the symbolism of the tabernacle and temple) leads “through the curtain” into the holy of holies.

p. 250

Bruce says further:

“This beautiful allegorizing of the veil cannot, of course, be made part of a consistent and complete typology. It is not meant for this. But as the veil stood locally before the holiest in the Mosaic Tabernacle, the way into which lay through it, so Christ’s life in the flesh stood between Him and His entrance before God, and His flesh had to be rent ere He could enter. This is the fact and the history which suggest the figure. But under this fact lie principles in the mind of God, and in the public law of the universe, and in the heart and mind of man, the object to be awakened and touched, which give to *through* a deeper sense, and in this sense for us also the way lies through His flesh” (A. B. Davidson).<sup>94</sup>

Davidson).<sup>94</sup>

<sup>94</sup> *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, pp. 211f. Cf. also O. Michel and C. Spicq, *ad loc.*, and W. Manson, *The Epistle to the Hebrews* (London, 1951), p. 67.

p. 252

Westcott says:

The way, however the words which follow may be interpreted, must finally be Christ Himself (John xiv. 6; x. 7); and it is therefore 'fresh' not only in the sense that it is a way which was before unknown, but also as one that retains its freshness and cannot grow old (c. viii. 13); and it is 'living' as a way which consists in fellowship with a Person.  
p. 319

Lane says:

The blessing of "free access to the heavenly sanctuary" is further defined by the compressed line of thought in v 20, which is intended to elucidate v 19. The expression "a way which is new and which leads to life" is descriptive of "free access" in v 19. It concerns the way into the heavenly sanctuary. The way is defined as "new" a term having both a temporal and a qualitative nuance. Temporally, the community possesses a way that had not previously existed, which is the result of the definitive sacrifice of Christ. It is a recently opened way (cf. 9:8), in contrast to the old way into the earthly sanctuary that has been set aside as a mere prefiguration of what was to come (cf. 8:13; 10:1). The way is also qualitatively new because it participates in the incorruptible freshness of the new covenant, which will not become old. The way is also defined as "living" in the sense that it leads to life, as demonstrated by the powerful effect that free access to God has upon the community of faith . . .  
pp. 283-4

Kistemaker observes:

Christ had dedicated the way by opening the curtain, "that is, his body." At his death the curtain to the Most Holy Place had to be torn from top to bottom. Likewise the body of Jesus had to be broken, and his blood had to be shed to open for us the way to God. By his sacrifice on the cross, Christ has removed the veil between God and his people.  
p. 287

J. Vernon McGee says:

John didn't say that it was a new and living way open to God, because the Incarnation, the *life* of Christ saves no one. We enter into the holiest by the *blood* of Jesus. Our right of entrance is not through His incarnation but through the rending of the veil; that is, through His death. You and I have the privilege of worshipping God, not because of the *life* of Jesus, but because of His *death* for us upon the cross. Oh, my friend, this distinction is so important!  
p. 575

Our author tells us, then, it is "BY A NEW [or fresh] AND LIVING WAY." That is, a way that involves fellowship with a person and we know that that person is described in:

John 14:6

Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

In this "NEW AND LIVING WAY" we have:

ACCESS and ACCEPTANCE into the presence of God.

This "NEW AND LIVING WAY WHICH [has been] OPENED FOR US THROUGH THE VEIL, THAT IS, HIS FLESH."

It was Jesus in the upper room who said:

"This is My body which is broken for you."

Matthew 27:50-52

And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, and yielded up His spirit. And behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom, and the earth shook; and the rocks were split, and the tombs were opened; and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised;

“BY A NEW AND LIVING WAY WHICH OPENED FOR US THROUGH THE VEIL, THAT IS, HIS FLESH.”



The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

At any rate His death gave believers the needed access and route to God, . . . **new** [equals recent] . . . only here in the NT) **and living**, [equals] . . . partaking of the fresh and vitalizing realities of the New Covenant.

p. 804

v.21 And since [we are having] a great priest over the house of God,

Once again, notice that he uses the word:

“brethren” in verse 19,

“us” in verse 20, and

“WE” here in verse 21.

The author is identifying with his fellow believers:

“AND SINCE [WE ARE HAVING] A GREAT PRIEST”

To have Him we have had to receive Him, to go along with the new priesthood and the new covenant.

He has become our AGENT or COURT-APPOINTED ATTORNEY.

Our ACCESS AND ACCEPTANCE is dependent upon this Great Priest. He is great because of His sovereign power.

It is having:

“confidence” in verse 19,

“A GREAT PRIEST” in verse 21.

We can just reverse that.

“SINCE [WE ARE HAVING] A GREAT PRIEST” we can be having “confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus.”

Westcott says:

Christians have open access to the Divine Presence; and in the court of the Divine Majesty they have an effectual Intercessor.  
p. 321

Lenski says:

Has Judaism a priest like this? The writer does not say “over the house of Israel” (8:8) but “over the house of God,” “whose house we ourselves are if we hold fast as firm to the end the assurance and the boast of the hope” (3:6).  
p. 347

Hughes says:

When Chrysostom was brought before the Roman emperor, the emperor threatened him with banishment if he remained a Christian. Chrysostom replied:

“You can not banish me for this world is my father’s house.” “But I will slay you,” said the Emperor. “No, you can not,” said the noble champion of the faith, “for my life is hid with Christ in God.” “I will take away your treasures.” “No, but you can not for my treasure is in heaven and my heart is there.” “But I will drive you away from man and you shall have no friend left.” “No, you can not, for I have a friend in heaven from whom you can not separate me. I defy you, for there is nothing you can do to hurt me.”<sup>1</sup>

1. Alan F. Johnson, *The Freedom Letter* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1974), p. 136, who quotes from Henry Hart Milman, *History of Christianity*, Vol. 4 (New York: Crowell, 1881), p. 144.

p. 31

v.22 let us keep on drawing near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having had our hearts sprinkled [clean] from an evil conscience and our body having been washed with pure water.

Verses 22, 23 and 24 all start with the words “LET US.”

The writer is now turning away from:

OUR PRIVILEGES in the words “having” in verses 19-21  
to RESPONSIBILITY.

He is giving a 3-FOLD EXHORTATION here in these verses.

“LET US KEEP ON DRAWING NEAR”

Once again he identifies with his readers by using the word “US.”

“LET US KEEP ON DRAWING NEAR” not by the rituals of worship under the old order but, “by the blood of Jesus and by a new and living way.”

It is a call from LUKEWARMNESS to be “DRAWING NEAR WITH A SINCERE HEART IN FULL ASSURANCE OF FAITH, HAVING HAD OUR HEARTS SPRINKLED [CLEAN] FROM AN EVIL CONSCIENCE AND OUR BODY HAVING BEEN WASHED WITH PURE WATER.”

It is to be a “DRAWING NEAR WITH A SINCERE HEART,” that is, with real devotion and not just going through the motion.

John Brown points out:

Christians are exhorted thus to draw near to God in the full assurance of faith. The full assurance of faith is just equivalent to the fullest and most assured belief. The question naturally occurs--the full and most assured belief of what? And the answer is easy--the full and assured belief of that respecting which we

have confidence--that Christ is our High Priest; has bodily passed through these heavens into the heaven of heavens by His own blood, thereby proving the perfection of His atoning sacrifice and the efficacy of His intercession.

No more veil. God bids me enter,  
 by the new and living way.  
 Not in trembling hope I venture,  
 boldly I His call obey.  
 There with Him My God I meet,  
 God upon the mercy seat.  
 In the robes of spotless whiteness,  
 with the blood of priceless worth.  
 He has gone into that brightness,  
 Christ rejected from the earth.  
 Christ accepted there on high,  
 and in Him do I draw nigh.

Lenski says:

“To sprinkle from a wicked conscience” is a pregnant expression and equals to sprinkle and thus to free from a wicked conscience. A wicked conscience is one that has wickedness lying upon it. Even if such a conscience is lulled asleep, even if it is actually seared, it will in the end fill the sinner with utter condemnation. Only one thing can free us from the charges of such a conscience, can restore us to a “good conscience” that is able to approach God uncondemned, and that is Christ’s blood. I John 1:7. How can one think of drawing near to the holy God in his holy Sanctuary with a wicked conscience?  
 p. 350

### 1 John 1:9

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Lane says:

. . . “our hearts have been sprinkled clean from a burdened conscience” (v 22*b*; cf. 9:13-14; 10:18). Only when the heart has been purged from the defilement of a smiting conscience can it be renewed in fullness of faith and sincerity toward God . . .  
 p. 286

The decisive purgation effected by the blood of Christ has removed the barrier of a smiting conscience, which had prevented unhindered access to God. The condition of the burdened heart belongs to the past . . .

p. 287

Bruce says:

Those who make bold to enter the heavenly sanctuary by the blood of Jesus are by that same blood purified and made fit for the divine presence; the cleansing of the conscience removes the barrier which prevented their free access.

p. 254

Hughes says:

Negatively, we can picture this idea from everyday life as we reflect on those people who, after being introduced to us, keep talking and smiling but at the same time looking behind and around us at other people and things. They really are not interested in us. They only see us as objects or a means for something they want. In our relationship with the God-man, such behavior is anathema. Positively stated, a “sincere” heart is represented in the words *focus or wholeheartedness*.

p. 32

Wiersbe says:

Of course, we must prepare ourselves spiritually to fellowship with God. The Old Testament priest had to go through various washings and the applying of blood on the Day of Atonement (Lev. 16). Also, during the regular daily ministry, the priests had to wash at the laver before they entered the holy place (Ex. 30:18-21). The New Testament Christian must come to God with a pure heart and a clean conscience. Fellowship with God demands purity (1 John 1:5-22).

pp. 114-15



Hession says:

This, then, is what is in view in the words “having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience,” sprinkled, that is, with the blood of Jesus. The power of His blood is such as to make us “perfect as pertaining to the conscience.” What a perfection to enjoy right now! If there is still something condemning you in your heart, agree with God about it and confess it, before you think of entering the Holiest. Direct the full assurance of faith, about which we have spoken, to the stain in question and to the efficacy of the blood of Jesus to cleanse it, and be at peace. Ask yourself which is greater--your sin, or the blood of Jesus. There can be only one answer.

Oft as it is sprinkled  
 On our guilty hearts,  
 Satan in confusion,  
 Terror-struck, departs.

pp. 119-20

Hession says:

Let us then be those who have constant recourse to the ever-available blood of Jesus and enjoy life in the Holiest, “having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience.” As Charles Wesley wrote:

Oh, may the least omission pain  
 My well-instructed soul,  
 And drive me to the blood again  
 That makes the wounded whole.

p. 132

Pink says:

“In full assurance of faith”: which means, negatively, without doubting or wavering; positively, with unshaken confidence--not in myself, nor in my faith, but in the merits of Christ, as giving the unquestionable title to draw near unto the thrice holy God. “Full assurance of faith” points to the heart resting and relying upon the absolute sufficiency of the blood of Christ which was shed for my sins, and the efficacy of His present intercession to maintain my standing before God.

p. 96

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English says:

“Having our bodies washed with pure water” denotes two things, it appears to us: (1) the sanctifying work of the Spirit of God at the new birth (John 3:5; Titus 3:5); and (2) the daily cleansing of the believer in Christ, by the washing of water by the Word of God (Eph. 5:26; cf. Lev. 8:6). The blood of Christ is applied to purge the conscience from evil; the renewing of the Holy Spirit imparts new life, and the daily application of the Word of God keeps cleansing the feet that become soiled in the pilgrim pathway.

p. 312

Phillips says:

The great reality, however, is matched by an equally great responsibility. Three times the writer of Hebrews says, “Let us!”

p. 144

In this TRIO OF EXHORTATIONS in verses 22-24, we have that other famous trio of:

FAITH,

HOPE and

LOVE.

It is:

“full assurance of faith” in verse 22,

“the confession of our hope” in verse 23, and

“TO STIMULATE ONE ANOTHER TO LOVE AND GOOD DEEDS”  
in verse 24.

The “full assurance of faith” is a ripe faith, a mature one. A faith that is vigorous to face the opposition and to remain faithful. This is certainly the answer to the recipients of this letter.

v.23 Let us constantly be holding fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful;

Back in verse 22 the writer exhorted us:

“let us keep on drawing near”

Now, here in verse 23, he is saying:

“LET US CONSTANTLY BE HOLDING FAST.”

The word “HOLDING FAST” is in direct contrast to the “WAVERING” in the latter part of the verse.

To “BE HOLDING FAST” is to remain erect and firm.

#### 1 Corinthians 15:58

Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.

#### Hebrews 6:19

This hope we are having as an anchor of the soul, a hope both sure and secure and one which is entering within the veil,

“HOLDING FAST” is in contrast with ISRAEL IN THE WILDERNESS when they would not proceed in faith to go on into the land at Kadesh Barnea but chose to waver at that point. As a result, they spent 40 years wandering in a purposeless wilderness.

The Bible Knowledge Commentary makes reference to the reliability of God’s promises:

It is because of the reliability of God's promises that we can afford to be holding fast without wavering and folding under pressure.  
p. 805

Lane says:

The encouragement to “hold fast” is reinforced by the term *aklines*, “without wavering.” This word is used by many classical authors but is found only twice in the LXX and nowhere else in the NT. It is an important word in the vocabulary of Philo, who uses it primarily to signify the immutability that belongs to God alone, but also to describe the stability of the friends of God who stand by his side. It connotes “swerving neither to one side nor to the other,” and so comes to mean “firm,” “stable,” “fixed,” “steadfast.” Here it qualifies the . . . [words], “let us continue to hold fast,” calling for the community to remain stable and to affirm its privileged status as the people who have been granted access to God through Christ.  
pp. 288-9

Hughes says:

So many people live on so little, surviving in this world, just putting one foot in front of the other as they depend on unsubstantiated, ungrounded “hope.” But the Christian’s hope has substance! The hope that our text commends here in verse 23 is a conscious reference back to the writer’s statement in 6:19, 20--“We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure. It enters the inner sanctuary behind the curtain, where Jesus, who went before us, has entered on our behalf.” It is grounded in the life, death, resurrection, ascension, enthronement, and intercession of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is anchored at the right hand of God. It is so substantial and real that it is called “an anchor.”  
p. 33

Lenski says:

The predicate adjective has the emphasis: Keep holding fast the confession “unbent,” i.e., never letting it be bent so as to droop, to lose its contents. Hold the confession firmly like a banner that is flying high and never drooping to the ground. Ever confess all your Christian hope fearlessly, courageously; never grow silent, never deny.  
p. 351

Wuest says:

The word “wavering” is the translation of *aklines*. The word is made up of *klino* “to incline, bow,” thus “to lean towards,” and Alpha privative, which when prefixed to a word makes it mean the opposite to what it meant originally. The writer urges the recipients not to lean back towards the First Testament. Like the generation which left Egypt, who in their hearts were returning to that place of slavery, so these unsaved Jews under stress of persecution were leaning back in their hearts to the First Testament.

p. 181

A. T. Robertson says of this same word:

[It is a] Common compound adjective (alpha privative and *klino*, unwavering, not leaning, here only in N.T. It is a confession of hope, not of despair.

pp. 411-12

Hughes says:

Literally, the author here commands, “And let us hold on *unbendingly* to the hope we confess, for he who promised is faithful.” The anchor is not in the sea, but in Heaven, the celestial Holy of Holies. It is anchored in God’s presence. As the winds pick up, as the ship bobs like a cork, as we sail through all life’s troubles, we must hang on to the confession of our hope without wavering, for our hope is anchored in our access to and advocacy before God the Father. We must hang on with all we have. Such tenacity will endure any storm.

pp. 33-34

Lane says:

The community possesses the strongest incentive for fidelity in the faithfulness of God who does what he has promised (v 23*b*).

p. 289



Lange says:

The faithfulness of God is above all faithfulness. God is faithful to fulfill what He has promised, and to guard what He has given. Should not this furnish to our faith and hope a double basis for a joyful confession?

p. 176

**“LET US CONSTANTLY BE HOLDING FAST THE CONFESSION OF OUR HOPE WITHOUT WAVERING, FOR HE WHO PROMISED IS FAITHFUL”**

Ephesians 4:14

As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves, and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming;

The REASON for “HOLDING FAST . . . WITHOUT WAVERING” is given to us in the last phrase of verse 23:

**“FOR HE WHO PROMISED IS FAITHFUL”**

Lamentations 3:22, 23

Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.

1 Corinthians 1:9

God is faithful, through whom you were called into fellowship with His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

1 Thessalonians 5:24

Faithful is He who calls you, and He also will bring it to pass.

Dr. V. Raymond Edmond in his book Great is Thy Faithfulness touches on this:

Faithful to remember always, the faithful God which keepeth covenant (Deut. 7:9). The most High can be utterly depended upon to remember and to keep His promises. He remembered Adam and sought him when sin had made mankind to fear the Almighty. He is still seeking sinners like you and me and has not forgotten us. He remembered Noah (Genesis 8:1), brought him and his family through the dreadful flood. Had made promise that never again would there be such destruction by deluge. He remembered Abraham, whom he had called from his Chaldean homeland to inherit a land yet unseen (Psalm 105:42). He remembered the Israelites in their hard bondage in Egypt and brought them out thereof and into the land which he had promised to Abraham. He remembered His many promises of a redeemer, and in the fullness of time He sent the Lord Jesus to become our Savior (Galatians 4:4-6).

Men may forget us completely, as they did Joseph in prison (Genesis 40:23), but God remembered him; and in time, brought his servant to his appointed place (Psalm 105:17-22). In the light of such truth the Psalmist could declare exultingly, Who remembered us in our lowest state, for His mercy endureth forever (Psalm 136:23). He is faithful who keeps covenant with His own; who never fails nor forgets them; who remembers not our former iniquities.

Earthly friends may prove untrue,  
Doubts and fears assail;  
One still loves and cares for you:  
Jesus never fails.

Tho' the sky be dark and drear,  
Fierce and strong the gale,  
Just remember He is near  
And He will not fail.

In life's dark and bitter hour  
Love will still prevail;  
Trust His everlasting pow'r,  
Jesus will not fail.

Jesus never fails,  
Jesus never fails;  
Heav'n and earth may pass away  
But Jesus never fails.

("Jesus Never Fails" by A. A. Luther. Inspiring Hymns compiled by Alfred B. Smith. Grand Rapids, MI: Singspiration, Inc. Copyright - Alfred B. Smith, 1951. #496)

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(When God Whispers Your Name by Max Lucado)

Read the last name on the list. In spite of all the crooked halos and tasteless gambols of his people, the last name on the list is the first one promised--Jesus.

"Joseph was the husband of Mary, and Mary was the mother of Jesus. Jesus is called the Christ" (Matt. 1:16).

Period. No more names are listed. No more are needed. As if God is announcing to a doubting world, "See, I did it. Just like I said I would. The plan succeeded."

The famine couldn't starve it.

Four hundred years of Egyptian slavery couldn't oppress it.

Wilderness wanderings couldn't lose it.

Babylonian captivity couldn't stop it.

Clay-footed pilgrims couldn't spoil it.

The promise of the Messiah threads its way through forty-two generations of rough-cut stones, forming a necklace fit for the King who came. Just as promised.

And the promise remains.

p. 139

v.24 and let us be considering how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds,

We could translate this verse:

“and let us constantly be giving careful attention to one another for the purpose of stimulating one another to love and good works.”

These Jewish believers are really having a rough time of persecution, loss of relatives and friends. They have been driven from their cities and homes. A lot of them are thinking of throwing in the towel and going back to Judaism. This new position in Christ is not worth all the hassles. The writer sees them in need of some encouragement from others who are being faithful to stand firm in the faith.

The writer actually admonishes them with a 5-FOLD CHALLENGE here in verses 22-25.

We can solve our problems not by going back but moving ahead.

1. “LET US draw near to God with a sincere heart and full assurance of faith” (verse 22).
2. “LET US hold fast” [unswervingly] to the hope (verse 23).
3. “LET US be considering how we may [spur one another on] to love and good deeds” (verse 24).
4. “LET US” not give up meeting together (verse 25).
5. “LET US encourage one another” (verse 25).

The FIRST 2 focus on TRUTH and the LAST 3 focus on RELATIONSHIP.

Right now we are FOCUSING ON THE LAST THREE. “AND” that begins this verse joins us to the previous. We have:

1. FAITH
2. HOPE
3. LOVE

“AND LET US” helps us to see that the author again joins his readers.

“AND LET US BE CONSIDERING,” that is, constantly be giving careful attention.

This is to be going on all the time. It is the mother with the newborn child. It is going on all the time. She is on 24-hour duty. The slightest stirring creates a response. I am asking myself the question, How sensitive am I to the needs of others?

The Greek word *katanoeo* means “to put the mind down on a thing, to fix the mind.”

Jesus uses this word in Matthew 7:3 when He talks about seeing the speck in your brother’s eye when you should be fixing your mind on the log in your own eye.

Gromacki says of this word:

It is a thoughtful perception and serious concern.

We are not separate entities but a body of believers bound together.

“AND LET US BE CONSIDERING HOW TO STIMULATE [or prod]”

This is a word that can be illustrated by the spurs of the cowboy or the cattle prod that gives the shock to control and direct the cattle where they need to be going.

The word for “stimulating” is the word for:

“sharp,”

“to sharpen,”

“to stimulate, to encite.”



It is used in:

Acts 15:39

[They had] such a sharp disagreement that they separated from one another, and Barnabas took Mark with him and sailed away to Cyprus.

Proverbs 27:17

As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another.

Paul's spirit was stirred when he saw the idolatry of Athens. In other words, he was seeing a need and it sharpened the knife of his spirit.

Paul sharpened the knife of his vision on the idols of Athens.

We are "TO STIMULATE ONE ANOTHER TO LOVE AND GOOD DEEDS."

CAREFUL ATTENTION + STIMULATION = "LOVE AND GOOD DEEDS."

"LOVE" deals with the inner attitude of the heart, whereas "GOOD DEEDS," on the observable performance that results.

Hebrews 6:9, 10

But, beloved, we have been convinced of better things concerning you, things that are belonging to salvation, though we are speaking in this way. For God is not unjust so as to forget your work and the love which you demonstrated toward His name, in that you ministered and are still ministering to the saints.

Philemon 7

For I have come to have much joy and comfort in your love, because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed through you, brother.

Titus 3:14

And let our people also learn to engage in good deeds to meet pressing needs, that they may not be unfruitful.

Hewitt says:

They are, therefore, strongly urged to watch one another, that in so doing there may be a mutual provocation to love and Christian faithfulness.

p. 164

Barclay says:

It is easy to drift into a kind of selfish Christianity, but a selfish Christianity is a contradiction in terms.

p. 135

Lane says:

. . . “let us keep on caring for one another for the stimulation of love and good works,” centers on the responsibility of Christians to exhibit practical concern for one another. By considerateness and example, they are to spur one another on to the love and good works that had distinguished them as a community in the past.

p. 289

Hughes says:

A second powerful way to spur one another on to “love and good deeds” is by example. Oswald Chambers said, “It is a most disturbing thing to be smitten in the ribs by some provoker from God, by someone who is full of spiritual activity.”<sup>8</sup> I believe Jim Elliott was this way when he was writing things like the following and living them out: “Oh, the fullness, pleasure, sheer excitement of knowing God on earth. I care not if I never raise my voice again for Him, if only I may love Him, please Him.”<sup>9</sup>

8. Oswald Chambers, *My Utmost for His Highest* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, n. d.), p. 192.

9. Elisabeth Elliot, ed., *The Journals of Jim Elliot* (Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell, 1978), p. 309.  
p. 36

Phillips says:

One believer will encourage, help, and stimulate another believer to evidence the true fruit of a saved life. It is no part of the Christian life to willfully “go it alone.” Christians need the help to be derived from each other’s fellowship.  
p. 145

### THE BARNABAS COMMITTEE

There is power in a word of affirmation and encouragement. Most of us are like a tire with a slow leak that needs to be pumped up on a regular basis.

This church consultant has discovered one way to combat the cancer of criticism that threatens the life of many local churches--a “Barnabas Committee.” The committee’s task is simply to call a cease-fire on critical remarks and start encouraging folks. In particular, they affirm the leaders of the assembly, both verbally and with notes of appreciation. They also go out of their way to encourage people who serve behind the scenes. Such a positive attitude can become contagious and begin to heal past hurts.

Paying too many compliments may cause people to become proud, but Scripture clearly teaches that we are to honor one another, and that means sincere affirmation and genuine appreciation. To live up to its name the Barnabas committee will also encourage others to exercise their spiritual gifts, even if that means they have to play second fiddle the same way Barnabas did with Paul.

“The Barnabas Committee” by Mark Porter. Interest, Feb 1991. Pages 20-21.

(From InfoSearch 3.51)

### WHY DID THE LITTLE OLD LADY CROSS THE STREET?

Three Boy Scouts reported their good deed for the day, “We helped an old lady across the street.”

“Did it take all three of you to do that?”

“It sure did,” they replied in unison. “She didn’t want to go.”

(From InfoSearch 3.51)

## SAME RESULTS FOR HALF PRICE

Cowpoke: “How much are your spurs?”

Clerk: “Ten dollars a pair.”

Cowpoke: “Here’s five dollars, give me one.”

Clerk: “What can you do with one spur?”

Cowpoke: “Well, I reckon if I get one side of the horse going, the other side will keep up.”

(From InfoSearch 3.51)

One of the highest of human duties is the duty of encouragement. It is easy to pour cold water on their enthusiasm; it is easy to discourage others. The world is full of discouragers. We have a Christian duty to encourage on another. Many a time a word of praise or thanks or appreciation or cheer has kept a man on his feet.

--**Barclay’s Commentary, *Hebrews***

(From Parson's Bible Illustrator 1.0)

## YOU ARE A LOUSY FOOTBALL PLAYER

During a practice session for the Green Bay Packers, things were not going well for Vince Lombardi's team. Lombardi singled out one big guard for his failure to "put out." It was a hot, muggy day when the coach called his guard aside and leveled his awesome vocal guns on him, as only Lombardi could. "Son, you are a lousy football player. You're not blocking, you're not tackling, you're not putting out. As a matter of fact, it's all over for you today, go take a shower." The big guard dropped his head and walked into the dressing room. Forty-five minutes later, when Lombardi walked in, he saw the big guard sitting in front of his locker still wearing his uniform. His head was bowed and he was sobbing quietly.

Vince Lombardi, ever the changeable but always the compassionate warrior, did something of an about face that was also typical of him. He walked over to his football player and put his arms around his shoulders. "Son," he said, "I told you the truth. You are a lousy football player. You're not blocking, you're not tackling, you're not putting out. However, in all fairness to you, I should have finished the story. Inside of you, son, there is a great football player and I'm going to stick by your side until the great football player inside of you has a chance to come out and assert himself." With these words, Jerry Kramer straightened up and felt a great deal better. As a matter of fact, he felt so much better he went on to become one of the all-time greats in football and was recently voted the all-time guard in the first 50 years of professional football.

That was Lombardi. He saw things in men that they seldom saw in themselves. He had the ability to inspire his men to use the talents they had. As a result, these players gave Lombardi three consecutive world championships at Green Bay. Later, when he moved to Washington, many people wondered how he would handle Sonny Jurgenson, the talented but undisciplined quarterback. They didn't wonder very long. On the first day of practice one of the reporters baited him with a question about Jurgenson. Lombardi called Sonny to his side, put his arm around him and said, "Gentlemen, this is the greatest quarterback to ever step on a football field." Is it any wonder that Jurgenson had his best year ever? Lombardi saw the good in others, treated them like he saw them and helped develop the "good" that was inside of them.

--*See You At the Top*, by Zig Ziglar

(From Parson's Bible Illustrator 1.0)

(Acts of Love: The Power of Encouragement by David Jeremiah)

Winston Churchill, too, was raised with encouragement. He was not intimidated by errors. When he made one, he simply thought the problem through again. Someone asked him, "Sir Winston, what in your school experience best prepared you to lead Britain out of her darkest hour?"

Winston thought a minute and then said, "It was the two years I spent at the same level in high school."

"Did you fail?"

"No," replied Winston. "I had two opportunities to get it right. What Britain needed was not brilliance, but perseverance when things are going badly."  
p. 100

(The Leader In You by Dale Carnegie & Assoc., Inc.)

In the early nineteenth century, a young man in London aspired to be a writer. But everything seemed to be against him. He had never been able to attend school more than four years. His father had been thrown in jail because he couldn't pay his debts, and this young man often knew the pangs of hunger. Finally he got a job pasting labels on bottles in a rat-infested warehouse, and he slept at night in a dismal attic room with two other boys--guttersnipes from the slums of London. He had so little confidence in his ability to write that he sneaked out and mailed his first manuscript in the dead of night so nobody would laugh at him. Story after story was refused. Finally the great day came when one was accepted. True, he wasn't paid for it, but one editor had praised him. One editor had given him recognition. He was so thrilled that he wandered aimlessly around the streets with tears rolling down his cheeks.

The praise, the recognition that he received through getting one story in print changed his whole life. If it hadn't been for that encouragement, he might have spent his entire life working in rat-infested factories. You may have heard of that boy. His name is Charles Dickens.

--Dale Carnegie

p. 125



(The Top Ten Mistakes Leaders Make by Hans Finzel)

I once read a poem that led me to develop the practice of not putting off praise if I think it is due someone:

If you know that praise is due him  
Now's the time to give it to him,  
For he cannot read his tombstone when he's dead.

p. 60

(Chicken Soup for the Soul: 101 Stories to Open the Heart and Rekindle the Spirit by Jack Canfield & Mark Victor Hansen)

Encouragement

Some of the greatest success stories of history have followed a word of encouragement or an act of confidence by a loved one or a trusting friend. Had it not been for a confident wife, Sophia, we might not have listed among the great names of literature the name of Nathaniel Hawthorne. When Nathaniel, a heartbroken man, went home to tell his wife that he was a failure and had been fired from his job in a customhouse, she surprised him with an exclamation of joy.

“Now,” she said triumphantly, “you can write your book!”

“Yes,” replied the man, with sagging confidence, “and what shall we live on while I am writing it?”

To his amazement, she opened a drawer and pulled out a substantial amount of money.

“Where on earth did you get that?” he exclaimed.

“I have always known you were a man of genius,” she told him. “I knew that someday you would write a masterpiece. So every week, out of the money you gave me for housekeeping, I saved a little bit. So here is enough to last us for one whole year.”

From her trust and confidence came one of the greatest novels of American literature, *The Scarlet Letter*.

*Nido Qubein*

p. 213

(Locking Arms: God’s Design for Masculine Friendships by Stu Weber)

Someone once said it so well: “Be kind. Everyone you meet today is fighting a hard battle.”

p. 69

(The Finishing Touch: Becoming God's Masterpiece: A Daily Devotional by Charles R. Swindoll)

It's called "At the Winter Feeder," a perceptive piece by John Leax, professor of English and poet-in-residence at Houghton College:

His feather flame doused dull  
by icy cold,  
the cardinal hunched  
into the rough, green feeder  
but ate no seed.

Through binoculars I saw  
festered and useless  
his beak, broken  
at the root.

Then two: one blazing, one gray,  
rode the swirling weather  
into my vision  
and lighted at his side.

Unhurried, as if possessing  
the patience of God,  
they cracked sunflowers  
and fed him  
beak to wounded beak  
choice meats.

Each morning and afternoon  
the winter long,  
that odd triumvirate,  
that trinity of need,  
returned and ate  
their sacrament  
of broken seed.

p. 357

v.25 not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging [one another]; and so much the more as you are seeing the day drawing near.

He has given us 3 POSITIVES in verses 22-24:

1. “Let us keep on drawing near,”
2. “Let us constantly be holding fast,” and
3. “Let us be considering.”

He now says in verse 25:

“NOT FORSAKING OUR OWN ASSEMBLING TOGETHER, AS IS THE HABIT OF SOME, BUT [in contrast, POSITIVELY] ENCOURAGING [ONE ANOTHER]; AND SO MUCH THE MORE AS YOU ARE SEEING THE DAY DRAWING NEAR.”

Delitzsch says:

The approaching day is the day of Christ, who comes not now for atonement, but for final judgment. Hence the necessity of perseverance in fellowship with His church in giving and receiving, and in mutual exhortation to love and good works, is deduced from the hopeless and terrible future which awaits apostasy.

p. 183

Bruce says:

But here love *is* provoked in the sense of being stimulated in the lives of Christians by the considerateness and example of other members of their fellowship.

This will never happen, however, if they keep one another at a distance. Therefore, every opportunity of coming together and enjoying their fellowship in faith and hope must be welcomed and used for mutual encouragement.

p. 257

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Wiersbe says:

Fellowship with God must never become selfish. We must also fellowship with other Christians in the local assembly. Apparently, some of the wavering believers had been absenting themselves from the church fellowship. It is interesting to note that the emphasis here is not on what a believer gets from the assembly, but rather on what he can *contribute to* the assembly. Faithfulness in church attendance encourages others and provokes them to love and good works. One of the strong motives for faithfulness is the soon coming of Jesus Christ.

p. 115

Lenski says:

. . . all these persecutions are signs of the end. Instead of letting such things move you to turn away from Christ they should move you to do the very opposite, for the great Day is near.

p. 355

A. T. Robertson, speaking on the words “NOT FORSAKING,” gives this alternate translation:

“Not leaving behind, not leaving in the lurch” (II Tim. 4:10).

p. 412

It is the word used in:

2 Timothy 4:10

for Demas, having loved this present world, has deserted me and gone to Thessalonica;

Barclay says:

It is easy to laugh at men’s ideals; it is easy to pour cold water on their enthusiasm; it is easy to discourage others. The world is full of discouragers. We have a Christian duty to encourage one another. Many a time a word of

praise or thanks or appreciation or cheer has kept a man on his feet. Blessed is the man who speaks such a word.  
pp. 137-8

Lane says:

The urgency for encouragement and reproof is that the community experiences an unresolved tension between peril and promise so long as it lives in the world. The neglect of the meetings of the assembly by some of the members sufficiently attests the reality of spiritual peril.

p. 290

The CHALLENGE of verse 25 is to stay focused on 3 THINGS:

1. their COMPANIONSHIP,
2. their CONVERSATION, and
3. His COMING again.

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

They must treat their future expectations as certainties . . . If they would only lift up their eyes, they could “see the Day approaching.”

p. 805

Stedman points out:

Too often church services are the kind pictured in the story of the father who was showing his son through a church building. They came to a plaque on the wall and the little boy asked, “Daddy, what’s that for?” His father said, Oh, that’s a memorial to those who died in the service.” The little boy said, “Which service, Daddy, the morning service or the evening service?”

p. 171



W. H. Griffith Thomas in his commentary Let Us Go On has the following little poem:

Is thy cruse of comfort failing?  
 Rise and share it with a friend,  
 And thro' all the years of famine  
 It shall serve thee to the end.

Love Divine will fill thy store-house,  
 Or thy handful still renew;  
 Scanty fare for one will often  
 Make a royal feast for two.

Lost and weary on the mountains,  
 Wouldst thou sleep amidst the snow?  
 Chafe that frozen form beside thee,  
 And together both shall glow.

Art thou wounded in life's battle?  
 Many stricken round thee moan;  
 Give to them thy precious ointment,  
 And that balm shall heal thine own.

pp. 44-45

William Barclay says:

He may try to be a secret disciple; but it has been well said that to be a secret disciple is impossible because either "the discipleship kills the secrecy, or the secrecy kills the discipleship."

p. 136

Someone said:

The church today is like Noah's ark, if it were not for the storm on the outside you could not stand the stench on the inside.

Ray Stedman, in speaking on the church, says:

You ever feel like a frog? Frogs feel slow, low, ugly, puffy, drooped, pooped. I know, one told me. The frog-feeling comes when you want to be bright but feel dumb, when you want to share but are selfish, when you want to be thankful but feel resentment, when you want to be great but are small, when you want to care but are indifferent. Yes, at one time or another, each of us has found himself on the lily pad, floating down the great river of life, frightened and disgusted, we're too froggish to budge. Once upon a time there was a frog--only he really wasn't a frog, he was a prince, who looked and felt like a frog. A wicked witch had cast a spell on him. Only the kiss of a beautiful maiden could save him. But since when do cute chicks kiss frogs? So there he sat, unkissed, prince in frog form. But miracles happen. One day a beautiful maiden gathered him up and gave him a great big smack. Crash! Boom! Zap! There he was a handsome prince--and you know the rest. They lived happily ever after. So what is the task of the church? Kissing frogs, of course.

(Prayer, Praise & Promises: A Daily Walk Through the Psalms by Warren W. Wiersbe)

Someone has said that our church services start at eleven o'clock sharp and end at twelve o'clock dull.

Day 213

Suffering comes to all of us, and no one can suffer for us. Even so, we can be supported in those difficult times by the prayers and understanding of loved ones and friends. It's when we are too proud to admit our need to others that we are in the greatest danger.

The Sequoia trees of California tower as much as 300 feet above the ground. Strangely, these giants have unusually shallow root systems that reach out in all directions to capture the greatest amount of surface moisture. Seldom will you see a redwood standing alone because high winds would quickly uproot it. That's why they grow in clusters. Their intertwining roots provide support for one another against the storms.

Support is what Jesus wanted from Peter, James, and John in Gethsemane as he faced Calvary. On the cross as the world's sin-bearer He would experience His Father's wrath and abandonment. That was the awful cup He prayed would be taken from Him. In that dark hour, He looked to His disciples for prayerful alertness and compassion. But oh, how they disappointed Him! Somehow the sight of His sleeping disciples must have made the isolation of Gethsemane that much more painful.

If Jesus looked to human support in His crisis hour, how much more do Christians need one another when they suffer! Let's be willing to ask someone to pray for us and with us. And let's be alert for opportunities to lend our support to others who are suffering.

(From Parson's Bible Illustrator 1.0)

### EMPTY PEWS, FULL HEARTS?

If absence makes the heart grown fonder, think how much some people must love their church.

(From InfoSearch 3.51)

(Locking Arms: God’s Design for Masculine Friendships by Stu Weber)

Perhaps you’ve heard the story told by comedian Emo Phillips. He states:

In conversation with a person I had recently met, I asked, “Are you Protestant or Catholic?” My new acquaintance replied, “Protestant.” I said, “Me too!” “What franchise?” He answered, “Baptist.” I said, “Me too!” “Northern Baptist or Southern Baptist?” “Northern Baptist,” he replied. “Me too!” I shouted. We continued to go back and forth. Finally I asked, “Northern Conservative Fundamentalist Baptist, Great Lakes Region, Council of 1879 or Northern Conservative Fundamentalist Baptist, Great Lakes Region, Council of 1912?” He replied, “Northern Conservative Fundamentalist Baptist, Great Lakes Region, Council of 1912.” I said, “Die heretic!”<sup>3</sup>

3. Quoted in *Leadership*, Fall 1992, 47.  
pp. 117-18

(Acts of Love: The Power of Encouragement by David Jeremiah)

Ken Medema, the blind singer and writer, has a song which was used more prominently in years past than it is today. But the message still speaks to the contemporary need of the local body of Christ. The title of the song is "If This Is Not a Place."

If this is not a place where tears are understood,  
Then where shall I go to cry?  
And if this is not a place where my spirit can take  
wings,  
Then where shall I go to fly?

I don't need another place for tryin' to impress you  
With just how good and virtuous I am, no, no, no,  
I don't need another place for always being on top of  
things.  
Everybody knows it's a sham, it's a sham.

I don't need another place for always wearing smiles  
Even when it's not the way I feel.  
I don't need another place to mouth the same-old  
platitudes.  
Everybody knows that's not real.

So if this is not a place where my questions can be  
asked  
Then where shall I go to seek?  
and if this is not a place where my heart's cry can  
be heard,  
Then where shall I go to speak?

And if this is not a place where tears are understood,  
Where shall I go, oh, where shall I go to cry?

pp. 187-8

Here's how Reuben Welch captured the importance of this truth:

You know something--  
we're all just people who need each other.  
We're all learning  
and we've got a long journey ahead of us.  
We've got to go together  
and if it takes us until Jesus comes  
we better stay together  
we better help each other.

And I dare say  
that by the time we get there  
all the sandwiches will be gone  
and all the chocolate will be gone  
and all the water will be gone  
and all the backpacks will be empty.  
But no matter how long it takes us  
we've got to go together.  
Because that's how it is  
in the body of Christ.

It's all of us  
in love  
in care  
in support  
in mutuality  
we really do need each other.

pp. 193-4

(The Living Body: The Church Christ Is Building by Dr. Richard Halverson)

The apostle Paul uses three analogies for the church. In understanding them, we may have a clearer understanding of the word fellowship as the New Testament uses it. The church is like a building. The church is like a body. The church is like a bride.

These three analogies have one thing in common. In each case, relationships are fundamental.

In a building, the rooms, doors, windows, floors, ceilings, pipes, electrical circuits, and all the other parts must relate to one another, or the building will be unusable. In addition, all the parts must relate to the building as a whole, both in appearance and in function, or the building will be a curiosity or an eyesore.

In the body, the members must be rightly related to one another, or the body will be dysfunctional, crippled, or ill. The members must also be rightly related to the head, or they will be unable to carry out their tasks.

In marriage, everything depends upon the relationship of the bride to the groom, and of the groom to the bride. No matter what else a husband and wife have, if they are not rightly related to each other, their marriage is a failure. pp. 68-69

(Final Call by Steven J. Lawson)

### A DEAD CHURCH?

Sounds like an oxymoron. You know what an oxymoron is, don't you? It's two words that are seemingly contradictory, but are joined together. It's two opposites that are attached that seem incongruous.

Like black light. Jumbo shrimp. Dead live oak. Ill health. Army intelligence. Rap music. Good casserole. Freezer burn. Postal service. Old news. Pretty ugly. These are tandems which shouldn't fit together, but they do.

But, a dead church?

That has to be the ultimate oxymoron. The greatest of all contradictions. How can you have a dead church? Especially if the living Lord indwells it? How can a congregation be dead if the life of God pulsates through that body?

Tragically, many churches are dead! Like the rotting carcass of Lazarus, these church bodies have the foul stench of death upon them. They have the appearance of life, but they are, in actuality, dead.

Their sanctuary is a morgue with a steeple. They are congregations of corpses. They have undertakers for ushers. Embalmers for elders. And morticians for ministers. Their pastor graduated from the Cemetery.

The choir director is the local coroner. They sing "Embalmed in Gilead." You might say their worship is a bit stiff.

At the Rapture, they will be the first churches taken because the Bible says, "The dead in Christ shall rise first." They drive to church in one long line with their headlights on.

Whenever someone joins their membership, the church office immediately notifies the next of kin. The church van is a black hearse. Their church sign is a tombstone.

The Divine Coroner pronounces such churches dead.

pp. 151-2



(Can We Save the Evangelical Church? by Bill Hull)

The present condition of the evangelical church is appalling in light of our purpose. Bonhoeffer said, "The Church is the Church only when it exists for others." If the purpose of the church is to glorify God by making disciples of all nations, then we are failing. The average evangelical church in North America exists for itself. Churches are preoccupied with themselves, their routines, locations, facilities, and filling up their buildings for performances. Although you can find pockets of effectiveness, most of evangelicalism is too self-centered to change its structures and move out of its comfort zone.

In today's church, one hundred adults and one year are required to introduce 1.7 people to Christ. The alarming fact is that 50 percent of evangelical churches do less than that. Most churches could do a better job of reaching those in need of Christ if they would close down the church and hire one person to go door-to-door. In ten hours a week, such a person could reap a greater harvest than do many of our churches. About 80 percent of American churches have either plateaued or are in decline. Many stall out because, as insulated islands of Christians, they do not even try to relate to the unchurched in their communities. This might sound too harsh, but the facts substantiate the judgment.

pp. 7-8

We can compare this situation to a football game. The church's mission is to advance the ball, or the Gospel. The contemporary church does not field its best team. The first string, with talent and dedication, is busy taking tickets, selling programs, walking the aisles, selling refreshments, and counting gate receipts. We have tied their hands with red tape and kept them off the playing field. In churches today, administration and support ministries preempt front-line ministry to people.

p. 102

(Real Men Have Feelings Too by Gary J. Oliver, Ph.D.)

Loneliness

There it is again!  
 A twinge of pain?  
 Forget it. It will go away.  
 In the business of my day.  
 I've places to go and things to do . . .  
 A round of meetings with entrepreneurs.  
 Planes to catch and taxis to hail,  
 I have life by the tail.  
 But what is this painful wail?  
 From the depths of me I ache.  
 It greets me when I wake.  
 Even in a crowded room of people  
 I can hear a haunting toll from the church bell steeple.  
 There's nothing wrong with me.  
 I'm a success, as anyone can see.  
 I--I hurt. I feel an emptiness.  
 This feeling, is it loneliness?  
 Loneliness?  
 I'm married with children, three.  
 Yet at times I feel so alone.  
 Maybe it's time to come down from my throne.  
 It's not good for a man to be alone.

p. 147

(The Victorious Christian Life by Dr. Tony Evans)

This is the definition of a church: *a community of believers who'll convince you you can make it, then stand beside you while you try.*

p. 161

Gary Inrig in his book Quality Friendship: The Risks and Rewards gives us an illustration of what should happen through relationship in the body of Christ:

Out of the furnaces of war come many true stories of sacrificial friendship. One such story tells of two friends in World War I, who were inseparable. They had enlisted together, trained together, were shipped overseas together, and fought side-by-side in the trenches. During an attack, one of the men was critically wounded in a field filled with barbed wire obstacles, and he was unable to crawl back to his foxhole. The entire area was under a withering enemy crossfire, and it was suicidal to try to reach him. Yet his friend decided to try. Before he could get out of his own trench, his sergeant yanked him back inside and ordered him not to go. "It's too late. You can't do him any good, and you'll only get yourself killed."

A few minutes later, the officer turned his back, and instantly the man was gone after his friend. A few minutes later, he staggered back mortally wounded, with his friend, now dead, in his arms. The sergeant was both angry and deeply moved. "What a waste," he blurted out. "He's dead and you're dying. It just wasn't worth it."

With almost his last breath, the dying man replied, "Oh, yes, it was, Sarge. When I got to him, the only thing he said was, 'I knew you'd come, Jim!'"  
p. 73

v.26 For if we go on sinning intentionally after having received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer is remaining a sacrifice for sins,

Here the author continues to identify with the readers when he gives the REASON why we should “NOT [be] FORSAKING OUR OWN ASSEMBLING TOGETHER”:

“FOR IF WE GO ON SINNING INTENTIONALLY.”

Numbers 15:29-31

One and the same law applies to everyone who sins unintentionally, whether he is a native-born Israelite or an alien. "But anyone who sins defiantly, whether native-born or alien, blasphemes the Lord, and that person must be cut off from his people. Because he has despised the Lord's word and broken his commands, that person must surely be cut off; his guilt remains on him."

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

If the efficacious sacrifice of Christ should be renounced, there remained no other available sacrifice which could shield an apostate from God's **judgment** by **raging fire**. A Christian who abandons "the confidence [he] had at first" (3:14) puts himself on the side of God's enemies and, as the writer has already said, is in effect "crucifying the Son of God all over again and subjecting Him to public disgrace" (6:6). Such reprehensible conduct can scarcely be worthy of anything but God's flaming indignation and retribution.

p. 805

Paul lists the works of the flesh in Galatians 5:19-21. And he concludes the list by saying:

. . . which I forewarn you just as I have forewarned you that those who practice such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

(Life Is a Contact Sport: Ten Great Career Strategies That Work by Ken Kragen & Jefferson Graham)

Losing my virginity was a  
career move.  
--MADONNA

p. 52

“FOR IF WE GO ON SINNING INTENTIONALLY AFTER HAVING  
RECEIVED THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE TRUTH”

This reminds us of:

John 14:6

Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh  
unto the Father, but by me.

John 8:32

and you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

“THERE NO LONGER IS REMAINING A SACRIFICE FOR SINS”

In MY SEMINARY LECTURE NOTES it says:

“For if we sin willfully,” rejection of fellowship was a willful thing. He is dealing with one sin of rejection of assembly together. If they go back, sacrifices will not do it. It will not do now what it never did before, going back to the Old Testament concept.

Wiersbe says:

This is the fourth of the five exhortations found in Hebrews. It is written to believers and follows in sequence with the other exhortations. The believer who begins to *drift* from the Word (2:1-4) will soon start to *doubt* the Word (3:7-4:13). Soon, he will become *dull* toward the Word (5:11-6:20) and become “lazy” in his spiritual life. This will result in *despising* the Word, which is the theme of this exhortation.

The evidence of this “despising” is willful sin. The tense of the verb indicates that Hebrews 10:26 should read, “For if we willfully *go on sinning* . . .” This exhortation is not dealing with one particular act of sin, but with an attitude that leads to repeated disobedience. Under the Old Covenant, there were no sacrifices for deliberate and willful sins (Ex. 21:12-14; Num. 15:27-31).  
p. 116

Phillips says:

In the light of all that has been said, the writer now turns his attention once more to those who have made all the initial responses to the Gospel but who are still about to turn away. In spite of everything, they are still looking back to a dead religion. The warning now placed before them is the strongest in the epistle. It has to do with despising the Spirit of God, and the consequences are clearly judicial.

p. 147

The willful sin envisioned by the writer of Hebrews is that of apostasy. The truth has been received, but not Christ. The warning is against turning against Christ in favor of an obsolete religion, a Christ-rejecting religion as, indeed, it had become.

This sin is not only a deliberate sin; it is a damning sin.  
p. 147

Kistemaker says:

The word *deliberately* stands first in the original Greek, and as the opening word of the sentence it receives all the emphasis. The term occurs only twice in the New Testament, here and in 1 Peter 5:2. It refers to something done intentionally.

In the Old Testament the distinction is made between sins committed unintentionally and sins committed intentionally. The first can be forgiven; the second cannot. Moses writes, "But anyone who sins defiantly, whether native-born or alien, blasphemes the Lord, and that person must be cut off from his people" . . .

p. 293

Griffith Thomas says:

Now comes the fourth of the interposed messages of warning. The thought seems to be closely connected with the preceding verse, suggesting that if we forsake our fellow-Christians, it may easily lead to our forsaking Christ. It will be seen that the substance of this message is still more solemn than those which have preceded it. The dangers of apostasy are forcibly indicated, and the underlying appeal is that they should not despise the message of the Gospel.

p. 135

Draper says:

The [Greek] word "knowledge" is very significant to this passage. The Greeks normally spoke of knowledge as *gnosis*. That term referred to knowledge in a general, experiential sense. That word, with a difference, is used in this text. It is actually a combination of two words. The root word is *gnosis*, but there is also a preposition, *epi*, added to it as a prefix. The result is the term *epignosis*. It is a knowledge "upon" knowledge.

There can be a false *gnosis*, a false knowledge based upon a false experience, but there cannot be a false *epignosis*. It cannot be false, because it is a precise knowledge, a full knowledge, a knowledge upon knowledge. It is knowledge that is vindicated. On several occasions in the New Testament, the word is translated "acknowledge." It means a person acknowledges Christ as Savior and commits himself to the Lord. There is a finality about it.

pp. 276

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Draper says further:

The greatest detriment to winning the world to Jesus Christ is professing Christians. We who claim the name of Christ often profane that sacred name. We stand in the way of the gospel. Many times men say, "If he is a Christian, I do not want anything to do with it." God is saying to his people, "I am watching you. I have a plan for your life. I have a purpose for your life. I want to use you. I am going to require great things of you." This message is for us. It is a solemn warning to us.

p. 278

MacArthur says:

This chapter could be titled, "The Tragedy of Getting over It," because it deals with those who had heard the gospel, had come face-to-face with the claims of Christ, had been associated to some extent with His church, but had gone away. These were people whose hearts had been warmed toward the gospel of Christ, who had made a superficial commitment of faith in Him, and had identified themselves visibly with the true church. But their enthusiasm was cooling and the cost of being a Christian was becoming too high. They were "getting over" the gospel, and were in danger of becoming apostate.

p. 270

Judas Iscariot is, of course, the classic apostate. No other rejecter of Christ ever had the exposure to God's truth, love, and grace as did Judas. He knew the Lord intimately. He was one of the twelve of Jesus' inner circle of disciples. Had he believed, he would have become an apostle. But he rejected the truth and became an apostate. His story is the supreme contradiction to the common excuse, "I would probably believe in Christ if I just had a little more evidence, a little more light." Judas had the perfect evidence, the perfect light, the perfect example. For some three years he lived with Truth incarnate and Life incarnate, yet turned his back on the One who is truth and life.

p. 271

Stedman says:

What a somber passage! What is this willful, deliberate sin that has such terrible results? The tense of the word indicates immediately that this is not a single act of folly or weakness. This is not something one can stumble into suddenly. It is not the normal falterings of a Christian who is still learning how to walk in the Spirit. None of these is in view at all. The continuous present tense of this wording, “sin deliberately,” marks a long-continued attitude of resistance. It is, of course, the sin the writer has warned against all along in Hebrews. It is the sin of knowing the principle of the denial of self in following Christ, and a consistent refusal to do so. I ran across a startling phrase that beautifully expresses this. It is “the leukemia of noncommitment.” It is refusing to cease from our own works and enter into God’s rest, refusing the cross in our life. It is choosing to live for self behind a Christian veneer, refusing the claims of the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

This is not possible when this new arrangement for living is not yet clearly understood. I want that to be clear. This willful sin is never the sin of ignorance. It is a presumptuous choice of self-living when we know perfectly well, from the Word of God, what the results of that choice will be.  
p. 173

DeHaan says:

We are dealing with Christians who deliberately continue in a life of willful, presumptuous disobedience to God. It says definitely “if we,” by which the writer of Hebrews includes himself. It is a sin against better light, for it is willful sin *after we have received the knowledge of the truth*. It is not dealing with sins of ignorance, or sins of omission or defilement. He is not referring to the case of a believer being “overtaken in a fault” (Gal. 6:1), or yielding to fear or the flesh in a moment of weakness, like Peter (Matt. 26:70). It is instead, deliberate, willful, presumptuous sin against better light, like the sin of Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5), and the sin of Nadab and Abihu (Lev. 10). It is the “sin unto death.”  
p. 140

Richards says:

When we come to the third great warning passage here in Hebrews 10, we find the same themes repeated. God is again warning a people eager to hurry up the process and find instant maturity. God is saying, “When the growing gets rough, My way for you is not to turn back but to tough it through.”  
p. 107

He says further:

To understand these verses, we must remember where they come in this book. They come *after* the writer has explained the full meaning of Jesus’ death. They follow his clear presentation of the full access to God, the power for righteousness, and the dynamic holiness that Jesus brings us. In particular these verses follow immediately on his presentation of the fact that Jesus’ sacrifice “has made perfect forever those who are being made holy.”  
p. 108

Wiersbe titles this section:

***Fearfulness*** (26-39). The privilege of entering His presence brings with it the responsibility of obeying His precepts. This exhortation applies to those who repeatedly defy God’s will and disgrace God’s name. God deals with His children; He will not have them acting like rebels. The chapter closes on a note of encouragement. God warns us so that we will not be presumptuous, but He comforts us so that we will not be discouraged. The hard heart needs the warning; the broken heart needs the comfort.  
p. 820

v.27 but a certain terrifying expectation of judgment, and the fury of a fire which is about to be consuming the adversaries.

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

[This] is not . . . hell.  
p. 805

McGee says:

If the death of Christ over nineteen hundred years ago was not adequate, then *nothing* is adequate. God is not going to do something else to redeem us. Christ is not going to die again--and, of course, it is not necessary for Him to do so. It becomes willful disobedience on the part of those who “have received the knowledge of the truth” to continue with the temple ritual and offering of sacrifices.  
p. 577

Draper says:

Now some ask if a person who sins like this loses his salvation. Absolutely not. This passage does not speak of the loss of salvation. That is not what God says. He says that if a Christian in full possession of the truth of God deliberately, maliciously, and with premeditation sins against God, then the only thing left is the judgment seat of Christ. That’s what “fiery indignation” means.

The Apostle Paul wrote about that judgment seat of Christ saying, “Every man’s work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man’s work of what sort it is. If any man’s work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man’s work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire” (1 Corinthians 3:13-15). He is concerned with a Christian who becomes so reprobate, so disobedient, so rebellious that God has to step in and say, “I cannot tolerate it anymore. I cannot stand it. There is nothing left for you but the judgment seat of Christ.”  
pp. 279-80

Lenski says:

[This word] “expectation” is found only here in the New Testament and is used in a sense that is not found elsewhere, not even in the papyri. It has the meaning “expectation,” which corresponds to the verb used in 10:11 and is one of the interesting New Testament words on which more light is sought. The writer does not say “some frightful judgment” remains for such sinners but more impressively “some frightful expectation (looking for, A. V.) of judgment,” i.e., all that is left is so frightful a wait although the sinners themselves do not realize it.

p. 358

Hewitt says:

It is better, therefore, to suppose that the only persons the author can conceive of apostasizing are those who have received Christianity as a formulated system of beliefs, but without any personal experience of God in Christ.

pp. 165-6

v.28 Anyone who set aside the Law of Moses is dying without mercy on [the testimony of] two or three witnesses.

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

Under the Old Covenant, if an Israelite spurned the Mosaic Law and at least **two or three witnesses** verified his actions, he was put to death. This being true, the author then argued from the lesser to the greater. If defiance of an inferior covenant could bring such retribution, what about defiance of the New Covenant which, as he had made clear, is far superior? The answer can only be that the punishment would be substantially greater in such a case.

In order to show . . . this . . . [he puts] defection . . . in the harshest possible light.

p. 805

DeHaan says:

This statement furnishes the key to our passage. We are referred to the law of Moses which clearly and unmistakably made known God's will concerning certain sins: idolatry, profanity, Sabbath-breaking, disrespect of parents, murder, stealing, lying and adultery. These things were strictly forbidden and no Israelite had any excuse if he committed them. For deliberate, presumptuous transgression of these clearly forbidden sins there was no sacrifice provided, but death was the penalty.

p. 141

Hewitt says:

Using the exegetical argument from the lesser to the greater, he asks the readers to decide the punishment of the greater sinner. The sentence decreed against the person who *despised*, or set at nought, *Moses' law* was inexorable--*without mercy*. The reference taken from Deuteronomy xvii. 2-7 refers to those who were guilty of the sin of idolatry. They denied the validity and the authority of certain divine ordinances when they transferred their worship from Jehovah to foreign deities. On the ground of the evidence of two or three people they were condemned and no mercy was shown to them.

p. 166

v.29 How much greater a punishment are you thinking one will deserve who trampled under foot the Son of God, and regarded as common (unclean) the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and insulted the Spirit of grace?

Here is the QUESTION and it has to do with a person who has done 3 THINGS. He has:

1. "TRAMPLED UNDER FOOT THE SON OF GOD,"
2. "REGARDED AS COMMON (UNCLEAN) THE BLOOD OF THE COVENANT BY WHICH HE WAS SANCTIFIED," and
3. "INSULTED THE SPIRIT OF GRACE."

We have a clue this is again a REFERENCE TO TRUE CHRISTIANS because of the fact that they were:

"SANCTIFIED [by] THE BLOOD OF THE COVENANT."

Barclay says:

All through this, one thing comes out. Sin is not disobedience to an impersonal law; it is the disturbance and the wrecking of a personal relationship. To sin is not to sin against the law; it is to defy and wound and violate the heart of the God whose name is Father.

p. 141

Lane says:

Contempt for a privileged relationship with God through Christ in the new covenant will involve retribution more terrible than the death penalty attached to violation of the law.

p. 293

Phillips says:

To set aside the Law of Moses called for death; to set aside the Son of God calls for damnation. To tread under foot the Son of God! This is a total, willful rejection of the Lord Jesus Christ. This is not merely thoughtless unbelief; this is willful unbelief, the deliberate rejection of Christ by one “almost persuaded.”

The seriousness of the offense goes deeper still. It involves not only rejecting the Son of God but refusing the salvation of God. Such a person has “counted the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified an unholy thing” (10:29*b*). The person envisioned here is one who professed faith in Christ and came, as it were, under the shadow of the cross and was outwardly identified with the Christian community. He was associated in the public eye with those set apart by Christ. He was identified with “the blood of the covenant.” He professed to be sanctified. But it was not real. He has turned his back on all that now. One step more and he would have truly been covered by the blood and saved forevermore, but now he has willfully refused God’s salvation.

pp. 149-50

J. Vernon McGee says:

Knowledge creates responsibility. If, after you have heard the gospel, you turn your back on Jesus Christ—my friend, someone ought to tell you that you are going to *hell*! This is not what *I* say; it is what *God* says.

p. 577

Lange quotes Starke who says:

Were there to be another sacrifice, there must also be another Messiah; and God must lay through Him an entirely new foundation for salvation; must institute an entirely different economy for attaining it; and must consequently, at the same time, Himself take away the way which has been disclosed, and the foundation which has been laid, through Christ. Inasmuch, therefore, as this is absolutely impossible, it is also equally impossible that any one should be saved out of Christ; . . .

p. 178



v.30 For we are knowing Him who said, "Vengeance belongs to me, I will repay."  
And again, "The Lord will judge His people."

Montefiore in Black's commentary says:

The citation is from Deut. xxxii. 35. Exactly the same quotation and text is employed by Paul in Ro. xii. 19; but Paul uses it to prove that Christians must not take vengeance into their own hands, while our author proves by it that divine retribution is inevitable.

p. 179

Bruce says:

He drives his warning home with two quotations from the Song of Moses in Deut. 32.

p. 264

Hewitt says:

Two quotations from Deuteronomy xxxii. 35, 36 are now introduced to illustrate the awful gravity of the judgment which will fall upon the willful sinner. The first of these quotations is slightly different from the Hebrew, but more so from the LXX, which is unusual in this Epistle. Paul, when quoting this passage in Romans xii. 19, uses the same words as the author of Hebrews.

p. 167

Lenski says:

This sinner will get full justice, *all* that is due him from God.

p. 361

Draper says:

If we have been saved, we have the awesome task to live as God wants us to live. It is our sacred charge. God will not tolerate bold, malicious rebellion in his people. He will judge us for the deeds we do.  
p. 281

v.31 It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

A. T. Robertson says:

We are not dealing with a dead or an absentee God, but one who is alive and alert (3:12).

p. 414

### Hebrews 3:12

Keep on taking care, brethren, lest there should be in any one of you an evil, unbelieving heart, in falling away from the living God.

You have heard the little song often sung by the young people:

Give me oil in my lamp,  
Keep me burning, burning, burning.

I was at a retreat not long ago where they were singing:

Give me cheese on my burrito,  
God is neato, neato, neato.

I am afraid for some folks it is going to be a real shock when they realize who they are going to be facing and the accountability that they have before our Heavenly Father.

v.32 But constantly be remembering the former days, in which, after being enlightened, you endured a hard (great) struggle with sufferings,

What is the SOLUTION? It is revealed in verses 32-39.

The Bible Knowledge Commentary titles this section:

THE RENEWED ENCOURAGEMENT  
p. 806

The Bible Knowledge Commentary also says:

An effective way to fortify people against future trials is to remind them of the courage they displayed in past ones. [How they stood] their **ground** . . .  
p. 806

Lenski says:

Only a short time after their conversion the readers “endured a great contest of sufferings,” [the] athlete’s struggle. Still young in their faith, their spiritual muscles not hardened by long training, the readers successfully endured (aorist) this severe test of suffering.  
p. 365

Lane says:

The return to a tone of pastoral encouragement sets off the third paragraph (vv 32-35), where the writer recalls the past fidelity of the community, which had been tested in the crucible of suffering early in its experience. The remembrance of past performance provides a powerful incentive for renewed commitment and fidelity in the present and for the future.  
p. 282

Lane says further:

The adversative “instead” in v 32 indicates the writer’s strategy. He urges his friends to pursue a course of action opposite to that just described.  
p. 298

He says further:

... “you endured a hard contest with sufferings.” From the beginning, sufferings had been a constituent part of their Christian experience. The rare word “contest” was originally used of the intense efforts of athletes in the sports arena ... Here it is used metaphorically for persecution ...  
p. 298

Westcott says:

The retrospect of their own history was sufficient to inspire the Hebrews with patience. They had borne sufferings themselves and shared the sufferings of others. They had experienced in all this the assurance of a better possession than any that they could lose by persecution.  
p. 333

Masculine Journey by Robert Hicks)

To be a man is to bear wounds and wear scars.  
PATRICK ARNOLD  
Wildmen, Warriors, and Kings

I'm wounded but am not slain,  
I will lay me down for to bleed a while.  
JOHN DRYDEN  
"Johnnie Armstrong's Last Goodnight!"

p. 97

(When Heaven Is Silent by Ronald Dunn)

When I lay these questions before God I get no answer. But rather a special sort of "No answer." It is not the locked door. It is more like a

silent, certainly not uncompassionate, gaze. As though He shook His head not in refusal but waiving the question. Like, "Peace, child; you don't understand."

C. S. Lewis

p. 51

(Over the Top by Zig Ziglar)

The following story is true. If you find it hard to believe, you can look it up in the 1982 Encyclopedia Britannica Yearbook under "Unusual Events of the Year."

The story is about one day in the life of Bryan Heiss, who lives in Provo, Utah. It seems his day began with a leak in the ceiling of his apartment. The water was splashing in his face, so he jumped out of bed and called his landlord to see what could be done about the problem. When he stood, he splashed in the water that was gathering on the carpet, so his landlord told him to go rent a water vacuum in a hurry.

Bryan tore down the stairs to get in his car to go rent the water vacuum, but he discovered that all four of his tires were flat. He went back upstairs, reached for the phone, and was shocked so severely it nearly knocked him down. He called for a friend and asked him to take him to get help.

When he got back downstairs, Bryan found that someone had stolen his car. He knew it didn't have much gas. So he and his friend walked a few blocks, found the car, and pushed it to a service station, where they bought gas and put air in the tires.

Bryan later returned home and went upstairs to get dressed for an ROTC graduation ceremony that night. He donned his uniform and tried to get out of the house, but the water had caused the door to swell in its frame, and he had to scream until someone could come and kick the door down from the outside.

When he finally sat down in his car, he sat on his bayonet, which he had carelessly left in the driver's seat. Bryan was taken immediately to the hospital for some very strategic surgery.

Friends took him home, and when he opened the door, he saw that falling plaster had toppled the cage of his prized pet canaries, killing all of them. As he ran across the wet carpet, he slipped and fell and injured his back. Once again, he was taken to the hospital.

By this time a newspaper reporter had caught up with Bryan and asked, "Mr. Heiss, how can you explain all of this happening to one person in a single day?" He answered, "It looked like God was trying to kill me, but He kept missing!"  
pp. 221-2

(When Counseling Is Not Enough by J. Kirk Johnston)

In his book, Living With Everyday Problems, Eugene Kennedy says this:

If I can just get through this problem, then everything will be all right," may be one of the most common English sentences. But there comes a time, and it may well be the birth of maturity--when we suddenly realize that if we do get through our present problem, there will be another one, slightly larger and a little more intense, waiting to take its place.

p. 100

(Final Call by Steven J. Lawson)

A LINE HAS BEEN DRAWN IN THE SAND. Sides have been taken, and war has been declared. Hell is officially in session. And the church is under attack.

With mounting hostility, the kingdom of Satan is engaging in a full-scale war against the church of Jesus Christ. The foul forces of darkness are escalating their campaign against the people of God with an unholy vengeance. Like two weather fronts colliding, a violent storm is brewing across the horizon as never before.

Witness the Hamilton Square Baptist Church in San Francisco. As church members gathered for Sunday evening worship on September 19, 1993, they knew it would be an eventful service. They just didn't know how eventful!

The featured guest speaker for the evening was Lou Sheldon, an outspoken opponent of pro-homosexual legislation in California. As chairman of the Traditional Values Coalition, Sheldon had played a key role in overturning a 1989 domestic partners ordinance in San Francisco.

As he came to speak, this church turned into a battleground. Two pro-homosexual newspapers had publicized Sheldon's visit, leading to a barrage of phone calls to the church all week. Militant homosexual activists promised to show up in force and threatened to disrupt the service.

And disrupt it they did. The worship service became a war zone. Like an invading army, approximately 100 rioters stormed the church ground and took complete control of the exterior property.

Angry protestors denied worshipers entrance into the church. Physical contact was used. One church member, a woman, was physically and forcibly carried away from the church's entrance by the activists.



All the while, police stood by watching. Rioters vandalized church property. The church's Christian flag was replaced by a homosexual flag. Innocent children were verbally harassed and threatened. Vile obscenities were yelled.

When the service began, angry gays (surely a contradiction in terms) pounded on the doors of the sanctuary, taunting worshipers to come outside and join them in sexual orgies. As the believers sang, the demonstrators threw eggs and rocks at the stained-glass windows. The pastor was pelted by debris and needed a police escort as he left in a church van.

Sounds like Sodom and Gomorrah.  
pp. 91-92

(Halftime: Changing Your Game Plan from Success to Significance by Bob Buford)

I was a committed Christian when I lost my son. I had already put God in the box and was beginning to implement a mission that made God the primary loyalty in my life. None of that prevented a horribly real external: raging currents can drown even the most powerful swimmer. It was hard enough to deal with that loss, but I can honestly say I do not think I would be where I am today had it not been for my faith. Respect the externals of the natural world and the authority of the supernatural world and it will free you to grow and serve well in the second half.

p. 157

“BUT CONSTANTLY BE REMEMBERING THE FORMER DAYS, IN WHICH, AFTER BEING ENLIGHTENED”

This takes us back to verse 26:

“after having received the knowledge of the truth.”

You have LIGHT and LIFE in John 14:6.

He is saying, remember your former experience. You endured, you persevered a hard, great struggle with sufferings.

The LESSONS OF THE PAST are designed to challenge them IN THE PRESENT.

v.33 partly, by being exposed as a public spectacle to insults and persecutions, and partly by becoming sharers with those who are being treated in the same way.

They were getting VERBAL and PHYSICAL abuse.

Phillips says:

The word is “theatrize,” from which comes our English word “theater.” They had been put on the stage, as it were, and exposed to ridicule and shame and contempt. In the arena of testimony, with catcalls and missiles being hurled at them by an infuriated audience, they had endured. They had shown the faith in Christ to sinners.

p. 151

v.34 For you showed sympathy to the prisoners, and accepted with joy the seizure of your property, knowing that you are having for yourselves a better possession and an abiding one.

1. “YOU SHOWED SYMPATHY TO THE PRISONERS”--that is your ministry.
2. “YOU ACCEPTED WITH JOY THE SEIZURE OF YOUR PROPERTY”--you were joyful in your misery.
3. “KNOWING THAT YOU ARE HAVING FOR YOURSELVES A BETTER POSSESSION AND AN ABIDING ONE”--How did you do that? You did it by keeping your focus on the eternal. This is just the temporal down here.

#### Matthew 6:19-21

"Do not lay up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal; for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

#### Colossians 3:2, 3

Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth. For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God.

Lane says:

The play on words between “property,” “possessions,” in v 34*b* and “possessions,” in v 34*c* is rhetorically effective in developing the contrast between possessions that can be lost through seizure and the permanent possessions Christians enjoy on the basis of their relationship to God through Christ.

p. 300

Barclay says:

The appeal of the writer to the Hebrews is an appeal that could be made to every man. In effect, he says: "Be what you once were at your best." If only we were always what we can be at our best, life would be very different. Christianity does not demand the impossible. If we were always as straight, as honest, as kind, as courageous, as courteous as we can be at our best, life would be a very different thing. Any man might well take as a motto, "Never to sink below my best."

p. 143

Kistemaker says:

The author of Hebrews seems to develop a sequence of the events that had occurred in the lives of his readers. First, they had endured a period of suffering when they "had received the light" (v. 32). Then they were exposed to public insult and persecution (v. 33). Also, they supported fellow believers who suffered similar abuse. And last, they had lost their property, perhaps in a time of political or religious turmoil (v. 34).

p. 300

Bruce says:

Like the warning of 6:4-8, so the warning of 10:26-31 is followed by words of reassurance and encouragement. Our author does not wish to discourage his readers, but to embolden them so that they will emerge victorious from the present growing test of their faith. This he does now in the first place by reminding them of how they stood a severe test in the earlier days of their life as Christians, not long after their "enlightenment"--an expression repeated from 6:4.

p. 267

Bruce says further:

At any rate, the readers had at one time "endured a hard struggle with sufferings," as our author puts it, using an athletic metaphor. They had met the challenge of those sufferings as good athletes of Christ, and stood firm.

p. 270

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Delitzsch says:

In this way the sacred writer raises the hearts and minds whom his previous language might have depressed. He has led them to the brink of a terrible precipice of negligence or apostasy, down which they seemed in peril of falling, and now he leads them back from it to the contemplation of their own steadfast and favoured past.

p. 196

Lange says:

The aid and comfort derived from the *remembrance of conflicts and suffering* that in former times have been *victoriously* endured in *faith*.--To *begin* in faith, but not to *endure*, leads to useless sacrifices, vain hopes, and fruitless sufferings.--The *attainment* of the promised blessings must be preceded by the *fulfillment* of the Divine will: but this cannot take place without a living *faith*, that proves itself in suffering.

p. 181

(Perilous Pursuits by Joseph M. Stowell)

I am reminded of the Puritan who was incarcerated for his faith in Christ. In his cramped jail cell he was fed one portion of bread and water each day. But the guard heard him exclaim one day as he prayed over his portion, "Thank you, Lord, for all of this and heaven too!" He recognized his blessings.

p. 92

(When Heaven Is Silent by Ronald Dunn)

Through these months, *acceptance* has been a word of liberty and victory and peace to me. But it has never meant acquiescence in illness. . . . But it did mean contentment with the unexplained.

Amy Carmichael

p. 87

I think Teilhard de Chardin was right: *Joy is not the absence of pain but the presence of God.*



v.35 Therefore, do not throw away your confidence, which is having a great reward.

In view of your past faithfulness to endure such adversity, “THEREFORE, DO NOT [fling away as though it were of no value] . . . YOUR CONFIDENCE, WHICH IS HAVING A GREAT REWARD.”

We had the word “CONFIDENCE” back in verse 19:

“Having therefore, brethren, confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus.”

We have reference to:

the PAST in verses 32-34,

the PRESENT in verses 35-36, and

the FUTURE in verses 37-39.

Montefiore in Black’s commentary says:

The reminder of the past was intended to evoke perseverance in the future.  
p. 182

Hewitt says:

They are urged, therefore, not to throw off their Christian *confidence* as they would a worthless garment, but to continue to speak and act boldly for Christ as they had so gloriously done in those former days.  
p. 169



English says:

Thus the writer seeks to woo back to their former loving trust in God any who may be wavering, by reminding them of the effectual testimony that the Spirit has wrought within their hearts, and by calling upon them to hold on and to press on. In his urgency, he reminds his readers once again of the “better rest” of God’s provision, the “great recompense of reward.”  
pp. 328-9

Owen says:

The inference of these words is plain,--Seeing you have suffered so many things in your persons and goods, seeing God by His grace hath carried you through with satisfaction and joy, do not now despond and faint upon the approach of the same difficulties, or those of a like nature. He exhorts them unto the preservation and continuance of their confidence. This confidence, whatever it be, was that which carried them through their sufferings.  
pp. 211-12

Lenski says:

The readers did not shrink back during that severe trial of “former days”; they will surely not do so now.  
p. 367

Barclay says:

*We need to keep our hope before us.* The athlete will make his great effort because the tape and the goal beckon him on. He will submit to the discipline of any training because of the end in view. If life is only a day to day doing of the routine things, then we may well sink into a policy of drift; but if we are on the way to heaven and heaven’s crown then life must always be at full tension and effort always at full pitch.  
p. 143

Kistemaker says:

If the readers suffered for their Christian faith in earlier days, will they at present throw away the confidence they showed in the face of persecution? Apparently time has elapsed, and the believers are living in a period of peace and safety. Their boldness in confessing their faith in Christ has fallen into disuse. And because they have not exercised their gift of confidence, they are ready to discard it.

p. 301

Arago ascribes his success to words found on the paper cover of his book when greatly discouraged. They were, "Go on, sir, go on! The difficulties you meet will resolve themselves as you advance. Proceed, and light will dawn and shine with increased clearness on your path," written by D'Alembert. "That maxim," says Arago, "was my greatest master in mathematics." Following out these simple words, "Go on, sir, go on!" made him the first astronomical mathematician of his age. What Christians it would make of us! What heroes of faith, what sages in holy wisdom, should we become, by acting out that maxim, "Go on, sir, go on!"

(From Parson's Bible Illustrator 1.0)

(Over the Top by Zig Ziglar)

I encourage you to take the advice of speaker and writer Clebe McClary, the American hero who was so grievously wounded in Vietnam. Clebe uses the FIDO approach that literally means to Forget It and Drive On.

p. 223

(Margin: Restoring Emotional, Physical, Financial, and Time Reserves to Overloaded Lives by Richard A. Swenson, M.D.)

Remember the sampler on Grandma's kitchen wall: "Use it up. Wear it out. Make it do. Do without."

p. 182

(2nd Helping of Chicken Soup for the Soul, A: 101 More Stories to Open the Heart and Rekindle the Spirit by Jack Canfield & Mark Victor Hansen)

**Discouraged?**

As I was driving home from work one day, I stopped to watch a local Little League baseball game that was being played in a park near my home. As I sat down behind the bench on the first-baseline, I asked one of the boys what the score was.

“We’re behind 14 to nothing,” he answered with a smile.

“Really,” I said. “I have to say you don’t look very discouraged.”

“Discouraged?” the boy asked with a puzzled look on his face. “Why should we be discouraged? We haven’t been up to bat yet.”

*Jack Canfield*

p. 174

(Christian Disciplines by Oswald Chambers)

Perhaps to be able to explain suffering is the clearest indication of never having suffered. Sin, suffering, and sanctification are not problems of the mind, but facts of life--mysteries that awaken all other mysteries until the heart rests in God, and waiting patiently knows “He does all things well.” Oh, the unspeakable joy of knowing that God reigns! that He is our Father, and that the clouds are but “the dust of His feet”! Religious life is based and built up and matured on primal implicit trust, transfigured by love.

pp. 45-46

The unexplained things in life are more than the explained. God seems careless as to whether people understand Him or not; . . .

p. 46

v.36 For you are having need of perseverance, in order that, having done the will of God, you may receive what was promised.

Now the apostle gives the REASON for the exhortation in verse 35, why they should:

“not throw away [their] . . . confidence, which is having a great reward.”

REASON:

“FOR YOU ARE HAVING NEED OF PERSEVERANCE”

PURPOSE:

“IN ORDER THAT, HAVING DONE THE WILL OF GOD, YOU MAY RECEIVE WHAT WAS PROMISED.”

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

As much as anything, these words express the central exhortation of the Book of Hebrews.

p. 806

Delitzsch says:

. . . it is only that unshaken, unyielding, patient endurance under the pressure of trial and persecution, that steadfastness of faith, apprehending present blessings, and of hope with heaven-directed eye anticipating the glorious future, which obtains what it waits for.

p. 197

Bruce says:

What they need is patience. God will certainly fulfil[l] his promises; they will enter into the utmost enjoyment of it; but in the meantime they must remain loyal, and not give up doing God’s will. Their Master came expressly to

do the will of God, as they had been told already (10:7, 9f), although the doing of that will involve suffering and death for him; his servants can expect no easier path as they in their turn do the will of God and await the promised bliss.

p. 272

## ALL OUT

In his book, *See, I told You So*, Rush Limbaugh says that he learned a lot about life as an offensive tackle on the football field when he was in high school:

“Every day after practice we had to run wind sprints, which I hated. At some point a coach would yell, ‘First three tackles through for the day!’ That meant the first finishers in the next sprint could hit the showers. The others would continue running.

It didn’t take me long to realize that if I paced myself during the early sprints, I would have some gas left to finish in the top three. After three days of this, the assistant coach called me over.

“Limbaugh, I noticed you’re usually in the middle of the pack until we call out ‘first three tackles.’ he observed. ‘Why is that?’

“I’m pacing myself coach,’ I said.

“In football we don’t pace ourselves,’ the coach explained. ‘We go all out all the time. You’d be wise to do that your whole life. If I see you doing that again, you’re going to run ten extra sprints. Is that clear?’

“It was a valuable lesson. I’m still going all out, all the time.”

[Reader’s Digest, Apr 1994. Page 147.]

(From InfoSearch 3.51)

(The Disciplines of Life by V. Raymond Edman

We feel we must be active, energetic, enthusiastic, and humanly effective; and we cannot understand why inactivity, weakness, weariness, and seeming uselessness should become our lot. It all appears to be so futile and foolish, without plan or purpose.

The discipline of delay is written large in the life of God’s people, as we could observe in Abraham’s long waiting for the son of promise, in Joseph’s years in Egypt as victim of cruel circumstances, in Moses’ long obscurity in the desert, in Hannah’s empty home and aching heart, even in the silent years spent by our Lord Jesus in the narrow streets of Nazareth.

p. 79

Say not my soul, “from whence  
 Can God relieve my care?  
 Remember that Omnipotence  
 Hath servants everywhere.

His help is always sure,  
 His methods seldom guessed;  
 Delay will make our pleasure pure;  
 Surprise will give it zest.

His wisdom is sublime,  
 His heart profoundly kind;  
 God never is before His time,  
 And never is behind.

Hast thou assumed a load  
 Which none will bear with thee?  
 And art thou bearing it for God,  
 And shall He fail to see?

J. J. Lynch

(The Hidden Price of Greatness by Ray Beeson & Ranelda Mack Hunsicker)

Seneca, the Roman philosopher and statesman, said, “It is a rough road that leads to the heights of greatness.”  
 p. 13

Fanny Crosby’s shoulders bent more than usual as she faced another day in the dreary Manhattan apartment. Since her precious baby had died, time had hung on her like a lead weight. *What can’t be cured can be endured.* She repeated the phrase her grandmother had lived by and taught her early in life. But it didn’t ease the ache in her heart.  
 p. 59

Sailing in a seemingly starless night, Charles Cowman wrote:

We have never undertaken a work for the Lord under His direct guidance for the liberation of precious souls that Satan has not fought us inch by inch, but in the midst of the battle, as we have gone along with God, our

spirits have been hushed and a sweet still voice has whispered to our inmost hearts, “I am on board, there is no wind wild enough, no wind high enough, no storm fierce enough to wreck the vessel which carries the Lord of the earth and sky. Sail on, sail on.”

p. 80



(Only Angels Can Wing It: The Rest of Us Have to Practice by Liz Curtis Higgs)

As Louisa May Alcott said, “I am not afraid of storms, for I am learning how to sail my ship.”

p. 96

There are 2 THINGS that we need to remember here in this particular verse:

1. PERSEVERANCE IS THE WILL OF GOD, and
2. PERSEVERANCE LEADS TO THE PROMISE.

“FOR YOU ARE HAVING NEED OF PERSEVERANCE, IN ORDER THAT, HAVING DONE THE WILL OF GOD, YOU MAY RECEIVE [or carry off] WHAT WAS PROMISED.”

v.37 For yet in a very little while, He who is coming will come, and will not delay.

Jesus is coming!

POSITIVELY:

“HE WHO IS COMING WILL COME, AND”

NEGATIVELY:

“WILL NOT DELAY.”

Hewitt says:

These words from Isaiah xxvi. 20 are prefaced to the main quotation from Habakkuk. Their use by the author is to show that *he that shall come . . . will not tarry*. His return is imminent. The quotation is adapted from Habakkuk ii. 3, 4 where the prophet speaks of the fulfilment of the prophecy regarding the overthrow of the Chaldaeans.

p. 169

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Draper says:

The readers of the Book of Hebrews were experiencing a great deal of persecution and pressure to return to their former faith. This passage is addressed to that issue and it contains a quotation from the prophecy of Habakkuk: “For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry. Now the just shall live by faith” (10:37, 38).

The people in Habakkuk’s day were also under terrible persecution. Their world was tumbling in about them. In this time of distress, the prophet stood before them and recorded the words of Habakkuk 2:3, 4. It was a good word to people who had very little hope. It was a word of encouragement. Under the heavy hand of oppression, a word of hope was given. One would come who would give relief, release, and victory. Accordingly, the just shall live by faith in his coming, in his provision. That’s what Habakkuk charged.

It is interesting that these words from the prophet are repeated in the midst of an almost identical setting. These Hebrew-Christians were under heavy persecution. They were being unjustly accused. They were being victimized. They were being ostracized.

p. 283

J. Vernon McGee says:

Somebody asks, “When is He coming?” Well, the Lord won’t let me see His calendar; so I don’t know. I hear some folk talk as if they have seen His calendar, but I think they have been looking at man’s calendar, because nobody has seen God’s calendar. However, we can be sure that Christ will come on the day appointed; it is as certain as His first coming to this earth.

p. 578

(Heaven Help Us! Truths About Eternity That Will Help You Live Today by Steven J. Lawson)

That reminds me of a T-shirt I saw. Printed on the front was, “God is dead.”--Nietzsche.

But on the back, it said, “Nietzsche is dead.”--God.

Yes, God will have the final word.

p. 97

## IS EVERYTHING IN ORDER?

The “Moody Monthly” at one time related the story of a 6-year-old, golden-haired child who had a strong, simple faith in the truths she heard in Sunday school. She seemed especially impressed by the thought of the Lord’s second coming. One morning a guest in her home found the youngster busily working in her bedroom, carefully arranging the contents. Impressed by what he saw, he exclaimed, “You sure keep your room nice and neat!” Looking up with a smile, she replied, “Yes, I’m putting everything in order, ‘cause Jesus might come today!”

(From InfoSearch 3.51)

v.38 But my righteous one shall live by faith; and if he shrinks back, my soul is having no pleasure in him.

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says of this verse:

. . . God’s favor cannot rest on his life.  
p. 807

Hession says:

The same passage that says, “Let us draw near” into the Holiest (10:22), also warns us of the possibility of “drawing back unto perdition” (10:39).  
p. 135

### Revelation 3:11

I am coming quickly; hold fast what you have, in order that no one take your crown.

In the passage we have seen 3 THINGS:

1. SINNING INTENTIONALLY,

2. SETTING ASIDE THE LAW OF MOSES, and
3. SHRINKING BACK.

(Broken in the Right Place by Alan E. Nelson)

Mahatma Gandhi said that seven things will destroy us: wealth without work; pleasure without conscience; knowledge without character; commerce without morality; science without humanity; religion without sacrifice; and politics without principle. Life has a certain balance. If we avoid the principles which season the success and the victories, we are apt to reap rewards gained too easily. It is not a negative to think we must suffer prior to having fun; rather, it is positive to have sufficient character strength to endure and enjoy the fruits of our labors. When we avoid the difficult, that which creates strengthened character, we harm ourselves.

p. 50

(The Finishing Touch: Becoming God's Masterpiece: A Daily Devotional by Charles R. Swindoll)

I read recently of a missionary from Sweden who was urged by friends to give up the idea of returning to India because it was so hot there. "Man," he was urged, "it's 120 degrees in the shade!" "Vell," said the Swede in noble contempt, "ve don't always have to stay in the shade, do ve?"

p. 221

### BURNING YOUR BOATS

When Julius Caesar landed on the shores of Britain with his Roman legions, he took a bold and decisive step to ensure that success of his military venture. Ordering his men to halt on the edge of the Cliffs of Dover, he commanded them to look down at the water below. To their amazement, they saw every ship in which they had crossed the channel engulfed in flames. Caesar had deliberately cut off any possibility of retreat! Now that his soldiers were unable to return to the continent, there was nothing left for them to do but to advance and conquer! And that is exactly what they did.

(From InfoSearch 3.51)

v.39 But we are not of the shrinking back kind to destruction, but of those who are having faith to the preserving of the soul.

Hebrews 6:9

But, beloved, we have been convinced of better things concerning you, things that are belonging to salvation, though we are speaking in this way.

According to The Bible Knowledge Commentary:

The “DESTRUCTION” that the writer is describing is TEMPORAL and NOT ETERNAL ruin.

p. 807

[This is] a call for determination and perseverance.

p. 807

Griffith Thomas says:

The “we” is emphatic, as much as to say that this reference to drawing back has nothing to do with us. The meaning of “draw back” is, literally, “to take in sail” (Gal. 2:12). The believer is depicted as a sailor who, instead of opening every stitch of canvas he possesses to catch every breeze, deliberately strikes sail and thus becomes becalmed. Drawing back in the Christian life is sometimes due to disappointment, at other times to depression, at still others to discouragement, but always to distrust.

p. 139

Wiersbe says:

I personally believe that “waste” is the best translation for this word in Hebrews 10:39. A believer who does not walk by faith goes back into the old ways and wastes his life.

“The saving of the soul” is the opposite of “waste.” To walk by faith means to obey God’s Word and live for Jesus Christ. We lose our lives for His sake--but

we save them! (See Matt. 16:25-27). In my own pastoral ministry, I have met people who turned their back on God's will and (like Israel) spent years "wandering in the wilderness" of waste.

But we can be confident! As we walk by faith, our great High Priest will guide us and perfect us!

p. 119



DeHaan says:

Here is the final answer. Do not suppose that the believer can draw back unto perdition. He can draw back and invite the judgment of God in sickness, weakness and chastening and even commit the sin unto death, but God cannot go back on His promise, and so we are reminded that “we are not of them that draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.” Yes, it is possible to draw back, *but not unto perdition*.

Shall we then sin that grace may abound? Because we are saved by grace, can we then live as we please? Does the Gospel of the grace of God give us license to sin? Don't be deceived!

God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap (Gal. 6:7).  
pp. 146-7

Bruce points out:

For, says he, in a further affirmation of his essential confidence in them, and including himself among them, “we are not in the ranks of those who draw back and perish; we belong to those who believe and thus gain our lives.” They had begun their Christian career in that carefree spirit which accepts without questioning the assurance of Christ that “whoever would save his life will lose it; and whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's will save it” (Mark 8:35). Let them maintain that spirit of faith to the end, and they would certainly gain their souls and “take hold of the life which is life indeed. That this will prove true with our author and his readers alike is his firm assurance.<sup>208</sup>

<sup>208.</sup> See E. Grässer, *Der Glaube im Hebräerbrief* (Marburg, 1965).  
p. 275

Barclay says:

Here is a summons to us never to be less than our best; always to seek for the unromantic but essential virtue of perseverance; and always to remember that the end comes. If life is the road to Christ then none can afford to miss the road or to stop half-way.

p. 144

Montefiore in Black's commentary says:

The passage ends with an expression of hope and confidence, preparatory for the next great section about the perseverance and faith of the heroes of old.  
p. 185

McGee says:

The writer to the Hebrews did not consider that they had drawn back, but he is speaking of the *danger* of doing so, and he is giving them this warning. Since *draw back* means to "take in sail," the believer is like a sailor who should let out all the sail. That is what the writer has been telling these folk--"Let us go on!" His thought is that a believer could reef his sails--become stranded because of discouragement, because of persecution, because of hardship, because of depression. But since we have a living Savior, let's go on. Let's open up all the sails. Let's move out for God.  
p. 579

The Book of Virtues by William J. Bennett)

An Appeal from the Alamo

William Barret Travis

The Alamo in San Antonio, Texas, has become an American symbol of unyielding courage and self-sacrifice. A force of Texans captured the mission fort in late 1835 after the outbreak of revolution against the dictatorship of Mexican General Antonio Loez de Santa Anna. By early 1836, Lieutenant Colonel William Barret Travis and the fort's garrison found themselves hemmed in by a Mexican army swelling to six thousand troops. On February 24, Travis dispatched couriers to nearby Texas towns, carrying frantic appeals for aid. Fewer than three dozen men picked their way through enemy lines to join the Alamo's defenders. The siege continued until March 6, when Santa Anna's forces overwhelmed the fort. The entire garrison was killed, some 180 men, including Colonel Travis, James Bowie, and Davy Crockett.

COMMANDANCY OF THE ALAMO, TEXAS  
February 24, 1836

To the People of Texas and All Americans in the World.  
FELLOW CITIZENS AND COMPATRIOTS:

I am besieged by a thousand or more of the Mexicans under Santa Anna. I have sustained a continual bombardment and cannonade for twenty-four hours and have not lost a man. The enemy has demanded a surrender at discretion; otherwise the garrison are to be put to the sword if the fort is taken. I have answered the demand with a cannon shot, and our flag still waves proudly from the walls. I shall never surrender nor retreat. Then, I call on you in the name of Liberty, of patriotism, and of everything dear to the American character, to come to our aid with all dispatch. The enemy is receiving reinforcements daily and will no doubt increase to three or four thousand in four or five days. If this call is neglected, I am determined to sustain myself as long as possible and die like a soldier who never forgets what is due to his own honor and that of his country.

VICTORY OR DEATH.

WILLIAM BARRET TRAVIS  
Lieutenant Colonel, Commandant

pp. 484-5

(Standing Tall by Steve Farrar)

Louis Adamic wrote: "There is a certain blend of courage, integrity, character, and principle which has no satisfactory dictionary name but has been called different things at different times in different countries." Our American name for it is "guts." Elijah had guts. And so did Peter Cartwright.

Peter Cartwright was a circuit-ridin' Methodist preacher back in the nineteenth century. He stood tall, he shot straight, and he rode for the brand. On one occasion Cartwright was getting ready to preach to a very large congregation when he was told that President Andrew Jackson would be in the audience. His friends, who knew Mr. Cartwright well, asked him to make sure that his remarks were positive and unoffensive.

Peter Cartwright preached his sermon. Somewhere in that sermon he said, "I have been told that Andrew Jackson is in this congregation. And I have been asked to guard my remarks. What I must say is that Andrew Jackson will go to hell if he doesn't repent of his sin."

The congregation, of course, was aghast. Yet after the service, President Jackson made his way to Peter Cartwright and extended his hand.

"Sir," the president said, "if I had a regiment of men like you, I could whip the world."

pp. 166-7

(Holiness by J. C. Ryle)

The experience of that eminent saint, Philip Henry, does not stand alone. In his last days he said to his family, 'I take you all to record that a life spent in the service of Christ is the happiest life that a man can spend upon earth.' Surely this is good!

p. 61

(When God Whispers: Glimpses of an Extraordinary God By an Ordinary Woman by Carole Mayhall)

But for now? Someone said, "Much of life falls between the cracks." Another mused, "Much of the Christian life is just hanging on."

p. 127

(Mama, Get the Hammer! There's a Fly on Papa's Head! by Barbara Johnson)

NEVER WASTE YOUR PAIN!

Dear Lord . . .

Please grant that I shall  
 Never waste my pain; for . . .  
 To fail without learning,  
 To fall without getting up,  
 To sin without overcoming,  
 To be hurt without forgiving,  
 To be discontent without improving,  
 To be crushed without becoming more caring,  
 To suffer without growing more sensitive,  
 Makes of suffering a senseless, futile exercise,  
 A tragic loss,  
 And of pain,  
 The greatest waste of all.

Dick Innes

p. 95

C. S. Lewis said that while on this earth we are “on the wrong side of the door.” But he added, “All the leaves of the New Testament are rustling with the rumor it will not always be so.”

(From *Our Daily Bread*, Saturday, September 30, 1995)

I saw on a young Aggie’s T-shirt the other day 3 THINGS:

1. GIVE UP SOME INCHES,
2. GIVE UP SOME MINUTES, and
3. GIVE UP THE GAME.

The KEY WORDS in this whole passage that we have considered are:

1. “DRAWING NEAR,”
2. “HOLDING FAST,”

3. “CONSIDERING,”
4. “REMEMBERING,” and
5. “DO NOT THROW AWAY.”

CONCLUSION:

What are some of the lessons we can learn from this particular study?

LESSON #1: We can have confidence coming into God's presence by the blood of Jesus Christ.

LESSON #2: We have access and acceptance into the very presence of God the Father because of Christ's death upon the cross.

LESSON #3: We have a great Priest who is representing us in the courts of heaven.

LESSON #4: We are exhorted to be "drawing near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith."

LESSON #5: We are challenged to be "constantly holding fast the confession of our hope without wavering."

LESSON #6: He who promised is faithful and He will not fail.

LESSON #7: We are exhorted "to stimulate one another to love and good deeds."

LESSON #8: We are commanded "not [to be] forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some."

LESSON #9: There are serious consequences for sinning intentionally.

LESSON #10: It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

LESSON #11: Triumph in suffering comes when we keep our focus on heaven.

LESSON #12: We are commanded “not to throw away [our] confidence” but to keep on persevering.



(Holiness by J. C. Ryle)

What though your conscience within be lashed by the recollection of countless transgressions, and torn by every gust of temptation? What though the remembrance of past hideous profligacy be grievous unto you, and the burden intolerable? What though your heart seems full of evil, and sin appears to drag you whither it will like a slave? What though the devil rides to and fro over your soul like a conqueror, and tells you it is vain to struggle against him, there is no hope for you? I tell you there is One who can give even you pardon and peace. My Lord and Master Jesus Christ can rebuke the devil's raging, can calm even your soul's misery, and say even to you, 'Peace, be still!' He can scatter that cloud of guilt which now weighs you down. He can bid despair depart. He can drive fear away. He can remove the spirit of bondage, and fill you with the spirit of adoption. Satan may hold your soul like a strong man armed, but Jesus is stronger than he, and when He commands, the prisoners must go free. Oh, if any troubled reader wants a calm within, let him go this day to Jesus Christ, and all shall yet be well!

p. 203

(Broken in the Right Place by Alan E. Nelson)

Margaret Clarkson put it this way, "Perhaps the greatest good that suffering can work for a believer is to increase the capacity of his soul for God. The greater our need, the greater will be our capacity; the greater our capacity, the greater will be our experience of God. Can any price be too much for such eternal good?"

p. 62

Someone once said, "People who make life fit into a nutshell belong in one." I would not be so naive as to say that people only need to surrender to God and they will be healed. That's a pious pronouncement with little practical benefit. I am trying to point out that if woundedness results in spiritual brokenness, there is not only a much greater sense of catharsis, resolution, and relief, but also a greater chance that inner healing will take place. Also, we better comprehend what God has in mind when we undergo various breaking circumstances.

p. 71

(The Finishing Touch: Becoming God's Masterpiece: A Daily Devotional by Charles R. Swindoll)

Reason #1: God allows suffering so that we might have the capacity to enter into others' sorrow and affliction. . . .

Reason #2: God allows suffering so that we might learn what it means to depend on Him. . . .

Reason #3: God allows suffering so that we might learn to give thanks in everything. . . .

**A Finishing Touch:** Years ago I heard two statements about suffering that I have never forgotten: "Pain plants the flag of reality in the fortress of a rebel heart." And, "When God wants to do an impossible task, He takes an impossible individual--and crushes him."  
pp. 434-5

(Amazing Grace: 366 Inspiring Hymn Stories for Daily Devotions by Kenneth W. Osbeck)

HE HIDETH MY SOUL  
Fanny J. Crosby, 1820-1915

*I will put you in a cleft in the rock and cover you with my hand.*  
(Exodus 33:22)

The beloved blind American poet Fanny Jane Crosby did not begin writing gospel texts until her mid-forties. But from then on, inspiring words seemed to flow constantly from her heart, and she became "the happiest creature in all the land." Friends stopped in frequently to see her with requests for new texts for special occasions.

One day Fanny was visited by William Kirkpatrick, a talented gospel musician who had just composed a new melody that he felt needed suitable words to become a singable hymn. As William sat at the piano and played the tune for Fanny, her face lit up. She knelt in prayer, as was always her custom, and soon the lines to this lovely hymn began to flow freely from her heart:

A wonderful Savior is Jesus my Lord, a wonderful Savior to me; He hideth my soul in the cleft of the rock, where rivers of pleasure I see.

A wonderful Savior is Jesus my Lord--He taketh my burden away: He holdeth me up and I shall not be moved; He giveth me strength as my day.

With numberless blessings each moment. He crowns, and, filled with His fullness divine, I sing in my rapture, "O Glory to God for such a Redeemer as mine!"

When clothed in His brightness transported I rise to meet Him in clouds of the sky; His perfect salvation, His wonderful love, I'll shout with the millions on high.

**Chorus:** He hideth my soul in the cleft of the rock that shadows a dry, thirsty land; He hideth my life in the depths of His love, and covers me there with His hand, and covers me there with His hand.

The life of Fanny Crosby can be as uplifting to us as her wonderful hymns. When she wrote "rivers of pleasure I see," with numberless blessings each moment He crowns," and "I sing in my rapture," she reveals the triumph God gave her over a life of blindness. At least 8,000 gospel texts were written by this godly woman. She lived to be 95 years of age and traveled extensively in her later years as a speaker throughout the country. She said it was her continual prayer that God would allow her to lead to Christ every person she contacted. Only eternity will reveal the host of lives that have been directed to God through the life and hymns of Fanny Crosby.

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