

## A PERSERVERING FAITH

Bible Background – HEBREWS 10:19-39

Printed Text – HEBREWS 10:23-36

<sup>23</sup> Let us hold tightly without wavering to the hope we affirm, for God can be trusted to keep his promise.

<sup>24</sup> Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works.

<sup>25</sup> And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of his return is drawing near.

<sup>26</sup> Dear friends, if we deliberately continue sinning after we have received knowledge of the truth, there is no longer any sacrifice that will cover these sins.

<sup>27</sup> There is only the terrible expectation of God's judgment and the raging fire that will consume his enemies.

<sup>28</sup> For anyone who refused to obey the law of Moses was put to death without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses.

<sup>29</sup> Just think how much worse the punishment will be for those who have trampled on the Son of God, and have treated the blood of the covenant, which made us holy, as if it were common and unholy, and have insulted and disdained the Holy Spirit who brings God's mercy to us.

<sup>30</sup> For we know the one who said, "I will take revenge. I will pay them back." He also said, "The LORD will judge his own people."

<sup>31</sup> It is a terrible thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

<sup>32</sup> Think back on those early days when you first learned about Christ. Remember how you remained faithful even though it meant terrible suffering.

<sup>33</sup> Sometimes you were exposed to public ridicule and were beaten, and sometimes you helped others who were suffering the same things.

<sup>34</sup> You suffered along with those who were thrown into jail, and when all you owned was taken from you, you accepted it with joy. You knew there were better things waiting for you that will last forever.

<sup>35</sup> So do not throw away this confident trust in the Lord. Remember the great reward it brings you!

<sup>36</sup> Patient endurance is what you need now, so that you will continue to do God's will. Then you will receive all that he has promised.

-----New Living Translation

### Lesson Introduction

Faith is active when we depend on God and rest in Christ's perfect sacrifice for the sins of mankind paid on the Cross. The writer of Hebrews encourages believers to live in faith and obedience to God each day. It is through Christ that believers receive an eternal reward and substantial privileges in our new life in Him. As we explore the stories of early believers who suffered for their beliefs, let us also derive the courage to suffer for our faithful witness.

**Background:** Sacrifices were practiced from the earliest of times in the Old Testament. Animals were imperfect sacrifices that could not completely purify or atone for people's sins. The writer of Hebrews expresses the importance and superiority of Christ's priesthood to the Levitical priesthood. The Levitical high priest could only enter the Holy of Holies one day a year when he would make reconciling sacrifices for the sins of the entire nation. This was the only way the Jews knew to approach God. The writer of Hebrews explained a new covenant promise was placed into effect when Christ died (Hebrews 9:11-12, 24-28). The new covenant frees believers from the bondage of the first covenant. God took away the Levitical sacrificial system, which was the first arrangement when He established the perfect sacrifice—Jesus Christ. The hope of enjoying the presence of God, of approaching Him freely in an intimate relationship is the hope referred to in our first verse today. The new covenant is the promise we can trust God to keep.

-----*Precepts for Living*, the UMI Annual Commentary 2020-2021, p. 583

### **Knowledge of the Truth**

**Hebrews 10:23-27:** The writer of Hebrew's admonishes believers to hold on tightly to the profession of faith with a firm grip and do not waiver. After all, the God who promises is more than able and willing to make good on what He has promised. We serve a God who always keeps His word. Believers are also called to encourage each other to love and to abound in good works. Consider one another as members of the same community, all members of one body, continuing corporate worship. We must be intentional about unity and togetherness in the church body. Individuals working as one whole is a reflection of God's triune nature. The writer states that it is all the more important to continue to work in harmony and encourage each other to stand strong in the faith especially as we see the Day of Judgment approach. It is worth noting here, that early Christians lived in the expectation of the Second Coming of Christ which would bring an end to things as we know them. From that perspective, time is short.

Believers are told to not give up and turn their backs on the truth and knowledge that they had become intimately familiar with. They were well acquainted with God and His covenant so to then reject the sacrifice of Christ leaves one with no sacrifice to cover that sin—the sin of apostasy. When a believer deliberately chooses sin and voluntarily denies Christ's sacrificial death, they cannot turn back. They have denied the very basis for such a return. The writer warns believers that an apostate has become an enemy to God by choice.

◆*In what ways can you encourage fellow believers?*

### **How God Will Judge His People**

**Hebrews 10:28-31:** The writer now compares the punishment for transgressing the Law of Moses with the punishment due to those who reject the Son of God. Jews considered the Law of Moses to be divinely given, and to reject it was to reject God's instruction. Such a one was killed without compassion or mercy (Deuteronomy 17:6; 19:15). The writer poses that the punishment for rejecting the gift of God in Christ would be much worse. Proving that the New Covenant was

established by a better sacrifice (9:23) on better promises (8:6), to reject such truth would be an insult to God and a mockery of the Giver of grace. The apostate denies the significance of the sanctifying blood of Christ and treats it as common and unholy. Such arrogance and willful sin deserves a dreadful and certain penalty. Avenging wrongdoing is in the hands of God and the wrongdoer will not go unpunished. And such punishment will not be for a time but throughout eternity.

◆*Can a person lose their salvation? In light of your answer, how do you understand apostasy?*

### **Looking Forward Through Suffering**

**Hebrews 10:32-36:** The Jewish Christians who were recipients of this epistle were called to remember the earlier times when they first believed. How they were publicly abused—both verbally and physically—some were imprisoned, had their belongings confiscated and vandalized. But they persevered, maintaining a positive disposition and solidarity with those who were imprisoned for their faith. They endured patiently, being assured of the eternal reward that followed. They were encouraged by the writer to keep their confidence and boldness in the confession of Christ. They, and we, must remain faithful to the end. Our perfect role model is Christ who showed perfect biblical perseverance and our eyes should always remain on Him.

### **Conclusion**

Through Christ we can experience God's presence and develop a relationship with Him, always remembering that this world is temporary, but our life with God is eternal. As we persevere in the faith, we resist the doubts and concerns that society presents. Continue to share the knowledge of truth with others, introducing them to a new life through Christ. Encourage others to share the love of Christ and hold on to the promises of God that affirm our hope.

### **Source:**

Banks, M. (Ed.). (2020). Love For One Another. *Precepts for Living*, 23(Summer Quarter), 579-590. The Urban Ministries, Inc. Annual Commentary 2020-2021.

August 15, 2021 – Study Guide 11

**Lesson for Next Week – August 22, 2021 – Study Guide 12**

## **A CONQUERING FAITH**

Bible Background ♦ 1 JOHN 4-5  
Printed Text ♦ 1 JOHN 4:2-3, 13-17; 5:4-5  
Devotional Reading ♦ JOHN 14:15-24

### **Daily Bible Readings**

#### **MONDAY**

Test Our Love for God  
(Deuteronomy 13:1-4)

#### **TUESDAY**

Love God by Keeping His Commandments  
(John 14:15-24)

#### **WEDNESDAY**

Discerning the Spirit of Truth and Error  
(1 John 4:1, 4-6)

#### **THURSDAY**

Knowing God, We can Love Others  
(1 John 4:7-12)

#### **FRIDAY**

Faith Is the Victory  
(1 John 5:1-3)

#### **SATURDAY**

Believers in Jesus Have Life  
(1 John 5:6-12)

#### **SUNDAY**

Faith That Loves Overcomes Obstacles  
(1 John 4:2-3, 13-17; 5:4-5)