

Hebrews 10:19-39 – This is How to Stay Faithful

Intro: New Year's resolutions – things that pull us away from our goals. We lose intensity, then integrity, and then interest – our goal isn't as important to us as it once was.

Proverbs 16:9, 19:21, 27:1 – we should plan, but with an understanding of the providence of God. What is our plan for pressing on in the faith this year? How about reading the bible all the way through or missing fewer Sundays? What are the things that would pull us away from those goals? Do we even think about such things? How many times have we told God we were going to do this or that, and yet we failed to follow through? It's the same as it is with New Year's resolutions. Our goal loses its influence over us. What does the bible have to say about it?

This text is not everything *about* the subject, or the last word *on* the subject, but it is foundational *to* the subject. This message does not include all the issues that this particular text addresses, but this is biblically based instruction on *this* subject from *this* text of scripture. This is about how to stay faithful to Christ, not just what to do so that you will remain faithful but what faithfulness looks like; not just how to get to your destination but also how to travel while on the way, the right road and the right vehicle. Jesus has come and is coming again, we must keep this in sight if we want to stay and grow right, and we do this by doing the things outlined in this text.

Background: Under persecution some had departed and went back to Judaism. They had fallen away, and weren't coming back, and the others were being warned that they must separate from those who had lost their faith, or they would eventually fall away also.

What will you do with Jesus – the question for them and for us – it is a matter of exclusivity – a Christian is one who believes in salvation by God's grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone. They are placing all their trust for salvation in Christ. They cling to the cross of Christ even when they have to suffer for it. With all the other voices of the world pulling us in the other direction, saying we can have Jesus if we want but sincerity is all that really matters, it can be very hard to keep the faith. Yet that is what Christ demands, and no one who holds on to anything else but Jesus will make it to heaven, so says the bible. Jesus alone is the way the truth and the life. This passage provides motivation, accountability, and security for the true believer, and a warning to those who profess Christ but don't yet possess Christ.

Because we have (Jesus) (Christ alone)

- Confidence to enter in (19) through Jesus (atoning death) the throne room
- A new and living way (20) opened by Jesus (incarnation, sinless life)
- A great high priest (21) who is Jesus (resurrection, ascension)

Let us then (Approach) (Christ alone)

- Draw near (22) – **Worshipping** – remember our cleansing – prayer, thankfulness
 - Past – He has redeemed us, NO work needing to be done for forgiveness, acceptance (hearts / bodies cleansed, baptism, 1 Peter 3:21 / 1 Corinthians 6:20)
 - Have faith; it is based on knowledge (of Him), not against it
- Hold fast (23) – **Witnessing** – unwavering confession
 - Present – He is faithful to us
 - Have hope, it is based on His faithfulness, not ours

- Consider how (24-25) – **Working** – serving, supporting watching
 - Stir each other up, love, good works – meeting, not neglecting but encouraging, to miss is discouraging to me and to others – increasing in all of these things as the Day of Christ’s return is ever nearer
 - Future – He is coming again for us
 - Have love; it is centered around Christ

Since we have 19 we can 22 / we have 20 and so we can 23 / we have 21 and so we can 24-25. We abide in Christ by abiding in faith (vs.22), hope (vs.23), and love (vs.24).

- 26-31 – **Warning** – Trusting in Him alone or no place for forgiveness, get right with God or face His wrath
- 32-34 – **Walking** – obedience /sacrifice – destroys word of faith theology, practice
- 35-36 – **Word** – we know God’s promises, God’s will, and develop endurance through His Word (Romans 15:4)
- 37-39 – **Watching** – Living for today by having an eye for tomorrow, we shrink back, we fall back, we fall away, we must keep reaching for the goal or we will lose sight of it

as is the habit of some – the practice of some, it becomes a habit and it takes hold of them, it gets easier to do and harder to stop, it isn’t a holy habit like the text instructs us to have it is an unholy habit, which the text warns us about. Indeed some will not be ready, they will not stay faithful, they will fall away because they never were real in the first place, and it will be manifested as it says here, they will neglect the meeting together of the saints.

Many think they can stay home and stay faithful, but that is exactly the opposite of what this text teaches. You may think you are strong enough to coast but this text says you are not. Of course, just attending church is no guarantee that you are truly trusting Christ. Some may faithfully attend and not have real faith, but I can guarantee you that persistent and willful non-attendance is a sure sign that a person lacks real faith. If you love Christ you will love meeting, worshipping, fellowshiping and serving with your brethren in a local church, even if it costs you more than you seem to get out of it. Even if it means you will suffer persecution and loss as we see in this very passage of scripture. Willfully sinning is abandoning our confession because of contention, persecution, and conflict, and it is manifest by a lack of focus on Christ, slacking devotion and disobedience to Christ, and persistent and willful non attendance in a local church, the manifestation of the Body of Christ.

all the more as you see the Day drawing near – Second Coming of Christ – Romans 13:11-14 – our ultimate salvation. Matthew 25 clearly teaches that a state of sleep will come upon the church (vs.5), but that there will also be an awakening prior to His return (vs.6). It is high time to awake from our sleep! Many are not awake and not ready. They think they have enough oil to last but their light is going out. They think they belong but they do not. We must prepare ourselves as this text teaches. Those that are expecting will be increasing – 1 John 3:1-3.

This passage shows us what faithfulness looks like; worshipping, witnessing, working, walking, heeding the warning, reading the Word, and watching for His coming; and it teaches us to be about it all the more. That is how we can stay faithful.