

Jesus or Judgment

Hebrews 10:26-39

- If you were with us last week, the writer of Hebrews gave us some ways that we should be intentionally drawing near to the Father
- We should confidently and consistently going before Him
- And we should be consistently drawing near to Him together with other believers as well
- The writer says we need to consider how to stir one another up to love and good works, we shouldn't neglect to meet together, we should encourage each other all the more as we see the Day of Jesus coming back drawing near
- We are to live with a sense of urgency that there is a limited timeline on this life and the world as we know it
- Jesus will come back, as Revelation 21 says, the time will come when ***"God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no***

more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away..." -Revelation 21:4 (NKJV)

- However, in those days the only ones that will experience that new heaven and earth in eternity will be those who accept Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.
- When Jesus was praying in the garden of gethsememne in John chapter 17, He is very clear, ***"And this is eternal life, that they know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent." -John 17:3 (ESV)***
- Earlier in the Gospel of John, Jesus is asked, ***"Then they said to him, "What must we do, to be doing the works of God?" Jesus answered them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent." -John 6:28-29 (ESV)***

- And this is the number 1 reason why so many oppose Christianity.
- So many can't get passed the audacity of Christians to claim that there is only one way to God and eternal salvation
- I remember one time a man arguing with me saying, "That's what I can't stand about you Christians. Saying there's only one way to God. If I wanted to get to the state of Washington, there's not only one road I can take, I can choose whichever path I want!"
- But God's not a destination on a map, there is only One way, because before Him there WAS NO WAY
- But in His grace and His mercy, He created a way by enduring the cross so your sins could be paid for and you could enter into a relationship with God
- So there's really only two choices! Jesus or Judgment
- In this next section of Hebrews chapter 10, the writer gives a very strict warning.
 - Because he knows that there are some within the church, that have been around, heard the Gospel, been a part of the community, but haven't committed yet. They are still figuring out if this Jesus thing is for them or not, some are feeling pressure to return to the Jewish Temples and the Old Covenant way of life!
 - But the writer says, to do that, would be a complete rejection of Jesus, and there is nothing for you back there!
- He says, in verse 26: ***"For if we go on sinning deliberately after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a fearful expectation of judgment, and a fury of fire that will consume the adversaries. Anyone who has set aside the law of Moses dies without mercy on the evidence of two or three witnesses. How much worse punishment,***

do you think, will be deserved by the one who has trampled underfoot the Son of God, and has profaned the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has outraged the Spirit of grace? For we know Him who said, "Vengeance is Mine; I will repay." And again, "The Lord will judge His people." It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." -Hebrews 10:26-31 (ESV)

- PRAY
- DOG VOMIT
 - Because of that, it is so convicting to me whenever I read Proverbs 26:11 that says.
- ***"As a dog returns to its vomit, so fools repeat their folly." -Proverbs 26:11 (NIV)***
- When someone vomits, it is because there is something within them that their system rejects and has to discharge of

- You see we as believers, whenever we come into a relationship with Christ we are now New Creations, the old has passed and we have become new.
 - We have a new system, led by the Spirit not by the flesh.
 - Therefore Romans 6 says, ***"So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus." -Romans 6:11 (ESV)***
- So sin, has been rejected by this new system that we have in Christ
- However, in our weak human state, we can still be drawn back to that which our system has rejected
- All of the sudden that which the Spirit has discharged from our new self, starts to look appetizing every once in a while.
 - And to go back to that, the bible says, is as ludicrous as a dog returning to it's vomit.

- With that being said, we have to understand that there is a difference between sinning, and living in sin
- We will all sin in various ways probably every day
 - We will never be perfect
- However there are those that deliberately, willfully, intentionally reject the ways of God and the grace of God
- The writer in our passage isn't referring to those that experience temptation, try to fight it, know that it's wrong, have a weak moment, and fall into it anyway
- No, always remember to keep Scripture in context with Scripture and John says, ***"My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." -1 John 2:1 (ESV)***
- That passage has always been so encouraging to me, because John says, IF anyone sins
- Which tells me that there could actually come a time in my spiritual life, where sin isn't a regular occurrence, but actually a rarity in my life...as I grow in this process of sanctification
- Therefore, the Writer is not talking about those who sin, (which would be all of us) but rather those who intentionally live in sin.
 - The writer in this context is talking about those that say, "Oh God, said this...I don't care, I'm going to do the opposite."
- That's what the writer means by going on sinning deliberately...he describes this sin as trampling the underfoot of the Son of God.
- That term in the original language means: To spurn, to reject with disdain or contempt.

- He says that for those that intentionally choose the path of rejecting Jesus, then there remains no sacrifice for sins
 - Because according to the Old Testament law, there were different sacrifices for different kinds of sins. But there was no sacrifice for “willful” sins or “deliberate” sins
 - There were those that would hear God’s law, and decide that it wasn’t important, it wasn’t for them, and they would break the law intentionally in order to prove a point
 - And for those types of deliberate sins, there was no sacrificial atonement, they would be put on trial, and if 2 or three witnesses all agreed that this was a willful, deliberate sin... those people were to be cut off from the people, and most times they were to be stoned
- However, the writer of Hebrews says that for those who hear the Gospel, come to know the Truth, or more accurately hear the precise

Truth, and intentionally reject it: A worse punishment remains for them.

- Peter says, ***“It would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness than to have known it and then to turn away from the holy commandment passed on to them. What the true proverb says has happened to them: “The dog returns to its own vomit...”***
-2 Peter 2:21 (ESV)
 - The writer of Hebrews says that all that is left for those who deliberately reject Jesus is judgment, a fury of God’s fiery anger, and an insulted Spirit of Grace.
 - This version says, “outraged the Spirit of Grace” but I think that translation over does it a bit, because the word in the original language means to insult. To spite.
- So the word is being used to describe an action being done, not the emotion of who it is being done to...I felt that warranted clarification

- However, the point still remains. There is only two choices. Jesus or Judgment: Are you going to choose Jesus and receive forgiveness, and eternal life, and real purpose for the life you're currently in...or are you going to reject Jesus and face the consequences?
- Now keep in mind that this passage is written to believers, who have their eternity secured. We've seen this back in chapter 6, when the writer gave a similar warning and strong language but followed it up with, "Though we speak in this way, yet in your case, beloved, we feel sure of better things"
- And the writer will do the same thing later in this chapter.
 - So, the writer's point is not, *"You better shape up, stop sinning, or all of this judgement is going to happen to you!"*
 - *Rather, his point is more so to highlight how completely ludicrous it would be to reject Jesus and go back to Judaism*
- Because only in Jesus is there an effective sacrifice for our sins.
- Now, the Gospel will always be controversial and offensive because it demands a choice.
- And this is an aspect that we don't like talking about, or thinking about that is when it comes to the judgement of God
- We want to talk about the love of God, not the wrath of God
- However, you can't really have one without the other
 - We will never fully appreciate the love of God we don't deserve if we don't have an understanding of the wrath of God that we do deserve
- And so many people miss out on appreciating all who God is, because we treat Him as if we are doing Him a favor by choosing to follow Him.

- We feel like God needs to give us a sales pitch, to see if we will grace Him with our presence on His team
 - And that is exactly why so many people miss out on the Kingdom of God, just as some would in the time of Hebrews...because we're just giving Jesus a trial run to see if He's going to work for me.
 - What's interesting is that when the writer says, If there are those that deliberately go on sinning after receiving the knowledge of truth...that same word greek word for receiving is used again in the next chapter in the context of:
 - **Receiving (lambanō): “To make a trial of”**
- How many people come into church, or take an approach to God with the attitude, of “Let's see if this will work for me. Let's see if I'm going to be comfortable signing up for His way of life...”
 - And we'll base our spiritual lives around our wants, our preferences, our desires
 - And if your spiritual life is based around you, you don't have one...because all you are doing is trying to manipulate a version of God to your own liking, and in doing so you are just choosing to be your own God
- And the only reason we will ever have mindsets like that is because we don't have any remorse or understanding for how detestable, abhor-able, and heinous sin is!
- It's so disgusting in the eyes of God that it is comparable to dog vomit!
- When sin entered into the world, it created an immediate separation between God and humanity
 - God is so Holy that He cannot be in the presence of Sin
 - God is so Just that sin has to be punished
 - God is so Merciful that He provided a way for atonement
 - God is so Loving that He took the punishment that sin required for you

- The love of God provided the way for us to escape the wrath of God
- The only question is, are you going to accept the way out that He offers?!
- But so many people get so upset that we would ever say that Jesus is the only way!
 - But that's like getting a diagnosis from the doctor. And the doctor comes in and say, "I have bad news. You have a terminal disease. But the good news is that we caught it early, there's a treatment, and if you accept this treatment you will live."
 - Imagine getting that news, and then just getting upset at the doctor for having the audacity to tell you that you have a disease! Or being so offended that he would dare tell you how to treat the disease!
 - But the reality is you can react however you want, but you only have two choices...accept the treatment, or accept the consequence of rejecting the treatment
- Because that is the exact offer that you have from God! He tells you clearly the diagnosis! We all have been infected by the disease of sin, and if left untreated you will spend eternity separated from God!
 - But the good news is, we caught it early! And there is a treatment! And all you have to do is believe and accept Jesus, because His blood is the antidote for your condition! And if you accept Him you will be saved!
 - But if you reject Him, you will have to live with the consequences for all of eternity
- So many people will ask, how could a loving God, send people to Hell?
- But the reality is, we are all sinful human beings on our way to hell, but God in His Love, and in His Grace, and in His Mercy provides a way out
 - And we can either gratefully accept it, or stubbornly ignore it

- But the Day, the writer of Hebrews says, is drawing near. And that is the day God will enact His judgment on all sin. God will have his vengeance on sin, He will judge the sins of the people, and it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of punishment of the Living God
- Now, with all of that being said: this is not a passage that we as believers should use as pious ammunition, this is not a passage that should lead us to a place of fear, this is a passage that should break our hearts!
- If we as believers know our eternal security, we are not fearful of losing that because of our mistakes or shortcomings
 - Because we know that Jesus has covered that on the cross and we have accepted the treatment for our sin!
- However, we should be devastated at the thought of those around us rejecting the Son of God and falling into this Judgment!
- We have been given the greatest news ever known to mankind and we should be sharing it every single chance that we get!
- That's why Paul says ***"All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to Himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation."*** -2 Corinthians 5:18-19 (ESV)
- That word reconcile means to reestablish a relationship with
- Therefore, our hearts desire, and our mission as believers, is to partner with God in reestablishing the relationship between Him and His creation!
- Paul goes on to say: ***"Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making His appeal through us. We implore you on***

***behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.” -2
Corinthians 5:20 (ESV)***

- Other translations say, as if God were pleading through us!
- If our hearts are not completely broken for the lost something is wrong!
- Peter says, “God is not willing that any should perish but that all would come to repentance”
- Paul tells Timothy, “God wants everyone to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.”
 - And that should be our heart as well!
- We only have a brief amount of time on this planet...the average life span is what? 70 years or so?
 - After this life is over, we will never again in all of eternity have the opportunity to share the Gospel with someone.
 - Once we reach eternity, everyone will already be saved!

- We have the greatest opportunity right now, that the angels don’t even get, to live by faith and share the message of Jesus with a world that so desperately needs Him, and we cannot take that for granted.
- *And the best way to genuinely share our salvation is to authentically appreciate our salvation*
- The writer says in verse 32: ***“But recall the former days when, after you were enlightened, you endured a hard struggle with sufferings, sometimes being publicly exposed to reproach and affliction, and sometimes being partners with those so treated. For you had compassion on those in prison, and you joyfully accepted the plundering of your property, since you knew that you yourselves had a better possession and an abiding one. Therefore do not throw away your confidence, which has a great reward.” -Hebrews 10:32-35 (ESV)***

- So the writer of Hebrews, I think, rounds out chapter 10 by giving us 3 practical ways that we can make sure that we are confidently and consistently drawing near to the Presence of God, not neglecting to meet together, and not deliberately sinning or taking our salvation for granted.

- First from this passage, I see that we are to:

- **REMEMBER WHEN WE MET JESUS**

- The writer says, recall the early days
- Remember how much differently you saw things after you initially really started following Jesus for the first time
- Remember the excitement and the realness there was around your faith
- I always love, we talked about this at Easter, but I always love so much seeing Jesus restore Peter after the greatest spiritual failure in his life
 - He had denied Jesus three times, was still wallowing in the guilt and shame of his

failure, and then Jesus appears to him while He's on a boat, tells him to cast the net on another side, catches more fish than he can hold....and completely recreates the scene of when they first met.

- Sometimes whenever you feel in a spiritual rut, or start to drown in fear and doubt, think back to when you first met Jesus, think back to times where your faith really became your own for the first time
 - Think back to those times where His presence was undeniable
 - Think back to the first time you really experienced the power of prayer
 - Think back to the various spiritual breakthroughs that you've experienced
- Because the fun thing about the Christian life, is that it's not just one moment of transformation at salvation, but it's a series of transformations where God is constantly revealing more of Himself, consistently moving in new ways, always pulling you up, seeing you

through, and taking you deeper and deeper into His presence as you journey through this life

- And there will be times where we feel like we're off, or that we're in a spiritual lull, and sometimes all it takes to remember. Think back over all the times He's come through for you
- That's why David tells us in Psalm 37 to "Feed on His Faithfulness"
- But also in Psalm 51, David intentionally asks God to "Restore to him the Joy of His Salvation"
 - Because there are going to be times where we get beaten down by life over and over again, that we're not handling it as well as we used to earlier on in our faith
 - We get so busy, and distracted and can become callous to the needs of others, because of how much we have going on
- But the writer says remember the days where you endured hardship so easily because of

your faith in Christ, remember how much your heart went out to the needy!

- And whenever those priorities were straight, he tells them exactly why they had the perspective that they did:
- He says: ***"...since you knew that you yourselves had a better possession and an abiding one." -Hebrews 10:34b (ESV)***
- So, we are to remember when we first met Jesus, and:
 - **FOCUS ON HEAVEN**
 - We have to be reminded that this life is but a vapor
 - That this world is not our home
- There's a reason why Jesus taught us to pray, beginning with: "Our Father, who art in Heaven, hallowed be thy Name. Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven"

- You seem our job as Christians is not to get to Heaven one day, our job is to bring Heaven here
- That is why Paul says that we are citizens of Heaven, and while we are still on this earth we are to operate as ambassadors of Christ
 - Being focused on Heaven does not mean that we overlook the needs of this world
 - On the contrary, the more we are focused on eternity the more that we will be able to effectively help and meet the needs of this world.
 - CS Lewis explained this so well whenever he said:
 - ***“If you read history you will find that the Christians who did most for the present world were precisely those who thought most of the next. It is since Christians have largely ceased to think of the other world that they have become so ineffective in this (one).”-CS Lewis***
- You see, if we lose sight of the promise of Heaven that we have...all we are going to do is live in fear of the brokenness and chaos of this world
- If we lose sight of the truth that Kingdoms rise and kingdoms fall but the word of the Lord stands forever....then election time this year, is going to rattle us
- If we lose the appreciation of our salvation we won't have the confidence that David had whenever he said, "The Lord is on my side; I will not fear. What can man do to me?" -Psalm 118:6 (ESV)
- This is why we are to:
 - ***“Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth.”
-Colossians 3:2 (ESV)***
 - ***“...we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the***

***things that are unseen are eternal.” -2
Corinthians 4:18 (ESV)***

- And yes, there are issues and injustices that the church should rightly be involved with and lead the charge in, however, we can never effectively help and earthly problem without a heavenly perspective
- So we remember all that God has done for us, we stay focused on heaven, so we can remain confident in our faith:
- That's why the writer closes out this chapter by saying: ***“Therefore do not throw away your confidence, which has a great reward. For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God you may receive what is promised. For, “Yet a little while, and the coming One will come and will not delay, but My righteous one shall live by faith, and if he shrinks back, my soul has no pleasure in him.” But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who have faith and***

***preserve their souls.” -Hebrews 10:35-39
(ESV)***

- So for our last point:
- **STAND FIRM IN THE FAITH**
- And to clarify, we constantly remind ourselves of our salvation, we stay focused on Heaven so we can stand firm in the faith.
- I think too often we have this misguided idea of what it means to stand firm in the faith:
- We see standing firm as we're supposed to be posting bible verses on social media, argue with unbelievers, we make sure we share our Christian opinion in controversial situations. We think it means to be as good as possible, and talk as much as possible
- But when Paul uses the phrase “Stand Firm” in corinthians, philippians, Thessalonians, and other places...the phrase literally means. To be stationary
 - So to stand firm in the faith, it isn't really about taking active steps to be a better

Christian...it's about not being moved from away from Him.

- It's about not falling away from Him, AND it's about not getting ahead of Him.
- But we're human, and we're so often like dogs drawn to our vomit, and there will be times we start to shrink back, there will be times we start to get ahead of God
- There are going to be those times in our lives where we find ourselves in situations that we feel completely helpless and hopeless, we'll feel like we've dug ourselves into a hole
 - And standing firm in the faith isn't about digging yourself out of it...it's about letting Him who is above you, pull you out of it
 - Exodus 14:14- The Lord will fight for you, you need only to be still.
- One of the scariest situations of my life came in 2016
- I was 25 years old, and I had been in a relationship for wayyy to long that ended. I had

money that I had saved up for an engagement ring, wasn't going to be buying that anymore so I took that money and I booked myself a little getaway to Belfast, Northern Ireland

- And it was a short trip, I was only going to be there for 3 days, but I had a good plan. My first day there was going to be my walking day, 2nd was my car rental day, 3rd was going to be my train day.
- All started off well, walked all around the city my first day there. However, my 2nd day, was where I hit a snag. This was my car rental day, so I got up in the morning and went to budget rental car
- And I was excited, I had always wanted to drive in the UK on the left hand side. While I was getting my car, the lady at the counter asked me if I wanted the insurance. "Sure, I spend my money on dumb things on vacation, so what the heck! Gimme the insurance!"
- But then they brought me out to the car....

- Little matchbox car that makes my nissan look like an suv
- Stick shift for my left hand
- Car whizzing all around downtown
- But I muster up the confidence, and I merge into traffic...I feel ok, until the gps tells me to take a right turn, and my mind can't comprehend what I'm seeing, so I decide I will only take left turns
- And then at one point I take a turn down this street, it's so narrow, cars along each side of the street. But I'm so happy not to be in the middle of downtown anymore. And I just when I start to feel like I'm getting the hang of it, I get a little too comfortable and I start to drift a little to the left, and then BANG. I hit a parked car
 - Now I have cars behind me, and beside me, there's no where to pull over, and I'm at a stop light so I can't get out of the car there
- The people on the street said, "Hey! you just hit that car! "I said "I know! "They said "What are you drunk?," and I said "No! I'm American!"
- I said, "I'm going to circle around the block and come back!"
- It made sense in my mind, I take 3 left turns, I'm right back where I needed to be
- But the problem was, when I took that first left turn I was at a round-a-bout..after circling that 3 times, I panic and just pick one way to go, and then I'm on the freeway!
- Cars whizzing by me, I'm shaking and can't take my hands off the wheel and shifter, and when I get the confidence to change lanes, I finally get off an exit and find a place to pull over on the side of the road
- I get out, I'm dry heaving, trying to figure out what I'm going to do now!

- I gather myself and then drive around for almost an hour, and I can't find where I had hit that car
- So finally I gave up, and just went back to the rental car place...
- They asked, "Are you ok?" I said, "No, I hit a car!" They said, "You didn't stop?" "I couldn't!" "That's a federal offense" I was like, "IM GOING TO JAIL!"
- I explained the whole situation, and they had me fill out an accident report...after I filled it out, I asked, "Ok, how much is this going to cost me?"
 - "Unfortunately for us, you took out the largest insurance policy we have, so we have to take care of it"
 - "Well, do I need to go to the police station?"
 - "No, we'll take care of that too, just go get yourself a cup of coffee, settle yourself down, and enjoy the rest of your stay....but you will

never be able to rent from budget rental car in Northern Ireland ever again."

- DEAL
- But there was such a valuable lesson in that, because:
 - There were times in my life where I was going to crash again. I am going to mess up, I am going to make mistakes.
 - And my first default instincts are to make one panic decision after another, let my fears dictate my next move, and try to fix and take care of something I don't know how to fix or take care of!
 - But when I do that, all I am going to do is end up in a much bigger mess, more and more lost, and so much further from where I need to be!
- So what I need to do from the beginning, is just go back to the source, go back to the starting

point, and let the One who really knows what He's doing take care of it all!

- There is only One WAY to put all of the broken pieces, and the messiness, and hardships of life back together
- There is only ONE WAY to go from falling to standing firm!
 - Its not philosophy, ideology, religion, or a self-help program...
 - HE'S A PERSON, AND HIS NAME IS JESUS CHRIST
 - And He took out the largest insurance policy in all of eternity, when He poured out His blood on the cross, so that you could have the opportunity to get back up, keep moving forward, and stand firm in the faith!
- But the enemy has been trying to get some of us to believe that all we are capable of is failure! So there's no point! And they try to get us to shrink back and give up

- But the writer of Hebrews says, that's not who you are! We are not those who shrink back and are destroyed, but those who have faith and preserve their souls!
- Standing firm in the faith is not about having a perfect performance, it is about trusting in the promises of God
 - That He will never leave you or forsake you
 - That He is with you, even to the end of the age
 - That He who began a good work in you, WILL bring it to completion
 - AND IF GOD IS FOR US, WHO CAN BE AGAINST US!
- John tells us:
 - ***For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith.” -1 John 5:4 (ESV)***