

With verse 18 the writer ends the doctrinal section of the epistle. He now turns his attention to practical applications from the doctrinal thoughts. The last half of this chapter deals with Christian behavior and their remaining faithful to their commitment to Jesus Christ. An overview is that they are to be mindful to encourage others to love and good works. They must not neglect the assembly as some do, but encourage one another. If Christians keep on sinning willfully, they will be lost. The Israelite who disobeyed the Law of Moses was put to death without mercy on the evidence of two or three witnesses. How much worse it will be to those who flagrantly disobey the Son of God. God has said He will punish the wicked.

They need to remember their early days of being a Christian. On one hand they were persecuted. On the other hand they had the joy of those of a like faith knowing they had a lasting possession. They are admonished not to throw away their confidence for it has a great reward. Endurance is necessary to gain God's greatest blessing. It will not be long until the Second Coming of Jesus. Do not give up the faith. Christians must persevere to the end in order to be saved.

19 Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holy place by the blood of Jesus Christ, 20 by the way which he dedicated for us, a new and living way, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; Men now have access to God by a new and living way, which is through Jesus Christ. This thought is very similar to the truth of John 14:6. It is a **new way**. This means a way which was never before accessible to man. It is a **living way** because it comes by the living Christ and gives men life. **The veil** refers to the second veil of the tabernacle which separated the Holy place from the Holy of holies. However, it was torn down at the death of Jesus on the cross (Matthew 27:51). When the veil was torn down, access to God is accessible of all man and the way to him was made clear to man. In this passage the veil represents **his flesh** or his body. Just as the only way into the Holy of holies was through the veil under the old covenant, the only way to God and heaven (the Holy of holies) is through the flesh of Jesus, which is his shed blood on the cross.

Verse 21 speaks of the house of God, which according to 1 Tim 3:15 is church and because we have a high priest over the church, there are some things we need to do. Christians are urged to DRAW NEAR UNTO GOD. *22 let us draw near with a true heart in fullness of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience: and having our body washed with pure water,* It is explained how one draws near to God. First, one

must have a **true heart**. This is a sincere heart. One of the essentials of being a Christian is to have a pure and honest heart. A heart without hypocrisy.

There must be the fullness of faith. **Fullness of faith** means a complete belief in God and his word. It is a trusting confidence that what God says is true. Obedience must follow. Faith which pleases God is always the faith that obeys.

Having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience. Old Testament terminology is used to express a New Testament thought. Under the old covenant they sprinkled the blood of animal was a means of cleansing. In the new covenant men are cleansed by the blood of the lamb thus **having our body washed with pure water**. This refers to the cleansing of the soul, not a physical washing of the body. **Washed in pure water** refers to baptism. As Paul teaches in Romans 6:3-4, one comes in contact with the blood of Christ at baptism. Ananias told Saul, "*Arise and be baptized and wash away your sins*" (Acts 22:16). Titus 3:6 calls it, **the washing of regeneration**. When one is baptized, he comes in contact with the blood of Jesus and his sins are washed away (Acts 2:38; Revelation 7:13-17).

Next we are told to HOLD FAST. (23) *let us hold fast the confession of our hope that it waver not; for he is faithful that promised:* Christians must hold fast to the faith they have confessed. This faith has the hope of eternal life if one remains faithful. The promise of eternal life in its fullest sense comes after the Second Coming of Jesus Christ and the resurrection from the dead. One must hold fast, remain faithful until death to receive this hope. One of the main purposes of the epistle is to encourage them to faithfulness.

Holding fast usually takes some encouragement from others. Thus v24 says LET US CONSIDER ONE ANOTHER. This consideration of one another comes in two ways. One is provoking and the other is not forsaking. *24 and let us consider one another to provoke unto love and good works;* As children of God, we are expected to consider the other children in the family. Christians are **to provoke one another to love and good works**. Too many times Christians provoke one another to anger. The proper provoking is to encourage fellow Christians to love and good works. One must be unselfish and help his brother along the road of life.

25 not forsaking our own assembling together, as the custom of some is, but exhorting one another; and so much the more, as ye see the day drawing nigh.

A vital part of Christianity is meeting together with fellow Christians. This encourages and provokes others to love and good works. As said before, coming together

Chapter 10:19-39

is not all about you but about the others. There is strength and encouragement that comes from worshipping God with fellow Christians, which comes in no other way. This is **exhorting one another** at the worship assembly. Worship of the entire church is vital to Christianity. And this is to continue until Jesus comes again or at the text says “*till you see the day drawing nigh.*”

The Hebrew Christians as well as we today need to understand that there is no other plan of redemption coming. So, *(26) if we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more a sacrifice for sins, 27 but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and a fierceness of fire which shall devour the adversaries.* **To sin willfully** is to sin deliberately after one knows what is right and true. This does not refer to the Christian who is striving to do right, but occasionally stumbles and sins. Nor is this talking about the Christian who drifts away from Christ, sins grievously, but one day comes to himself, repents and returns to the Lord seeking forgiveness. As the parable of the prodigal son and other scriptures teach an unfaithful Christian may be restored.

This refers to the Christian who turns away from Christ and his word and deliberately sins and keeps on sinning. When one deliberately and willfully turns away from Christ and keeps sinning, he will be lost. The blood of Christ cannot save one who does not repent, nor can he be saved in any other way. It should be understood that this person received the knowledge of the truth. This means he knew it, obeyed it and became a sincere Christian.

When one deliberately turns away from Christ, sins and keeps sinning, he has only the consequences of sin awaiting him, which is the second death.

To show the seriousness of faithfulness, the writer reminds the people that under the old imperfect law people were put to death because of sin at the testimony of two or three witlessness. Now under a new and superior law, how much more severe will the punishment be for sin, and much of this judgment is centered on a person attitude toward Jesus and what he did. Notice the end of verse 29. *how much sorer punishment, think ye, shall he be judged worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the spirit of grace?*

The new covenant is much better in every way. It is better both in blessings and punishment. The transgressor under the law received physical death: however, under the

new covenant, the Christians who turn away from Jesus will suffer eternal death. The despicable sins which he has committed are described.

(1) He has **trodden under foot the Son of God**. To trod under foot means to despise and hold Christ up to the worst type of contempt even when he knows Jesus is the Son of God.

(2) **Hath counted the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified an unholy thing**. This person was sanctified teaching he was a true Christian. He was not someone who just went through the motions of being a Christian. This person was a sincere Christian. The **blood of the covenant** is the blood of Christ. This means he treats the blood of Christ as common or unholy. This is contempt for that which is holy.

(3) And **hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace**. The Spirit of grace is the Holy Spirit through whom God gives man many of his blessings. This means to blasphemously insult the Holy Spirit. To insult the Holy Spirit is the darkest of sins and impiety. Such a one who does this and continues to do this will not receive forgiveness. He will receive eternal punishment.

Let us give attention to vs 30-31. It speaks of vengeance belonging to the Lord. This is similar to the language used by Moses in Deut. 32:45 and Paul's quote in Romans 12:19, but the difference is to whom vengeance is promised. In the previous references, it is promised to the wicked sinner. Here it is promised to the wicked Christian who has become unfaithful. *30 For we know him that said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense. And again, the Lord shall judge his people. 31 It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.* Matthew 10:28 and 2 Thessalonians 1:9 show why it is **a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God**. God will give the faithful Christians an eternal home in heaven. God will punish the unrighteous and unfaithful Christians in an eternal hell.

In vs 32-33 we see Christians being encouraged to faithfulness. He asks them to remember how they lived faithfully amid great persecution shortly after they became Christians. After they had become Christians, they endured great suffering and remained faithful. Some of these Christians had been exposed to this public ridicule and abuse by Rome. Others had supported and helped them. Some of these had been put into jail. In the first century one would die in jail unless others helped them with food, medicine and other necessities. They had compassion (v34) on one another. When their brothers and sisters were in prison, they did what Christians ought to do and took care of their needs. When

they suffered for being Christians, they rejoiced as Jesus commanded in Matthew 5:12 because they had a **better possession and an abiding one**.

35 Cast not away therefore your boldness, which hath great recompense of reward.

These Christians had been courageous in living for Jesus. He urges them not to **cast away** or change it. If they are faithful in living for Jesus, they have a great reward.

36 For ye have need of patience, that, having done the will of God, ye may receive the promise....38 But my righteous one shall live by faith: And if he shrink back, my soul hath no pleasure in him. 39 But we are not of them that shrink back unto perdition; but of them that have faith unto the saving of the soul.

Just as in Habakkuk 2:4, the prophet wondered how long before God delivered His people and fulfilled his promises. These Christians wondered the same thing. **My righteous one** refers to Christians. **Live by faith** means to be faithful. Therefore, God's children must be faithful. If they turn back and are unfaithful, God will not be pleased with them. The author is urging Christians to be faithful to God as Jesus is coming. Christians today need to be encouraged to be faithful.

The author has warned them, and then assures them that they are not those who will become unfaithful. They are those who will be faithful unto death and be saved. Christians must be faithful to go to heaven (Revelation 2:10).