

Hebrews



**Promises
Faithfully
Kept**

Hebrews 10.19-31 (CSB)

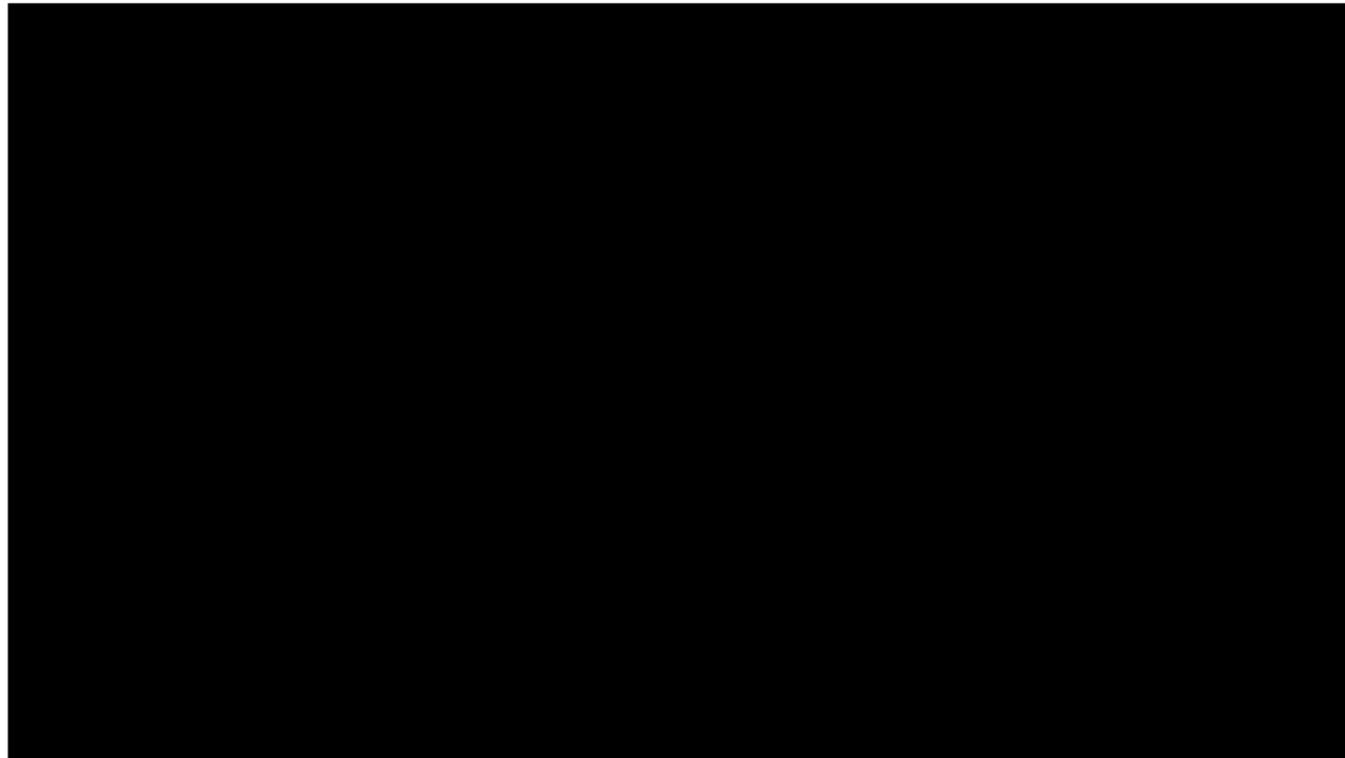
**Are You Persevering or
Pretending?**

Pretend that a car is about to hit you, but then your friend pushes you out of the way. Your friend loves you so much that he saves you from getting hurt by the car, but he gets hurt instead.



Intro: big thoughts for little thinkers

[No notes, just share personally how it is loving to confront our sinfulness, especially false professors within the church]



-4 soils (define as preoccupied, pretending to have salvation, ultimately preferring the world's approval, or those who have truly been saved)

19 Therefore, brothers and sisters, since we have boldness to enter the sanctuary through the blood of Jesus—

**— 20 he has inaugurated for us
a new and living way through
the curtain (that is, through his
flesh)—**

**21 and since we have a great
high priest over the house of
God, 22 let us draw near with a
true heart in full assurance of
faith,**

**with our hearts sprinkled clean
from an evil conscience and our
bodies washed in pure water.**

**23 Let us hold on to the
confession of our hope without
wavering, since he who
promised is faithful.**

**24 And let us consider one
another in order to provoke love
and good works, 25 not
neglecting to gather together,
as some are in the habit of
doing,**

**but encouraging each other,
and all the more as you see the
day approaching.**

**26 For if we deliberately go on
sinning after receiving the
knowledge of the truth, there no
longer remains a sacrifice for
sins,**

**27 but a terrifying expectation of
judgment and the fury of a fire
about to consume the
adversaries.**

28 Anyone who disregarded the law of Moses died without mercy, based on the testimony of two or three witnesses.

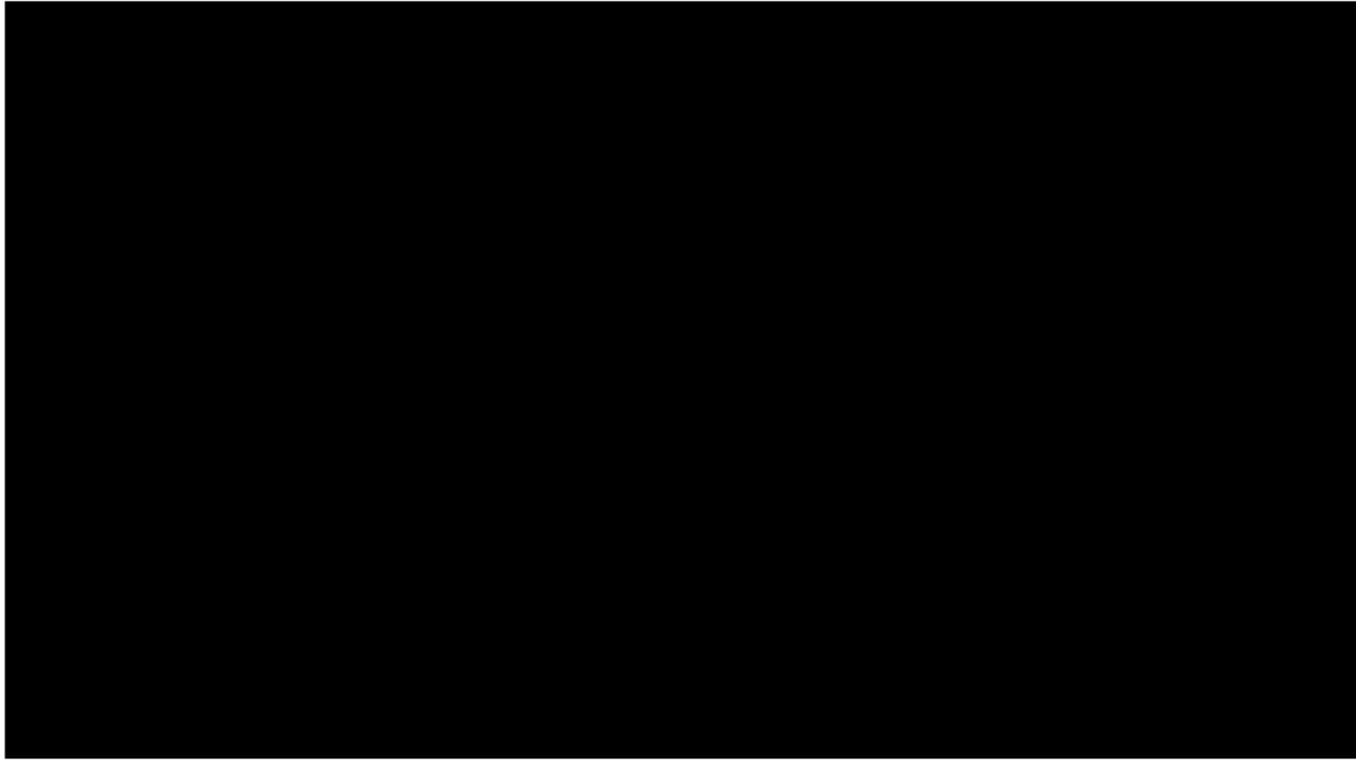
**29 How much worse
punishment do you think one
will deserve who has trampled
on the Son of God,**

**who has regarded as profane
the blood of the covenant by
which he was sanctified, and
who has insulted the Spirit of
grace?**

**30 For we know the one who
has said,
Vengeance belongs to me; I will
repay,**

**and again,
The Lord will judge his people.**

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



Pray

**If you are saved, you will
persevere faithfully by divine
preservation.
(Vv. 19-25)**

If you are saved, you will persevere faithfully by divine preservation.

The preacher gives us two paragraphs with two different types of people in mind. Both groups of people are those who have made a profession of faith in Christ. The first group is composed of those who truly know Christ and show it by their continuous actions. The other group appears to never have known Christ by faith through their continual deliberate choice of sin instead of obedience to Christ.

In the New Testament there is a tension that we are supposed to feel. We must uphold truths that only God can save and that God does save and keep those whom He calls to Himself. We must also uphold the teaching that there will be people who make professions of faith in Christ but turn away from Christ and the church.

Jesus referred to this in the 4 soils, in references to His disciples while making distinctions about Judas, and in His parables.

He says, 27 My sheep hear my voice, I know them, and they follow me. 28 I give them eternal life, and they will never perish. No one will snatch them out of my hand. 29 My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all. No one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. 30 I and the Father are one." (John 10:27-30)

In his priestly prayer, Jesus says:

I guarded them and not one of them is lost, except the son of destruction, so that the Scripture may be fulfilled. (John 17:12)

Speaking about the truly saved enduring to the end, Jesus said:

9 "Then they will hand you over to be persecuted, and they will kill you. You will be hated by all nations because of my name. 10 Then many will fall away, betray one

another, and hate one another. 11 Many false prophets will rise up and deceive many. 12 Because lawlessness will multiply, the love of many will grow cold. 13 But the one who endures to the end will be saved. (Matt 24:9-13)

Again, earlier in Matthew, Jesus tells us that not every one who acknowledges Him as Lord, Lord will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he does the will of my Father in Heaven. (Matt 7:21)

And yes, this is consistent with the Scripture that tells that everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved, for with the mouth one professes and with the heart one believes.

God knows those who are His and whom He has given new hearts, who are professing from a place of belief and not mere benefits.

You cannot just depend on your testimony from many years ago. That testimony must continue to be your testimony. Are you trusting our great Savior still? Are you obeying Him in all the ways He has taught us? Are you still pursuing Him so that you can know Him better? Are you still gathering with the church so that you may be encouraged to faithfulness AND so that you can encourage the rest of the church in faithfulness?

The preacher calls us to join him in four actions that are expected of a heart that has been changed by grace: Those who know God pursue God; they hold to the gospel in their own life and extend it to others; they gather regularly with the church to mutually encourage faithfulness; and they keep the end of all things before them.

READ vv. 19-22

The preacher, the author has driven these points home by now. You don't go to God by going back to your old life. You come to God only by Christ who is now your life. The OLD SYSTEM has faded into the background and been discarded because Jesus is all that we need to come into God's presence. He is the more glorious temple, He is the perfect sacrifice, He is the unfailing High Priest who is in the very splendor of the Father's presence! There is no more curtain to divide God from His people. Christ's body is the open curtain to heaven!

Remember the back room illustration, in which our salvation was worked out, a room we were not allowed into? We have a man who was able to go into the back room. He's looked back out to us and asked, "Aren't you going to come in? I've made a way for you?"

What could be more deserving of your attention than the God who inspires every wondrous joy this world has ever known, who sits ready to hear your voice address Him and whose Spirit always looks to encourage you in this life, in this pursuit of the life of Christ?

Are you keeping our church covenant promise to seek the Lord daily through Scripture and prayer? Delight in Him. Take in the sustaining Word and pour forth song and supplication to our Father.

Those who know the Lord in salvation will want to pursue God.

They will also hold to our sound confession of the gospel.

Jesus saves. Our message is as simple as that. There is salvation to restoration with God that is the key to all of creation being reset to its purpose, but that salvation is found in no other name than the glorious name of Jesus the Christ.

John Bunyan has given us a gift in his work, *The Pilgrim's Progress*. Throughout it, various people try to come alongside Pilgrim, claiming to be on the same road. But their essential character is not one of faith, and this is revealed over time through their claims and departure from the way of Christ. They hold to wrong views of God and life because of their wicked hearts still controlled by sin. They appear to be on the road to heaven, but their denials of essential truths and their selfish pursuits show they don't know the Savior. And so they eventually depart from the way.

Paul tells us that [False] teaching will spread like gangrene. Hymenaeus and Philetus are among those [teaching falsely]. 18 They have departed from the truth, saying that the resurrection has already taken place, and are ruining the faith of some. 19 Nevertheless, God's solid foundation stands firm, bearing this inscription: The Lord knows those who are his, and let everyone who calls on the name of the Lord turn away from wickedness.

If you are struggling to continue believing in Christ and God according to the Scriptures, then you must ask what God did you believe in? If your faith was in a version of God that was according to your own making or someone else's but not according to the self-revelation of Scripture, you have been believing in an idol. An idol does not save. Instead of turning from the faith, you should turn to it for the first time. Throw your idol and trust in the One and Only God.

Those who know the Lord in salvation will want to pursue God.

They will hold to our sound confession of the gospel.

They will continue gathering regularly with the church for worship and for instigating faithfulness in each other's lives.

There is understanding if someone is physically unhealthy or incapable physically of arriving at the place of gathering. Those people are the main reason we continue to use live stream for them to continue to connect to the church with whom they have covenanted.

But those with health and physical difficulties are not the only ones who have been part of this church who have not prioritized gathering with the body. I've heard it said that Sunday morning church attendance is a Saturday night decision. It is not a Saturday night decision only. It is a Sunday through Saturday life that you want to enjoy with the family of God. It is a desire to grow as Christ's disciples and so you gather on Sundays with the whole church and during the week with a small group of believers in community to spur one another on. The term for encourage or spur or stir up is similar to the English phrase "pushing someone's buttons." Some of you are natural button pushers when it comes to trying to tease others. To "push others' buttons" in all the good ways, you have to know each other and have enough relational credit.

If you are willfully choosing to avoid gathering with the church, it must be asked if you actually belong to the living body of Christ, who push one another to live and move as Christ's representative body.

Those who know the Lord in salvation will want to pursue God.

They will hold to our sound confession of the gospel.

They gather for worship and to push one another's buttons for persisting in faithfulness.

They also live in light of Christ's return, upon which He will judge the living and the dead.

We don't know when Christ is going to return. We're not on the planning committee, but we want to be on the welcoming committee.

When he returns, we want to be those who are found to have been faithful on this earth.

Have you used Christ's judgment seat as encouragement in accountability? If not, why not? Has your accountability not reached the point of openness? Or have you not called out sin as sin? Or applied the gospel to the sinful confession? The judgment seat of Christ reminds us that one day all our deeds will be exposed so that God is shown to be right and Christ as supreme. Love and honor for His glorious name should drive you to have your life submitted to the Spirit!

How you live your life matters to you if you know the love of God because you want to have him honored on that day that Jesus returns.

**Those who do not persevere in
the faith are pretending unto
eternal punishment.
(Vv. 26-29)**

Those who do not persevere in the faith are pretending unto eternal punishment.

The author now addresses the matter of people claiming to be Christian but deliberately or intentionally choosing sin.

There is a difference between stumbling into sin and running headlong into it. There is a difference between a toddler who needs to learn not to slap his mom and an adult man abusing his parents or wife or children or others. It is even more telling when someone who chooses sin over Jesus choose also to cover it up, knowing it was a choice of rebellion.

As this very book teaches us, God never abandons those who are His in Christ. Those who are truly His will never be able to run away from Him. Your sins (past, present, and future) are all forgiven in Christ.

But those who have been pretending to believe in Christ will treat Jesus's sacrifice as an excuse for their wicked hearts to find pleasure in idolatry.

The preacher of Hebrews compares the sacrifice of Christ to the repeated sacrifices of the Temple system. With that system, it was reinforced that it is better to ask forgiveness than permission. You knew another sacrifice was going to have be made next year, if not sooner.

Jesus is not some animal that you get to kill so that you get your way. And that is exactly how you treat his death on the cross if persist in sin, even sin that others may not be aware of. God knows and He knows your heart.

Just considering the law of Moses, if there were two or more witnesses to a person's committing idolatry, then that lawbreaker would be put to death without mercy.

The preacher is telling us that the pretender or world pleaser is actually an idolator disguised as a Christian.

You who seek your own glory instead of Christ's may have fooled the church for a time, but there are three witnesses that cry out against you (Christ, His blood, and the Spirit)

Your sin is not just a ruse against the people of God but are direct insults to Christ, His sacrifice, and the Spirit of God!

Will you really treat Jesus as someone to be stepped over and stepped on? In the NBA finals several years ago, one player chose to step over a player on the ground instead of going around him. The player on the ground rightly understood that action to be an insult to his dignity.

If we choose a life of sin over the Jesus whom we've claimed to believe in, we act like Jesus is on the ground and we are not only stepping over him to get what we want. We are stepping on him to get it.

Ladies—how do you feel about sweat? What about blood? But what if that sweat and blood is in reference to one who has built you a home and provided a good life for you and your family? In the OT blood could sometimes be seen as profane and sometimes sacred, depending on whose blood it was and why it was spilled.

By choosing sin over Jesus, we make what is most sacred to be profane. Jesus's sacred blood is what makes us His sacred people, marked off as being holy and belonging to God. When the church affirms salvation for someone, the church is saying as far as we can affirm that this person is a blood-bought, born again believer in Christ. Do not make out as profane that sacred blood that makes us holy.

And by ongoing, deliberate sin, those who were supposed to be the people set apart by the Spirit are those who insult the Spirit.

Recently I saw a statement by a pastor on the point about there being no forgiveness for blaspheming the Spirit. He shared that Jesus's point is not that there is a sin greater than God's grace. The point is that the person who blasphemes the Spirit has committed himself to never trust the Spirit of God. The Spirit alone can lead people to repent.

The problem is not with God, as if He is too weak to save or to keep in salvation. The problem is with wicked humans who try to pass themselves off as righteousness enough without Christ and the Spirit.

Falling away is not about God's inability. He's perfect in every way.

Will not the Lord accomplish what He pleases? If not, then He is not God.

Falling away is about a person pretending to have a new heart but still only having the old wicked one.

With that context, consider what Jesus says to his disciples about intentionally pursuing sin.

[Matt 5 references]

21 "You have heard that it was said to our ancestors, Do not murder, and whoever murders will be subject to judgment. 22 But I tell you, everyone who is angry with his brother or sister will be subject to judgment. Whoever insults his brother or sister will be subject to the court. Whoever says, 'You fool!' will be subject to hellfire.

27 "You have heard that it was said, Do not commit adultery. 28 But I tell you, everyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart. 29 If your right eye causes you to sin, gouge it out and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of the parts of your body than for your whole body to be

thrown into hell. 30 And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of the parts of your body than for your whole body to go into hell.

20 For I tell you, unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never get into the kingdom of heaven.

He makes clear we cannot make ourselves righteous enough, not even the zealous pharisees could. The person who intentionally chooses sin, treats Christ's sacrifice as a common animal sacrifice in the Old Covenant. Only a heart still controlled by sin will dismiss Jesus's sacrifice as common.

Are you sure you know Him?

Don't be okay with a ?, set your hope firmly on Christ so you are transformed.

**It is a terrible thing for a
pretender to fall into the hands of
the living God.
(Vv. 30-31)**

It is a terrible thing for a pretender to fall into the hands of the living God.

Context of Deut. 32 (and judgment passages) and Jonathan Edwards

God is not going to hold back or regret ultimately judging pretenders and fake world-pleasers.

Moses said about those among the people of God in Israel who did not believe:

When the Lord saw this, he despised them,
angered by his sons and daughters.

20 He said, "I will hide my face from them;
I will see what will become of them,
for they are a perverse generation—
unfaithful children.

21 They have provoked my jealousy
with what is not a god;
they have enraged me with their worthless idols.
So I will provoke their jealousy

with what is not a people;

I will enrage them with a foolish nation.

22 For fire has been kindled because of my anger
and burns to the depths of Sheol;
it devours the land and its produce,
and scorches the foundations of the mountains.

23 “I will pile disasters on them;
I will use up my arrows against them.

24 They will be weak from hunger,
ravaged by pestilence and bitter plague;
I will unleash on them wild beasts with fangs,
as well as venomous snakes that slither in the dust.

25 Outside, the sword will take their children,
and inside, there will be terror;
the young man and the young woman will be killed,
the infant and the gray-haired man.

26 “I would have said: I will cut them to pieces
and blot out the memory of them from mankind,

27 if I had not feared provocation from the enemy,
or feared that these foes might misunderstand
and say, ‘Our own hand has prevailed;
it wasn’t the Lord who did all this.’”

“[God] will have no compassion upon you, he will not forbear the executions of his wrath, or in the least lighten his hand; there shall be no moderation or mercy, nor will God then at all stay his rough wind; he will have no regard to your welfare, nor be at all careful lest you should suffer too much in any other sense, than only that you shall not suffer beyond what strict justice requires. Nothing shall be withheld, because it is so hard for you to bear.” -Jonathan Edwards

-Appeal for repentance and salvation

