

Hebrews 10:26–39

Intro: Context, context, context. Who are the recipients of this letter? What are they going through? What is their possible response to those struggles? There are five warnings in Hebrews, Heb 2:1-4; 4:1-10; 6:1-8; 10:26-31; 12:4-13. This is the most serious warning of the five and possibly all of scripture. When the Gospel is given to an unbeliever, there are ultimately only two responses, Faith or unbelief. For these Hebrews who had heard the gospel, associated themselves with the Church, were suffering, and thinking about returning to Judaism, the author is saying to do so would be Apostasy. Apostasy is the sin of rejecting the gospel for which there is no forgiveness - 1 Jo 2:19. The classic apostate is Judas. No other rejector had more access to God's truth, love, and grace.

XXIV. Apostasy: Rejecting Christ

A. The Nature of Apostasy

1. **apostasia** - defection from truth (properly, the state) ("apostasy")!--falling away, forsake, a leaving, departing from a previous standing. Expresses departure (rejection) and implied rebellion (as also in the LXX). It means "to withdraw in revolt; departing from a former loyalty or commitment; a denying to gain something new; a defection, apostasy, revolt" (Abbott-Smith).
2. It is an intentional falling away or withdrawal, a defection
 - a. Mt 24:10 And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another.
 - b. 2Th 2:3 Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;
3. after apostacy, the spiritual condition of the person is worse
 - a. Mt 12:43-45 "When an unclean spirit goes out of a man, he goes through dry places, seeking rest, and finds none. "Then he says, 'I will return to my house from which I came.' And when he comes, he finds it empty, swept, and put in order. "Then he goes and takes with him seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter and dwell there; and the last state of that man is worse than the first. So shall it also be with this wicked generation."
 - b. 2Pe 2:20-22 For if, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the latter end is worse for them than the beginning. For it would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered to them. But it has happened to them according to the true proverb: "A dog returns to his own vomit," and, "a sow, having washed, to her wallowing in the mire."
 - c. 1Ti 4:1-2 Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron,

B. Characteristics of Apostasy - vs 26

1. The truth is known and recognized
 - a. we have received the knowledge of the truth
 - b. **epignosis** - intensifies gnosis - recognition, full discernment, acknowledgement!--(ac-)knowledge (-ing, - ment). knowledge gained through first-hand relationship" – "contact-knowledge" as it is appropriate ("apt, fitting") to first-hand, experiential knowing
 - i. **lambánō** - to lay hold by taking initiative to (actively) accept what is

available (offered). ("accept with initiative") typically focuses on the volition (assertiveness) of the receiver.

ii. *alētheia* - truth (what is true to fact); reality. In ancient Greek culture, *alētheia* was synonymous for "reality" (the opposite of illusion, i.e. fact).

2. Truth is rejected

a. willfully remain in sin

b. *hekousiōs* - willingly (willfully), "what is of free-will," carries the idea of deliberate intention, not ignorance or weakness.

c. not talking about a believer lapsing into sin and straying from intimacy with the Lord

i. Apostasy and backsliding are not the same thing

ii. Though they may look exactly the same, the only way to know the difference would be the believer would fall under the discipline of the Lord

C. Causes of Apostasy

1. Persecution

a. causes the believer to become stronger spiritually and morally

b. drives unbelievers from the church

i. they do not have the strength to endure

ii. Often joins the persecutors - Mt 24:9-10 (pg 1)

2. False teachers

a. Mt 24:11 "Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many.

b. persecution frightens unbelievers, false teachers entice them - 2 Tim 4:3

3. Temptation

a. Lu 8:13 "But the ones on the rock are those who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, who believe for a while and in time of temptation fall away.

b. 2Ti 4:10 for Demas has forsaken me, having loved this present world, and has departed for Thessalonica--Crescens for Galatia, Titus for Dalmatia.

4. Neglect

a. rejection does not have to be willful

b. Heb 2:3 how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation,

5. Clinging to the old

a. religion can be habitual, Catholics....

b. for true believers, Pr 4:18 But the path of the just is like the shining sun, That shines ever brighter unto the perfect day.

6. Forsaking Christian fellowship - vs 25

D. Results of Apostasy - vs 26-31

1. No Sacrifice for sin remains - vs 26

a. the old sacrifices have already been shown to be lacking

b. if one doesn't receive Christ's sacrifice to atone for their sins, the first result is there isn't another

2. Brings greater judgment - vs 27

a. the second result is greater judgment

i. The greater the light rejected, the greater the judgment - Mt 11:21; Lu 10:13

ii. but a certain fearful expectation of judgment,

iii. and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries.

-2Th 1:8-9 in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

- Ro 2:8 but to those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness--indignation and wrath,
- Heb 12:29 For our God is a consuming fire.

b. Adversaries

- i. parable of wheat and tares - tares are the sons of the evil one - Mt 13:38
- ii. on those who do not obey the gospel - 2 Th 1:8; Ro 2:8

3. Degrees of sin and judgment - vs 28-29

a. worse punishment

- i. Anyone who has rejected Moses' law dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses.- De 17:2,6; 19:15; Joh 8:17; 2Co 13:1
- ii. how much worse the one who has trampled the Son of God underfoot,
 - counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing,
 - and insulted the Spirit of grace?

b. Jesus speaking of Judas - Joh 19:11 Jesus answered, "You could have no power at all against Me unless it had been given you from above. Therefore the one who delivered Me to you has the greater sin."

c. Jesus speaking of sin with and without knowledge - Lu 12:47-48 "And that servant who knew his master's will, and did not prepare himself or do according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. "But he who did not know, yet committed things deserving of stripes, shall be beaten with few. For everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required; and to whom much has been committed, of him they will ask the more.

E. Rejection of God - vs 29

1. Apostates reject the Father

- a. Jo 16:27 "for the Father Himself loves you, because you have loved Me, and have believed that I came forth from God.
- b. if they are "trampled the Son of God underfoot," (they have scorned) what is their opinion of the Father who sent Him, Whom He declared?

2. Apostates reject the Son

- a. by which he was sanctified - probably refers to Jesus, not the one counting the blood a common thing
- b. Joh 17:19 "And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified by the truth.

3. Apostates reject the Holy Spirit

- a. rejecting what the Spirit of God has convinced them about Christ is the insult
- b. insulted the Spirit of grace

4. 2Pe 3:9 The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

a. When they don't come to repentance - vs 30-31

b. "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," - It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

F. The Deterrents to Apostacy - vs 32-34

1. Remember your suffering and your service - a first deterrent to apostacy

a. *anamimnesko* - to remind; to recollect:--call to mind, (bring to , call to, put in), remember(-brance), to recollect by going through a process, i.e. the journey of where the remembrance leads (extends) to (a conclusion).

b. the former days in which, (he knew his audience)

i. after you were illuminated,

- Heb 6:4;
- knew the basics of the Gospel
- ii. you endured a great struggle with sufferings: - Ga 3:4
 - you were made a spectacle both by reproaches and tribulations,
 - you became companions of those who were so treated;
- iii. They had given up a lot - for you had compassion on me in my chains,
 - joyfully accepted the plundering of your goods,
 - knowing that you have a better and an enduring possession for yourselves in heaven.
- 2. Look forward to your rewards - second deterrent to apostacy
 - a. do not cast away your confidence,
 - i. which has great reward.
 - ii. They knew about the rewards, now to collect them they needed encouragement to follow through - Mt 5:12; 10:32
 - b. For you have need of endurance,
 - i. so that after you have done the will of God, they hadn't yet
 - ii. you may receive the promise: they hadn't yet - 1Pe 1:9
- 3. Meeting God
 - a. He who is coming will come
 - i. For yet a little while
 - ii. and will not tarry.
 - b. Now the just shall live by faith; - Ro 1:17; Ga 3:11
 - i. But if anyone draws back,
 - ii. My soul has no pleasure in him."
 - c. Encouragement to Believe
 - i. But we are not of those who draw back to perdition,
 - ii. but of those who believe to the saving of the soul.