

**"The Better Sacrifice"**

**Part 10**

**Hebrews 9:12-10:39**

**Introduction:** Tonight in our study of Hebrews we have come to the 4<sup>th</sup> warning contained in the letter. Our study tonight has brought us to a passage of Scripture that has been misunderstood by many and has been taught inaccurately by many.

**Notice Hebrews 10:26-31**

This is part of the passage which we are going to consider over the following weeks. Now the warning that we are going to look at here is a warning about APOSTASY. So before we get into these verses, we need to understand the definition of APOSTASY, and we need to understand what an apostate looks like. Let me begin tonight with a question which we need to first of all consider.

**What is the difference between an apostate and a backsliding believer?**

**1. The Backsliding Believer**

A backsliding believer is an individual who has placed their faith in Jesus Christ and has been saved by the blood of Jesus Christ, but they have drifted away into sin. This person will not continue to live in sin because God will not permit His children to live in sin. Jesus died to take away our sin. He died to take sin away from our account, and He died to remove sin from our lives.

**1 John 3:5-8**

<sup>5</sup> *And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin.*

<sup>6</sup> *Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him.*

<sup>7</sup> *Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous.*

<sup>8</sup> *He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.*

The backsliding believer who ignores the convictions of the Spirit and chooses to stay on the path of sin will find themselves under the chastening hand of God.

**Hebrews 12:6-8**

<sup>6</sup> *For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.*

<sup>7</sup> *If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?*

<sup>8</sup> *But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons.*

If the backslider continues to walk in sin under the chastening hand of God, then he or she is in danger of God ending their life before their appointed day. Remember the Corinthian believers who were carelessly coming to the Lord's Table?

**1 Corinthians 11:28-30**

<sup>28</sup> *But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.*

<sup>29</sup> *For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.*

<sup>30</sup> *For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.*

The word "sleep" here refers to **death** and it is only used to refer to the death of the believer.

**2. The Apostate**

An apostate is a person has heard and even embraced the Truth of the Gospel and they then turn their back upon the Truth and walk straight away. They will become active in the church body and even have their name on the membership roll. But they were never saved. These people will speak like true believers and they will conduct their lives like true believers. But when they turn from Truth of the Gospel, they will often step into a full time life of sin. When these people are in the church, it is impossible to tell them from a true believer. Even when they walk away, it is not possible to tell them apart from a backsliding believer. Apostates have always existed. Let me show you some Bible verses that will help us to see this.

**1 John 2:19**

<sup>19</sup> They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.

Here John speaks of the apostates, and he says that they went out from us, and this helps us to see that they were in the midst of the church but they were never saved. John tells us that they were NOT OF US. John also makes it very clear that a TRUE believer will CONTINUE in the Word. John tells us if they were true believers, they would have continued with us. The clearest example of an apostate would be Judas. He walked with Jesus, he listened to His teaching, he watched over the money, and then in the end it was revealed that he was never saved. In John 13 when Jesus washed the feet of His disciples He said something which we need to look at.

**John 13:10-11**

<sup>10</sup> Jesus saith to him (Peter), He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all.

<sup>11</sup> For he knew who should betray him; therefore said he, Ye are not all clean.

Jesus is speaking of Judas when He says you are not all clean. The point being that Judas never was saved, but he did blend right in with the other disciples. He knew the Truth, but he refused to accept the truth; and, therefore, he becomes the clearest example of an apostate. I believe Jesus pointed to apostasy in the Parable of the Sower.

**Luke 8:5-8**

<sup>5</sup> A sower went out to sow his seed: and as he sowed, some fell by the way side; and it was trodden down, and the fowls of the air devoured it.

<sup>6</sup> And some fell upon a rock; and as soon as it was sprung up, it withered away, because it lacked moisture.

<sup>7</sup> And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprang up with it, and choked it.

<sup>8</sup> And other fell on good ground, and sprang up, and bare fruit an hundredfold. And when he had said these things, he cried, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

Jesus then went on to interpret the parable and I want to show you what He said about the seed that fell upon the rock.

**Luke 8:13**

<sup>13</sup> *They on the rock are they, which, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away.*

The words "fall away" mean "to apostatize" or to "turn away".

The Apostle Paul had warned that in the last days there would be a falling away/apostasy.

**2 Thessalonians 2:3**

<sup>3</sup> *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;*

**1 Timothy 4:1**

*Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;*

So an apostate is someone who has knowledge of the Truth, plugs in with other believers, gets involved in the church, and then one day turns their back upon Jesus Christ and goes out into the world and many times dies in that very condition forever lost in their sins. Now this was the very concern in the mind of the writer of Hebrews. He knew there was a high possibility that some of the people who would read this letter were not truly saved and so with the pressure of the persecution, he wanted them to understand the danger and the consequences of apostasy.

**I. The Description of Apostasy**

**Notice Hebrews 10:26**

Let us remember that there were some who would read this letter who were considering turning from Christianity and returning back to Judaism due to the persecution. The writer knew that it was a high possibility that some of them were not saved. Now some people stumble over the writer's use of the word "we". They point to this, and they say that this is addressed to believers. I do not agree with that for this reason. I can stand up here, and I can say, "If WE are not saved, then when we die, we will be cast into the Lake of Fire." When I use the word "we", I do not mean I am not saved; I am just stating that

we as the human race need to be saved. When the writer uses the word "we", he is doing the same thing. I believe it is a collective statement that refers to all mankind but more specifically to the Jewish people here. When the writer refers to the willful sin here, he is referring to turning from Jesus Christ and going back into Judaism. That is the willful sin. He has just spent 10 chapters explaining why Jesus is better than everything of the Old Covenant. He has just explained that the blood of bulls and goats could not take away sin, but the blood of Jesus Christ has perfected us forever. The writer has presented Jesus Christ as the Great High Priest who can relate to everything which we go through.

Now here in Hebrews 10:26 he tells them that if they sin willfully after they have received the knowledge of the Truth, then there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin. The writer is saying that if they were to return to the Old Covenant after they sinned willfully by walking away from Jesus Christ then there would be no hope for them under the Old Covenant. You see these Jews were familiar with the Old Testament, and they knew something that many in our day do not understand. Under the Old Covenant there was no sacrifice for willful sins.

#### **Numbers 15:27-31**

<sup>27</sup> *And if any soul sin through ignorance, then he shall bring a she goat of the first year for a sin offering.*

<sup>28</sup> *And the priest shall make an atonement for the soul that sinneth ignorantly, when he sinneth by ignorance before the LORD, to make an atonement for him; and it shall be forgiven him.*

<sup>29</sup> *Ye shall have one law for him that sinneth through ignorance, both for him that is born among the children of Israel, and for the stranger that sojourneth among them.*

<sup>30</sup> *But the soul that doeth ought presumptuously, whether he be born in the land, or a stranger, the same reproacheth the LORD; and that soul shall be cut off from among his people.*

<sup>31</sup> *Because he hath despised the word of the LORD, and hath broken his commandment, that soul shall utterly be cut off; his iniquity shall be upon him.*

To go back to the Old Covenant was a hopeless move because there was no sacrifice for the willful sin. And then above this the Old Covenant was obsolete. Jesus had come, and He was the fulfillment of the Old Covenant. He had established the New Covenant, which was Superior to the Old Covenant. He was the final sacrifice and so to sin willfully by turning

from Jesus Christ would leave them with ABSOLUTELY NO HOPE. There was no other place to go. Now I want to show you something here that will help us to understand that this is a warning against apostasy. In other words I want you to notice that the writer is warning those who are not saved who are mixed in with the True believers.

**Hebrews 10:26**

*<sup>26</sup> For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins,*

The words "if we sin" are in the present tense which means the writer has the idea here of habitual sin or a continual sin/living in sin. This is something that is NOT possible for the person who is Truly saved. This is exactly what we read in 1 John 3.

**1 John 3:8-10**

*<sup>8</sup> He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.*

*<sup>9</sup> Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.*

*<sup>10</sup> In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother.*

John is talking about habitual sin here. He is saying that the person who is saved cannot live in the habitual practice of sin. This is the very idea we see in Hebrews 10:26. So we can conclude that the writer of Hebrew is concerned that there are some who would read his letter who were not saved. They have blended in with the True believers and even appear to be saved, but they are in danger of walking away from Christ or they are in danger of apostasy.

**Conclusion:**

Let me leave you with a verse from 2 Corinthians.

**2 Corinthians 13:5**

*<sup>5</sup> Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?*