

Fact Sheet for **“Hold Fast, Don’t Waver!”**
Hebrews 10:19-39

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We come to a passage that is sort of a summation of the author’s main purpose in writing. Again you can’t read them as a Gentile. You have to read them with Jewish eyes.

This is also the 4th of 5 warning passages in Hebrews (2:1-4; 3:7-4:13; 5:11-6:12; 10:19-39; 12:14-29).

¹⁹ ¶ **Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus,**
²⁰ **by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh,**

The word translated “**holy places**” is plural but it is a reference to the Holy of Holies (KJV, NIV, NKJ, NLT) that Christ has opened once for all as the mediator of the New Covenant. This was so dramatically shown in Matthew 27:50-51.

²¹ **and since we have a great priest over the house of God,**

...specifically Jesus, our High Priest (KJV, NKJ, NLT), even though the word for “High” is not in the original text.

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 with pure water.**

First, notice the word “**faith**” that is beginning to set up the next chapter. There should be no wavering.

...”**and our bodies washed with pure water**” should be taken together with “**our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience**” This is not primarily a reference to Christian baptism but an allusion to what Aaron was commanded to do on the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur) in Leviticus 16. That was the Old Covenant. But under the New Covenant Christ has opened the curtain of the Holy of Holies for us once for all. He has cleansed the hearts of those who have faith in Him by His entire payment (propitiation) for their sins. And although we still sin we stand as forgiven before God.

²³ **Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful.**

This verse sort of summarizes purpose of the whole book.

²⁴ **And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works,** ²⁵ **not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.**

Being forgiven in Christ (positional holiness) does not free us from living holy living now (personal holiness). The word translated “**stir up**” is well translated by the KJV “provoke” and the NIV “spur”. There is intensity to this word. We are to stir up one another to love and good works, and encourage one another. This will naturally happen when we regularly meet with other believers. Believers who choose not to regularly meet together with other believers are choosing not to follow God’s will for them.

²⁶ ¶ **For if we go on sinning deliberately after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins,** ²⁷ **but a fearful expectation of judgment, and a fury of fire that will consume the adversaries.**

Remember what the author of Hebrews wrote about the Day of Atonement in the previous chapter (9:6-7). There was no OT sacrifice for intentional sins! The implication is that if his readers intentionally

choose to walk away from Christ then there is no other way to be forgiven. Salvation is only found in Jesus Christ. What does this say about non-Christian faith systems today?

²⁸ Anyone who has set aside the law of Moses dies without mercy on the evidence of two or three witnesses. ²⁹ 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?

Verse 28 is a reference to Deuteronomy 17:6. And note that in verse 29 the author of Hebrews says, **“and has profaned the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified”**. He is referring to true Christians. The point that the author of Hebrews is making is that if defiance to the Old Covenant could bring such a sentence, then defiance to the New Covenant would call for a much worse punishment.

Does this mean a true Christian can lose their salvation? Don't jump to that conclusion so quickly. Be careful of what Hebrews 10:28-29 says and what it does not say. It says that those who have **“trampled underfoot the Son of God, and has profaned the blood of the covenant”** will receive a **“much worse punishment”**, but it does not clearly say that true Christians can lose their salvation. The author of Hebrews could just be warning them in very strong terms to stay away from the choice to walk away from Christ and the New Covenant and go back to the Old Covenant. This thought is strengthened by the next two verses.

³⁰ For we know him who said, "Vengeance is mine; I will repay." And again, "The Lord will judge his people." ³¹ It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

Now the author speaks of their faith.

³² ¶ But recall the former days when, after you were enlightened, you endured a hard struggle with sufferings, ³³ sometimes being publicly exposed to reproach and affliction, and sometimes being partners with those so treated.

Notice the words, **“after you were enlightened”**.

³⁴ 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.

Again notice the words, **“you yourselves had a better possession and an abiding one.”**

³⁵ Therefore do not throw away your confidence, which has a great reward. ³⁶ For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God you may receive what is promised. ³⁷ For, "Yet a little while, and the coming one will come and will not delay; ³⁸ but my righteous one shall live by faith, and if he shrinks back, my soul has no pleasure in him."

Christ is coming again, we need to be continually anticipating this.

Notice the word **“faith”** again in verses 38 and 39, setting up chapter 11.

³⁹ ¶ But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who have faith and preserve their souls.

I understand the pronoun **“we”** to include both the author of this book as well as his readers.

There are several applications for us that jump right out of this passage.

1. Constantly renew your appreciation of what Christ has done for you.
2. Pray for boldness as you share the Gospel. Christ is *the only* way to God!
3. Never neglect meeting regularly with believers. This is God's will for you.
4. If you have never asked Christ to forgive your sins you need to do this today, before it is too late.