

One Thing We Must Not Do - Hebrews 10:26-39
Basil Howlett - Carey Baptist Church – 21 October 2007

This is one of the most solemn sections of the Bible which has troubled many Christians. Some of these Hebrew people were tempted to renounce the Christian faith and go back to their old Jewish religion. From chapter 4:14 right up to this 10th chapter the writer has been telling them that such a thing is unthinkable because in Christ they, and we, are privileged to have a far greater high priest than any of the Jewish high priests. Because we have such a privilege (verses 19-25), we should draw near to God with a sincere heart, hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, spur one another on to love more and do good deeds and we should keep on meeting together in order to encourage one another, especially in view of the fact that the great day of judgment is coming. Those are the things that we must do. The passage this morning emphasizes the one terrible thing we must not do.

A. The sin of turning our backs on the gospel (verse 26)

'If we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth.' Obviously this does not mean that if we fall into ANY sin there's no remedy for it but only certain judgment. If that were the case then heaven would be empty! David, Peter and many others were forgiven. Note 1 John 1:7, 9 and 1 John 2:1. Hebrews 10:26 is speaking about the person who deliberately renounces the Christian faith and keeps on doing so. That's the great sin of which the writer has been warning us all through this letter (3:12, 6:6)

B. The consequences of turning our backs on the gospel?

- 1. There will be 'no sacrifice for sins'.** If we turn our backs on the Lord Jesus Christ and his gospel then we are in fact turning our backs on the only remedy for sin.
- 2. There will be the fearful prospect of judgment (verse 27).** The judgment of God on apostates will be more severe than the judgment of God upon those who have never made any profession (see 2 Peter 2:20). The writer underlines this in verses 28-29.

C. The horror of turning our backs on the gospel.

The writer makes three graphic, horrific statements which we would be reluctant to make if they were not in the Bible.

1. The person who turns his back on the gospel rubbishes the Son of God (verse 29).
2. He also rubbishes the redeeming work of Christ and his precious blood.
3. In addition he insults the Holy Spirit because it was he who gave the knowledge of the truth.

Obviously the person who does such vile things deserves God's judgment and this judgment is certain. The writer underlines this in verse 30 by quoting two verses from Deuteronomy 32: namely verses 35-36.

D. Two encouragements not to turn our backs on the gospel.

One in the past and one in the future.

1. He reminds them that they had been so keen in the past (verses 32-34)

There is no better way of challenging the person who has drifted than reminding them of former devotion and commitment.

2. He reminds them that their faith will be rewarded in the future (Verse 35).

One day, Christ will return to this world. The writer quotes 2 verses from his Greek translation of Habbakuk 2, namely verses 3-4 .

Christ's second coming is certain.

Christ's second coming will be sensational.

Christ's second coming will be soon – sooner than we think!

Christ's second coming will be punctual.

Christ's second coming will mean life and safety for the righteous.

Some of these Hebrew Christians were tempted to abandon their faith in Christ. This whole passage says, *'Don't do it. That will bring judgment and wrath. But if you persevere, Christ will come and you will live for ever in God's eternal Kingdom. where you will be richly rewarded.'*

Footnote:

A theological problem

Is Hebrews 10, especially verse 26, actually teaching that it's possible for a true Christian to fall right away and be lost for ever in hell? Some say 'yes' , but John 10:28 and Romans 8: 38-39 emphatically say 'no'! The kind of people described here as a warning were never genuine Christians. It's possible to have a knowledge of truth in the head without it ever touching the heart. Such people can renounce the truth they once professed to believe and fall right away.

But what about that phrase *'The blood of the covenant that sanctified him.'* ? There are many explanations but my own view is that the writer is referring here to what these people had professed, not what they had possessed. *'They have treated as an unholy thing the blood of the covenant which they once professed had cleansed and sanctified them.'*