

I. Review

- A. The author has wrapped up the exhortation and arguments to prove the legal power and effectiveness of the sacrificial work of Jesus as our High Priest in implementing the new covenant by the substitutionary sacrifice of Himself upon the altar in heaven through His death on the cross. (Heb. 9-10)
- B. He now turns to strongly warn and exhort the family of God that we must press and encourage one another to stay grounded in obtaining the promise of salvation (biblical fullness) through faith alone. The writer will take a very strong stance upon the error of attempting to justify ourselves before God through outward righteous works, especially as we draw near to the return of Jesus. (Heb. 10:19-39)

II. Verse-by-Verse

- A. Let us consider one another - The author immediately exhorts us to look to one another to strengthen one another in faith. We are to ask the Spirit to lead us to look and listen for the brother or sister who is struggling with their faith and stir them up and exhort them to faith unto love and works of faith. (1 Thes. 5:1-11)
- B. Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves - We must feel the weight of this exhortation. Of all the things that we may list that encourages our faith, the number one for this writer, under the inspiration of the Spirit, is intentional community. The purpose of this intentional community is not for what you can get but for what you can give. The writer places part of the burden of those around you staying steady in their faith upon you. (Col. 3:12-17; Eph. 5:15-21)
 - 1. After almost 20 years in the ministry field, I can assure you that the common denominator of individuals walking away or struggling in their faith is lack or avoidance of intentional vulnerability and/or accountability in relational community. (Acts. 2:46)
- C. So much more as you see the Day approaching - The struggle to remain steady and grow in our faith and relationship with Jesus will reach a height of pressure and deception that will cause the struggle of all previous generations to pale in comparison. The weapon that we are given to fight the pressure and struggle with is intentional community for the purpose of stirring up faith and love in others. (1 Tim. 4:1-5;

- D. For if we sin willfully there no longer remains a sacrifice for sin - Proper hermeneutics demands that we look at this verse in its immediate context and in the greater context of this book of Hebrews. In that light, it is my conviction that this verse is talking specifically about the willful sin of denying the new covenant realities instituted by the person and work of Jesus on our behalf. More specifically, the focus seems to be on denying, through your beliefs and response, that righteousness and the forgiveness of sin are through faith in the sacrifice of Jesus alone. This becomes even clearer when you look at the verses that follow this one.
1. If you are looking to obtain righteousness or forgiveness of sin by adherence to the law of Moses, you are sinning (missing the mark), and since you have placed your faith in the law, the sacrifice of Jesus does not apply to your life because it is accessed by faith.
- E. Anyone who rejected Moses' law rightly died - God demanded that His people responded with sincere obedience to the covenant that He gave on Sinai, instituted by the blood of animals. The just penalty for the willful sin of disregarding His covenant was death. Why? Because the righteous wrath of God would break out against the sins of His people if they didn't.
- F. How much more the one who rejects the covenant that Jesus instituted through His blood - The covenant instituted in the blood of Jesus demands more honor and more sobriety in response to it than the blood of animals. To place greater honor, or even equal honor, in your response to the old covenant is to openly put Jesus and His sacrifice to shame by devaluing it to something less than the death of a cow.
1. Trampled the Son of God underfoot
 2. Counted the blood the new covenant as a common thing
 3. Insulted the Spirit of grace
- G. Vengeance is mine - Only God can know if someone is truly willfully sinning in this regard. God takes the burden upon Himself of making sure that justice concerning the response to the sacrificial blood of His only Son is upheld. We must keep in mind that the primary audience of this letter are heavily persecuted Jewish Christians who are being told that if they practice and confess Judaism (faith in the law) instead of Christianity they will cease to be persecuted. They

would do this out of a fear of man to preserve their well being, not out of a real conviction to Judaism. In doing this they would be “willfully sinning” and would be in danger of the vengeance and wrath of God, which is much more a fearful thing than the persecution of men.

- H. Remember the former days - The primary audience of this letter has in the past endured tremendous persecution for their Christian faith. They even willingly, openly, and joyfully stood with, and identified with, those who were being persecuted and invited the same persecution on themselves.
- I. You have need of endurance - The endurance they need is not necessarily endurance to continue to deal with persecution, but rather, to endure the painstaking decision of giving up their non-persecuted life and sign up again for a persecuted one. The most difficult form of endurance is doing the will God while waiting on the breakthrough promise of God in a season of difficulty. However, it is enduring in these seasons that produces the greatest amount of maturity, faith, and character in those who are tested. (Jam 1:2-4)