

“God’s Lighthouse”

Hebrews 10:25-31

A. What does he say?

- 1) v 25 “the day drawing near”: the approaching day of judgment should make us even more concerned for those who move away from Jesus.
- 2) v 26 “sinning willfully”: deliberate abandonment of Jesus cannot be forgiven.
- 3) v 27 “the fury of a fire”: the lake of fire: being tormented forever in a universe filled with the undiminished glory of God.
- 4) v 28 “set aside the Law of Moses”: those who abandoned God to worship idols were executed if the charges proved true (Dt 17:2-7)
- 5) v 29 “severer punishment”: abandoning Jesus after having received Him will bring eternal death; “trampled underfoot”: saying Jesus is not divine, He’s only an angel or a man; “regarded as unclean”: saying His death did not atone; “insulted the Spirit of grace”: aggressively silencing the conscience and inner voice of the Spirit
- 6) vs 30, 31 “vengeance is mine...”: this sin deeply offends God and He will show no mercy to the one who commits it; the warnings God gave Israel about forsaking Him apply even more strongly to forsaking His Son, the Messiah

B. What does he mean?

To really know Jesus and then renounce Him as your Savior is an unforgivable sin.

C. Why does he say it so harshly

To help us fear God when the fear of man or the love of the world grows strong. People make decisions based on what they determine to be in their best interests, and without knowing the truth presented here, someday it might seem that leaving Jesus, at least for a while, would be in your best interest. So in case anyone considers playing the game in their mind which says, “It’s okay to leave Him now because He will always be there if I choose to come back to Him in the future,” the author says, “No, you can’t!”

D. How is it possible for someone who really knows Jesus to renounce Him?

Note: We’re not talking about someone who stops servicing Jesus for a season because they want to sin.

1) They grow weary: tired of suffering for Him (He 10:32-34); tired of saying “no” to the pleasure of the world; tired of humbly trusting God’s Word in matters I don’t understand (accepting true doctrine by faith; my pride wants answers that make sense to me)

In essence: I grow tired of denying myself in this life to have God’s blessing in the next; tired of laying up treasure in heaven (Mt 6:19, 20), of waiting for the Master to return (Mt 24:42-25:30); in self-pity I reason God has no right to ask so much from me; I grow angry at Jesus for the trouble He has caused me

This weariness particularly grows when I am not regularly refreshed by the Spirit’s presence and re-oriented by the Word of God. When we grow dry Jesus’ yoke grows heavy (Mt 11:28-30).

2) They grow ashamed

We grow angry at ourselves for constantly failing (especially sex, but also drugs/alcohol/food) and hide from His presence and His people in shame. This is why constant moral failure becomes dangerous. Shame can build to a point where it smothers my faith. I lose hope that I’m forgiven and in angry frustration give myself fully to my addiction.

2 Peter 2:1-3, 17-22 – By abandoning myself to my addiction I can become helplessly enslaved again.

3) They become deceived

False teachers lead us astray until we no longer believe in Jesus, or at least in the real Jesus. We cross a line without knowing it, and stay there because we aren’t willing to admit we are wrong (too proud to admit we’ve been deceived).



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E. How can I ensure this will never happen to me?

- 1) Refuse to dry up spiritually (“Spiritual dryness is unacceptable. I’ll do what I have to do to stay close to Him.”)
- 2) Always confess your sins to God and bring your addictive sins to the light (Jas 5:16) (“I will not allow a secret life to continue”)
- 3) Never allow another human being to be your conscience or sole interpreter of Scripture. God gives us teachers (Eph 4:11) but you must search the Scriptures for yourself. When all is said and done, you will stand alone before Jesus. Those who led you astray will be judged for doing so, but that won’t save you because it will always be shown that the Holy Spirit warned you that you were in error but you refused His warning.

Who but God can know when these lines finally get crossed in a person’s heart? Who knows at what point we stopped struggling and chose to throw Him out? This is why tending our faith is the most important thing we do in life. The only peaceful way to avoid this danger is to give these tendencies no chance to grow.

F. What should I do if I believe I may have renounced Jesus in the past?

There is likely among us those who in a drunken fit or in fury at the death of a loved one, or even a moment of demonic perversion, cursed Jesus and told Him you hated Him. Most of these outbursts were no more profound than the ravings of a spoiled teenager toward a parent. You were angry and deceived and you poured out your fury at God. It’s certainly a sad moment in your life, but by itself it’s not what this passage is talking about.

The author of Hebrews is addressing the genuine abandonment of Christ in which a person truly changes in their understanding of Him. They lose all reverence for Him. He’s no longer the Son of God in their eyes, His death was the death of a common man, it had no special power, and the inner voice that reaches out to bring them back has been bludgeoned into silence. That’s the sin addressed here. It’s what John calls the “sin leading to death” (1Jn 5:16, 17), and then he tells us not to pray for the person who has actually done it. Why not pray? Because there’s no point. Jesus came to die for all our sins, but the person who is willing to do this after becoming born-again has so hardened their heart, and so offended God they will never be able to return. It’s sad. It’s a hard truth to hear, but facing it honestly is an important part of God’s protection to keep us from crossing that line.

G. Conclusion

I don’t believe anyone can read these scriptures in an unbiased way and not conclude that it is possible to forsake Jesus Christ and by doing so end up in a worse condition than before being saved. And if we’re honest we recognize that Jesus and all the New Testament writers warn us of this same danger one way or another. But their warnings are not meant to undermine our assurance that we will go to heaven when we die. They are there to protect us, to help us make informed choices when our faith is under assault: when we realize a false teacher is leading us astray, or that confessing Jesus is putting our physical or financial safety in jeopardy, or we feel tempted to give ourselves over completely to a pleasurable addiction, or we’re tired of enduring the disapproval of family or friends because of our religion.

In those moments when we feel so weak and the devil feels so strong, God wants to snap us out of the spell that’s being cast over us by reminding us that this life is not all there is. We don’t cease to exist when our bodies die. There’s an eternity ahead of us, and the decisions being made here effect what happens there. Hebrews 10:26-31 isn’t God being mean. It’s God protecting us from being deceived into committing the sin of Esau who “sold his birthright for a single meal” and who afterwards could not reverse the damage he had done (He 12:16, 17). He didn’t see the big picture and therefore made a terrible choice.

Through Hebrews God is giving us a prophetic warning like a lighthouse placed on a shoal of rocks to show us where the danger lies so we won’t accidentally run aground. When we’re not under pressure these warnings will seldom come to mind, but when we do need them they are there to help us fear God, and that blessed fear will help us “hold fast the confession of our hope” (He 10:23).

Faith in Jesus Christ is not an option. It’s not a crutch. It’s not one religious expression among many others. It’s the key to eternal life, and keeping my faith in Him healthy is simply the most important thing I do.

H. Questions

- 1) How long have you known Jesus? Have you ever been tempted to quit believing in Him? If so, what caused this? What prevented you from giving in?
- 2) Name one step you take to keep your faith in Jesus healthy.