

A Warning Against Falling Away

Hebrews 10: 19-27 (NIV)

In the second portion of Hebrews 10, we see a call by the author to persevere. To persevere is to persist in or remain steadfast to the course set out for us by the Lord Jesus Christ. Perseverance is required when we face obstacles or discouragement of many kinds. We are to continue to move forward with the Lord, not looking back, but continuing in faith and assurance that he who has called us is faithful to deliver us.

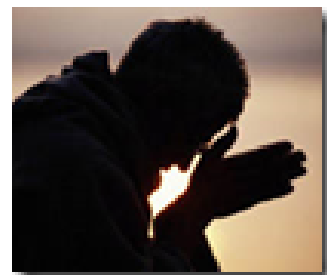


Perseverance in the Lord is continuing to choose Right and walking in righteousness (right standing with God).

Perseverance means to move beyond just knowing God's Word to obeying it as well. This is spiritual maturity. This is moving beyond the elementary teachings into the fullness of God's Word—righteousness and holiness.

It is not about knowing more-- it is about living out what we already know to be true in Christ. This shows that we actually believe what we say we know. This is the mark of a mature Christian—one who has grown up in the faith—one who is standing upright—one who can feed others instead of always needing to be fed. Because “we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place” by the blood of Jesus...let us draw near to God” (10:19-22). “Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful” (10:23). The Way has been provided for us—so let us hold fast that we would not be carried away by the world and our own sinful desires.

Let us keep our eyes on Jesus as he leads us into the promise. Let us not be like those Hebrews of the Exodus that did not enter into the land because of their unbelief, which was revealed in their continual disobedience to the Word of God. “We see that they were not able to enter, because of their unbelief” (3:19). The Scriptures is clear that they “did not go in because of their disobedience” (4:6).




Let's Review

Let us look at the warnings and exhortations throughout the book of Hebrews up to this point (additional study units on each verse is listed at the end of this unit):

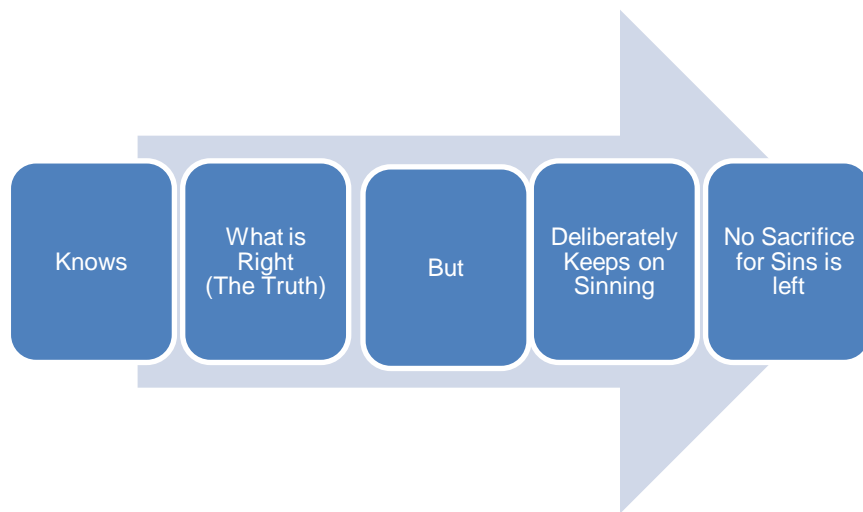
1. Chapter 2:1 exhorts, “We must pay more careful attention, therefore, to what we have heard, **so that** we do not drift away” (Emphasis added). We are not to just

hear the word—we are to hold fast to it in obedience; otherwise, we will drift away from the Lord.

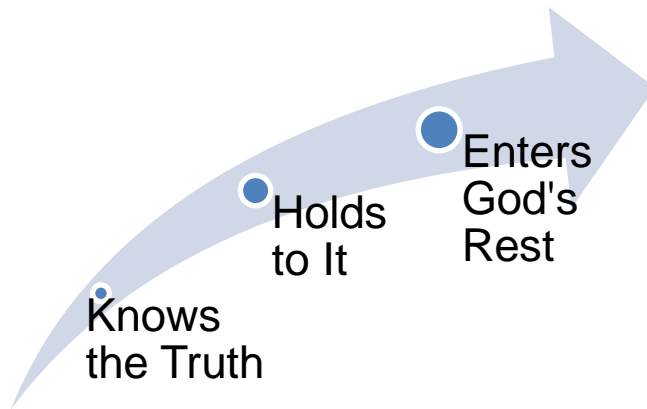
2. Chapter 3:6 states, “Christ is faithful as a son over Gods house. And we are his house **If** we hold on to our courage and the hope which we boast.” This is a conditional “If — then” statement. Our claim to be in him is only valid if we hold fast to him and his Word.
3. Chapter 3:7, 11 exhorts, “Today, **if** you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as [they] did in the rebellion during the time of testing in the desert....’I declared on oath in my anger, they shall never enter my rest.’” This is a strong warning to us not to harden our hearts toward the Lord and his Word— it literally means not to turn our face away from him. The example from the Old Testament had grave consequences for those who turned away from the Lord in disobedience and unbelief.
4. Chapter 3:12-14 warns, “See to it, brothers, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God. But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called ‘Today,’ so that none of you may be hardened by sins deceitfulness. We have come to share in Christ **if** we hold firmly till the end the confidence we had at first.” Another warning about turning away in unbelief and disobedience. We are to encourage one another to persevere, not getting tangled up in sin and the world. We are to hold firmly to the end our faith in the Lord.
5. Chapter 4:1-3 states, “Therefore, since the promise of entering his rest still stands, let us be careful that none of you be found to have fallen short of it. For we also have had the gospel preached to us just as they did, but the message they heard was of no value to them, because those who heard did not combine it with faith.” There is still opportunity to enter into Christ, but we must combine what we hear from him with faith.

A diagram consisting of three blue circles arranged horizontally. The first circle contains the word "Word", followed by a plus sign "+", the second circle contains the word "Faith", followed by an equals sign "=", and the third circle contains the word "Rest".
6. Chapter 4:16 encourages, “Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.” Instead of moving away from God, we are encouraged to move toward him with confidence, based on the sacrifice of Christ, so that in our time of trial and temptation we will have help from him to obey his Word.

7. Chapter 5:14 states, “Solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil.” The solid food of righteousness and the abundant life is for those who not only study and know God’s Word but follow it closely. They not only know good from evil—they chose good instead of evil.
8. Chapter 6:6 warns, “It is impossible for those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, who have shared in the Holy Spirit, who have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the coming age, if they fall away, to be brought back to repentance, because to their loss they are crucifying the Son of God all over again and subjecting him to public disgrace.” One of the strongest warnings in the Scriptures is toward those who have had full revelation of Christ yet reject him and walk away. There is no sacrifice left for them.
9. Chapter 10:26-27 brings another warning, “If we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, no sacrifice for sins is left, but only a fearful expectation of judgment and of eternal fire that will consume the enemies of God.”



10. Instead, let us hold firmly to the promise of God. “We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure. It enters the inner sanctuary behind the curtain, where Jesus, who went before us, has entered on our behalf. He has become a high priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek” (6:19-20). An encouragement once again to persevere in faith—standing fast in the promise of God. We are assured that nothing can move us as long as we remain within him.



11. Jesus “is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them” (7:25). Let us continue to move toward God in Christ, for he is able and faithful to keep us, and will supply all we need for righteousness and holiness along the Way.

What's Your Next Step?

See previous studies: Hebrews Chapters 1-5, Review. Hebrews 4:2, Combining the WORD with faith. Hebrews 4:15, Jesus our High Priest. Hebrews 6:4-6 Repentance Impossible to Renew. Hebrews 6:9-20, Hope of Salvation. Hebrews 7:1-10 Melchizedek: A Type of Christ. Hebrews 7:11-28, The Superior Priesthood of Jesus. Hebrews 10:1-18. Christ's Sacrifice Once and For All. Hebrews 10:19-25. A Call to Persevere