

ADDITIONAL WARNINGS FROM HEBREWS

Last week, I wrote of two warnings from the letter to the Hebrews. The first warning is concerned with the Hebrews' tendency to return to works-based, sacrificed-laden, law-driven Judaism. The Hebrew writer tells his readers that Jesus is superior to anything or anyone that they considered important in their relationship to God during their devotion to Judaism.

The second, much like the first, dealt with rebellion. Like the children of Israel, many of the Hebrews the writer is addressing had developed a sinful, unbelieving heart. If after hearing the gospel, you abandon the faith and return to the world, you will be punished just as those who died in the desert were. They were denied admittance into the Promised Land. We will be refused admittance into the glories of Heaven.

In **Hebrews 6:4-8**, the Hebrew writer issues a third warning that is very similar to the one we just looked at. The charge here is murder. If we hear the truth, and believe the truth, and are obedient to the truth, and THEN turn away from it, the Hebrew writer says we are guilty of "crucifying the Son of God again and subjecting him to public disgrace." We can't be brought back to repentance. We can only be punished for having brought reproach on the church. We had taught that Jesus was important to us, that he had changed our lives. But our lives show others just how unimportant he is to us and just how little we've changed. No wonder all we have to look forward to is being burned like worthless thorns and thistles.

Fourth, in **Hebrews 10**, the people have stopped meeting together to worship. Perhaps it started with just one Sunday a month. Then it was easier to justify staying away. Too dangerous. Maybe the gospel of Jesus Christ isn't the truth and I'm just wasting my time. Maybe I don't like being reminded that sin is an abomination to God. Maybe I just want to sleep in, or spend time out of town, or work in the yard, or play golf, or fish. In **Hebrews 10:26-31**, the Hebrew writer tells his readers (and us) that not meeting together to worship is willful sin and all the willful sinner has to look forward to is punishment. When you stop going to worship, the Hebrew writer says you're guilty of three horrific things:

1. Trampling the Son of God underfoot
2. Treating the sanctifying blood of the covenant that He shed as if it were an unholy thing
3. Insulting the Spirit of grace.

Nothing Jesus did had any impact on you. You don't need Him OR His sacrifice. You'll be fine going back to your works-based, sacrifice-laden, law-driven Judaism. Or maybe, just maybe, you don't need forgiveness because sin doesn't exist for you.

In **Hebrews 12:15, 25-29**, the writer issues this one last warning: See to it... make sure this doesn't happen to you. Don't miss out on God's gift of grace.

Don't allow anyone to be so corrupted that others will be led astray. Don't close your ears to God. Listen and obey. We've been given a kingdom that cannot be shaken—the church. We'll receive our eternal inheritance if we'll only remain faithful and obedient.