

HEBREWS: THE INFINITE SUPREMACY AND SUFFICIENCY OF JESUS CHRIST

XVI. God's Motivational Call For Loyalty To The Faith

(Hebrews 10:26-39)

I. Introduction

- A. We live in an era of great need for an encouraging word amid man's discouraging spiritual failure, so a word from God on the infinite supremacy and sufficiency of His Son Jesus Christ is both desirable and fitting.
- B. The Epistle of Hebrews offers it, and Hebrews 10:26-39 gives God's warning about defecting from the faith coupled with His encouragement to staying loyal to Christ, so we view it for our insight:

II. God's Motivational Call For Loyalty To The Faith, Hebrews 10:26-39.

- A. God warned of His severe punishment upon believers who defect from the Christian faith, Hebrews 10:26-31:
 - 1. The author's reference to sinning "willfully" (Hebrews 10:26a) for his Hebrew readers refers to sins of presumption (Numbers 15:29-31), acts of rebellion for which there was no sacrifice to atone, but only the facing of severe divine punishment that often involved physical death, Bible Know. Com., N. T., p. 805.
 - 2. Since defection from the Christian faith would be such a sin, the Author warned his readers that sinning in defecting from Christ left a believer open for severe divine punishment, Hebrews 10:26-27.
 - 3. Since in Moses' day under the Law, one who despised the law died without mercy at the testimony of two or three witnesses, today's Christian can only expect much sorer punishment for defecting from the Christian faith, a defection that repudiates Christ, His atonement and the Holy Spirit, Hebrews 10:28-29.
 - 4. Citing from Deuteronomy 32:35-36 and Psalm 135:14, the Author added that vengeance belonged to the Lord, that He would repay the wrongdoer, and that the Lord would judge His people, indicating that a believer would not be able to avoid God's severe punishment for defecting from the faith, Hebrews 10:30. (Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, fn. to Hebrews 10:30)
 - 5. Indeed, the Author claimed that "it is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God," to experience His severe punishment for defecting from the Christian faith, Hebrews 10:31; *Ibid.*
- B. However, God also encouraged believers to persevere in the Christian faith for rich reward, Heb. 10:32-39:
 - 1. The Author encouraged his readers to continue in the faith, reminding them of the great price they had paid to come this far in their Christian walk, that it was worth continuing in the faith, Heb. 10:32-34:
 - a. He urged them to remember how after they were enlightened through believing the Gospel of Christ they had struggled with suffering for the faith, at times being publicly exposed to reproach and affliction and at times being partners with those who were treated in such ways, Hebrews 10:32-33 ESV.
 - b. They had expressed compassion for believers imprisoned for the faith and they had joyfully accepted the plundering of their property, knowing they had a better and an abiding one in heaven, Heb. 10:34 ESV.
 - 2. Accordingly, the Author called his readers not to throw away their confidence in the Christian faith for which they had already been committed that they had paid such a steep price to follow, Hebrews 10:35.
 - 3. Also, God offered a great reward to them were they to remain committed to the faith, Hebrews 10:36-39:
 - a. The readers of the epistle had need of endurance so that when they had performed the will of God, they might receive what God had promised, Hebrews 10:36.
 - b. The Author then quoted from Habakkuk 2:3 to teach here that God promised that in a little while, Christ would return, bringing His reward to the faithful, Hebrews 10:37. (*Ibid.*, Bible Know. Com., N. T., p. 806)
 - c. He also cited Habakkuk 2:4 to teach that the righteous believer is to live by a life of faith, but that if he shrinks back in a lack of faith from living for the Lord, God would have no pleasure in him, implying a lack of reward from the Lord for such unbelief, Hebrews 10:38.
 - d. The Author of the epistle then expressed confidence in his readers that they were not of the company of believers who shrunk back from a life of faith only to be destroyed by defecting from the Christian faith, but that they belonged to that company that lived by faith and preserved their "souls," the Hebraistic sense of "persons" who are saved from destruction by God's severe discipline, Hebrews 10:39; *Ibid.*, p. 807.

Lesson: *If we believers cease to live by faith and defect from the Christian faith, we have only God's severe discipline to face, but if we live by faith, sticking with the stands that have already cost us so much in living for the Lord, we have God's rich reward to anticipate, some of which may be temporal and some for sure eternal.*

Application: *(1) May we realize that whether we live by faith in God and His heed His Word or not, the effects of that choice are very contrasting, for ill or for good! (2) May we then live by faith regardless of the cost involved.*