

# You Have Need of Endurance

Hebrews 10:32-39

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It is a wonderful blessing to be able to be together this morning! If you are visiting with us today (either here in person or online), we are glad to have you with us, and we would invite you to fill out a visitor card (either online or by using a card from the pew in front of you). And if you have any questions or concerns about your time with us today, please feel free to pull me aside after worship today.

We are here this morning to honor God and to preach the good news concerning the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus. As we've summarized on the wall up here, we obey the good news through faith, repentance, confession, and baptism. And as our tradition has been, we have several examples to share this week, starting with an update from Ricky Gootam, who preaches in India. This is what he posted online just a few days ago. He says,

Three were baptized into Christ this morning at church here at Satyavani Church of Christ in Kakinada, India. The word "baptism" means "immersion." We "immerse" into water and bring them out. In Christianity, we say [that just] as Christ died, rose from the dead on third day, we die of our old self and raise out by being washed by the blood of Jesus Christ. Today - Ammaji and her daughter Bhavani and also Nagamani wanted to be baptized. They live in our Leper colony in Peddapuram. We have a colony of lepers who live in that colony who we minister. They are inspiration to every Christian. We do not force anyone to become a follower of Christ here India. It is their own decision. Once you make that decision, usually we the Indians, stay faithful to God until we die. May these three from our Leper colony stay faithful all their lives to Christ. I have known these three for many years at our Leper colony, and this last week, they said they wanted to become Christians.

That is amazing! Over the past three years, I do not remember ever posting any baptism pictures from a leper colony, but so good to see this, and I hope to meet these three women some day.

And the other post I'd like to share this morning comes to us from Honolulu, Hawaii (yet again). They have an active congregation over there, and as this post will explain, they work together. This doesn't just fall on the preacher, but they actually work together. But this is what he posted this past Monday. He says,

What a Monday! GOD IS SO GOOD! While I (preacher Lima) was at a Bible study with Salele and Kalina, I got a phone call from my wife saying that one of our teenagers at church, Rayeben, wanted to be baptized for the forgiveness of his sins. One of his peers, Eryx, had encouraged him to obey the gospel a few days prior. After thinking about his soul, he made that decision today. The first set of pictures is Rayeben being baptized by his church friend Eryx with several of our church family who were present to witness and to help.

I hung up the phone with joy and shared the news with Salele and Kalina who were in the study with me just hours before this post. After three and half hours of study, learning about the sufficiency of the Word, the only church in the Bible, sin and its consequences, the gospel of Jesus Christ and forgiveness, the plan of salvation, and the urgency to obey the gospel, Salele and Kalina made the decision to put on Christ. Salele is the supervisor of one of our members, Tony. Tony had invited him to church and conversed with him about obeying the gospel. Tony does this with all his co-workers. We finally got together and had a wonderful meal at Liliha Bakery. (sponsored by one of our members, Susan). The meal invitation led to a scheduled Bible study, and the Lord gave the increase just hours before this post. God is so good!

Our church family knows how to win souls to Jesus. Some pray, some provide meals, some invite, some lead the study, some encourage and persuade, and we all do it because we love souls and we love our Lord! Jesus gave the mission and we are taking it to heart. "And He said to them, 'Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned'"(Mark 16:15–16). PRAISE THE LORD!

There are many more we could have shared this week, but we've shared this to illustrate what it means to obey the gospel. And if you have not yet obeyed the gospel yourself, we invite you to get in touch. Pull me aside after worship today or reach out using the contact information on the website or on the bulletin, and we would love to study together.

This morning we continue in our study of Hebrews! We are in the last few verses of Hebrews 10 this morning, so I would invite you to meet me there in just a moment, but as we make our way to Hebrews 10, let's remember that last week's passage was pretty intense, with the threat of the **"terrifying expectation of judgment"** for those who **"go on sinning willfully."** We learned of **"fire,"** and **"fury,"** and **"vengeance."** This morning, though, the author explains how to avoid all of this with the basic message that **"you have need of endurance."** And to communicate this message, to encourage those who were listening to this message for the first time, he refers to the past, present, and future. So, let's look together this morning at Hebrews 10:32-39,

***<sup>32</sup> But remember the former days, when, after being enlightened, you endured a great conflict of sufferings, <sup>33</sup> partly by being made a public spectacle through reproaches and tribulations, and partly by becoming sharers with those who were so treated. <sup>34</sup> For you showed sympathy to the prisoners and accepted joyfully the seizure of your property, knowing that you have for yourselves a better possession and a lasting one. <sup>35</sup> Therefore, do not throw away your confidence, which has a great reward. <sup>36</sup> For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God, you may receive what was promised.***

***<sup>37</sup> FOR YET IN A VERY LITTLE WHILE,***

**HE WHO IS COMING WILL COME, AND WILL NOT DELAY.  
<sup>38</sup> BUT MY RIGHTEOUS ONE SHALL LIVE BY FAITH;  
 AND IF HE SHRINKS BACK, MY SOUL HAS NO PLEASURE IN HIM.**

**<sup>39</sup> But we are not of those who shrink back to destruction, but of those who have faith to the preserving of the soul.**

- I. **As we think about what's been written here, let's start with THE ENCOURAGEMENT TO ENDURE BASED ON HOW THESE PEOPLE HAD ENDURED IN THE PAST (and we see this in verses 32-34).**

***"But remember the former days,"*** he says. To avoid the judgment from the previous paragraph, this is what we do instead. We ***"remember."*** And it's interesting that we these people aren't told to remember how good everything was in the past; but instead, they are to remember how they ***"endured a great conflict of sufferings."*** To ***"endure"*** is to stand your ground. The word translated here as ***"suffering"*** is the basis for the English word "athletic" and refers to a difficult struggle. They stood their ground the face of a difficult struggle. And not just any struggle, not just any suffering, but they are to remember how they suffered for their faith. They were made ***"a public spectacle through reproaches and tribulations."*** The ***"public spectacle"*** goes back to a word we might recognize in the English word "theater," the idea of being observed on a stage. And they did this through ***"reproaches and tribulations."*** They slandered these people. The early Christians observed the Lord's Supper and were accused of being cannibals for eating the body and blood of Jesus. They confessed Jesus as their only King and were accused of committing treason against the emperor. They refused to worship the local idols and were accused of being atheists. They warned about the coming judgment by fire and were accused of being arsonists. And then, in addition to being slandered, they endured ***"tribulations."*** That is, they were abused physically as well.

And not only were they mistreated themselves, but let's also notice in this passage that these people (back at the beginning) willingly identified themselves with those who were suffering. They ***"showed sympathy to prisoners."*** And this indicates that at least some of the persecution they faced was coming at them from the government. Sometimes (according to 1 Peter 4), we may just get harassed by old friends who are shocked that we aren't doing what we used to do. But sometimes, persecution may land God's people in prison. That's when the government gets involved. And if somebody is in prison for following Jesus, it's a pretty bold move to go visit that person in prison. We think of Peter at the trial of Jesus. Peter was so scared of being associated with Jesus that he lied. These people, though, openly associated with those who were in prison for their faith. This wasn't random, but these people signed up for this. They became ***"sharers with those who were so treated."*** The word translated here as ***"sharers"*** is a word that we often translate as ***"fellowship."*** We sometimes think of ***"fellowship"*** as eating together, and eating together may be a form of fellowship, but in this case, they became ***"sharers"*** in the suffering of others by joining them in prison, by caring for them in prison, by dropping off food and water and supplies. We think of Jesus who spoke of those who visited him in prison (in Matthew 25). To visit someone in prison was to be identified with them, to help, and to serve in some way. And then they also ***"accepted joyfully the seizure of [their] property."*** We think of the authorities in Thessalonica, pressed by an angry mob, demanding a ***"pledge"*** from Jason (in Acts 17). But Jason gave that pledge willingly, and these people gave up their possessions willingly as well. Why? Because they knew that they had something better; a better possession, a lasting possession; something that could not be taken away.

The author of Hebrews, then, encourages these people to think back to those early days. He encourages them to ***"remember."*** Avoid God's judgment by remembering how you ***"endured."*** You've done it once, you can do it again!

II. As we get back to the text, let's also notice that the author encourages these people to endure by giving some inspired encouragement for the PRESENT.

And this is where we come to another *"therefore."* Based on remembering how they suffered and endured in the past, he says, *"Therefore, do not throw away your confidence, which has a great reward. For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God, you may receive what was promised."* So, in the present, do not *"throw away"* that confidence you had in the past. We understand that we live in a throw-away society. So many things around us are designed to be disposable. Sometimes, though, we may accidentally throw away something that we never intended to throw away, and then we need to go looking for it. Maybe two years ago, I got a brand new cell phone, and for some stupid reason I laid it on top of the car. I was headed out and noticed I needed to bring the trash can in from the street, so I put the phone up on top of the car, took care of the trash can, and then drove away. Not good! I turned the first corner by our house, heard something sliding on the roof, and as soon as I realized what it was, I looked in the rear view mirror just in time to see it fly off and land in the middle of the road. I had thrown my phone away. So I had to pull over and go get it out of the road. Thankfully, the case protected it. Or I think back to when I was just starting to get serious with this girl in college, when she took her retainer out to eat, and wrapped it up in a napkin, and then sent it down the conveyor belt with the dirty dishes in the school cafeteria. I don't recommend digging through the trash in the dishwasher room of a college cafeteria after more than a thousand people have eaten, but something very valuable had been thrown away, and we had to go on a little adventure that day. True love right there! I still think of that when I eat at our old college cafeteria. I know what happens at the other end of that conveyor belt. I've seen some things!

Well, just as we might accidentally throw something valuable away, so also we may do the same thing with our Christian faith. And so he says, *"Therefore, do not throw away your confidence."* It's much easier, of course, to pay attention in the first place than to fix this. In the present, therefore, we must have endurance, encouraged by the past (you've done it once, you can do it again, you can keep on doing it), but also looking to the reward, *"so that when you have done the will of God, you may receive what was promised."* Doing the will of God, therefore, proves that we are trusting God. But we must obey in the present, right now. Obedience in the past will not get us through to the end. We must do the will of God right now, in the present. We have to keep our obedience up to date, so to speak.

And this confidence leads to a *"reward."* Some may object, saying, "No, we serve God out of love, not because we are looking for a reward." We understand the thought, and yet when we get to Moses (halfway through Hebrews 11), the text says, *"By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to endure ill-treatment with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin, considering the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for he was looking to the reward."* So yes, we serve God out of love, but we are also looking to the *"reward."* Here in the present, then, do not throw away your confidence, even though the reward may be delayed for a while.

III. Well, this leads us to the last few verses up here, as we think about the FUTURE.

And we start with a "for" in this section, *"FOR YET IN A VERY LITTLE WHILE, HE WHO IS COMING WILL COME, AND WILL NOT DELAY."* *"A very little while,"* of course, is from God's perspective, not necessarily ours. But we endure for as long as it takes, because Jesus is coming back for us! So hang on! Hang in there! Don't give up! *"BUT MY RIGHTEOUS ONE SHALL LIVE BY FAITH,"* he says, *"AND IF HE SHRINKS BACK, MY SOUL HAS NO PLEASURE IN HIM."* This is a quote from Habakkuk and is one of the most-quoted verses in the Bible. In

Habakkuk, God is in the process of punishing his own people by using the surrounding nations to do it, and the prophet is begging God on behalf of the people. And God explains that ***“my righteous one shall live by faith.”*** I know it’s bad, but hang in there! I know it’s bad, but do not ***“shrink back.”*** I know you don’t understand, so you’ll need to live by faith for just a little while longer.

And then he reminds us that everything’s at stake here, ***“But we are not of those who shrink back to destruction, but of those who have faith to the preserving of the soul.”*** To ***“shrink back”*** is to drift away, to slide back into the world. To ***“shrink back”*** is to end in ***“destruction.”*** To ***“shrink back”*** is to lose our reward. But thankfully, he ends on a positive note here. We are ***“those who have faith to the preserving of the soul.”*** It almost reminds me of what he said back in Chapter 6. He gets on them for not being able to handle what he wanted to say about Melchizedek, and then he says, ***“But, beloved, we are convinced of better things concerning you.”*** He’s concerned, but he’s optimistic. I think you can make it, but prove me right! He pushes pretty hard here, but he ends with some encouragement. We are ***“of those who have faith to the preserving of the soul.”*** So, he ends this passage with a reference to ***“faith.”***

### Conclusion:

And that is so appropriate because of what comes next! In the very next verse, we come to Hebrews 11, which is sometimes referred to as the “Hall of Fame of God’s Faithful.” Hebrews 11 is basically a list of great men and women who lived by faith in the past. And he’s ultimately moving toward the first few verses of Hebrews 12, where Jesus is described as being the ultimate example of faith. So, that’s where we are headed. Lord willing, we hope to come back next week and take a short break from Hebrews by having a special song and scripture service where we focus on faith. This morning, though, we’ve seen the need for ENDURANCE. And this endurance is motivated by looking at what we’ve been through in the PAST, realizing that we must obey God in the PRESENT, as we look to the FUTURE in faith.

Before Caleb leads us in a song to prepare us for the Lord’s Supper, let’s go to God in prayer:

Our Father in Heaven,

You are the great and awesome Almighty God, Creator of heaven and earth. We, on the other hand, are weak and sinful. We pray, though, that you would enable us to become the kind of people that you want us to be. We pray for wisdom as we encourage each other. We pray for courage as we face challenges. Be with those who are bringing up children. Be with those who are caring for loved ones. Be with those who are facing transitions. Be with those who are struggling with illness. Be with those who are traveling.

Father, we ask for the strength to hold on. We are so thankful that you have been with us in the past, we know that you are with us now, and we pray that you will be with us in the future until that day when our hope is realized, when we can finally see you face to face.

We come to you today through Jesus, who has saved us from our sins. Lord, come quickly!  
AMEN.

To comment on this lesson: [foullakeschurch@gmail.com](mailto:foullakeschurch@gmail.com)