

Book of Hebrews Part 37: 10:26-33; Willful Sin and Rebellion; Christian Persecution (11/30/2019)

The following text is a message from Corner Fringe Ministries that was presented by Daniel Joseph. The original presentation can be viewed at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TtMWwVjYyj8> or <https://rumble.com/embed/vbcm9b/?pub=b523j>.

***Portions of this document have been edited from the video message to better present a comprehensive, written document. Special attention was given to preserve the original context, but this document is not verbatim. Scripture verses are in the red text with other quotes in blue. Therefore, it is recommended that this document is printed in color. The Hebrew words are generally accompanied by the transliterate, English word. In most cases, the Hebrew is to be read from right to left.**

Shabbat Shalom. We are in chapter ten of the epistle to the Hebrews. I had planned to finish it this week, but we are not going to get there. We're going to leave a few verses for next week's message, and then we will break into chapter eleven. I am really excited to get to chapter eleven because it is so powerful. It's about the titans of the faith. These are the men and the women we want to emulate. Amen? So we are going to continue on in chapter ten.

I was hoping for kind of a light-hearted message, but we don't get that today. We get the exact opposite. This is necessary for the days we live in. We have to stay focused.

Having said that, we start in Hebrews 10:26 **For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins.** The first thing I want to do here is discuss two key words that require defining. We need to define these terms before we can really appreciate what is being communicated. They are the words sin and truth.

So what is sin? 1 John 3:4 **Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness.** This is talking about the breaking of the Commandments. It's the breaking of the laws. It's very simple. This is the biblical definition of sin. Then we have the word, truth. What is truth? Go to Scripture in Psalm 119:142 **Your Law is truth.** Psalm 119:151 **all Your commandments are truth.** Psalm 119:160 **the entirety of Your word is truth.** The entirety of it! It is truth! We know that word became flesh and dwelt among us. So this is how we should approach this, **for if we sin**, which is to say walk away from the law of God, abandoned the law of God, break the law willfully **after we have received the knowledge of the truth** (law, the knowledge of His Commandments, and the knowledge of His word) **there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins.** That means there is no atonement, no mercy, no grace, no salvation, and no hope.

Now, let's be honest. As believers, when we're confronted with the passage like this we're like, "back up, hold up, you just crossed the line of my comfort ability. I don't like these words. I really don't care for them." In fact, what you find some Christians doing, especially in this progressive, modern-day Christianity, what I would call a very liberal new Christianity, is literally one of two things. When confronted with passages like this, they either say, "I'm checking out." They continue to move saying, "I'll go find another passage because you know what? I need something that makes me feel comfortable. I need to feel good right now. I don't need this." Or they will do this; they rewrite Scripture. They'll twist it and pervert it so it says what they want it to say; so that it can speak to them in

a way that they're comforted. They create their own line, "You're not going to cross this line." So they literally rewrite Scripture.

I have to tell you, this passage is terrifying because it's hard for us today as believers who have come into the faith by no other thing than grace. The only reason we are in the faith is because the beautiful grace of God. Let's be clear on that. When you're confronted with the passage like this, it rocks your boat. Amen?

Do you know when you read this, there's no room for compromise? We don't like that. This is a passage that demands change from where we're at. It demands you close all those doors that you have opened, your affections, your desires for the world, and things you go after. You might have closed these thirty doors over here and are saying, "You know what? Comparatively, I could put myself up against many of the people in my own church, and I look pretty good." But there are still some doors left open where you haven't fully submitted to the LORD. There's still some adultery going on, and I say this metaphorically in the sense of adultery against the LORD. You're still married, there are still strings to the world you're attached to, and you're not willing to break them. You'll break these particular things, but there are some things you're not willing to let go of.

I'm going to tell you; in these circumstances, this is terrifying because this is where the rubber meets the road. This is where we are called on the carpet. This passage is to strike the fear of the Living God in you. In fact, I always make the joke when I come across this passage, it will change your religion. No kidding! Especially when we see today there is another gospel being preached and another Jesus which Paul says, "is not another." In other words, what Paul is getting at is there's a perverted gospel being presented. There's a perverted Jesus. There's a new Jesus we've created in our own minds to fit with our likes and dislikes, with our theology, rather than us getting in line with God's theology. We live in scary, scary times.

I want to be clear on something before we continue. The passage we're looking at right here is the purest and clearest definition of rebellion you will find anywhere in Scripture or otherwise. That's what rebellion is, **if you sin willfully after you receive the knowledge of the truth**. You've heard His Commandments, you know them. You say, "I don't need to. Sorry. I am not going to do it." You may even say in your heart, "You know what? I'm not ready?" It's rebellion. That is pure rebellion, and you cannot walk in rebellion and receive the grace of God.

The writer of Hebrews is going for the jugular here. He is literally scaring the Hades out of his brethren. This is the point of it, and it's very effective. I can tell you how powerfully this passage has spoken into my life on practical levels. It is, "The delusions and the lies I want to believe because I want to believe them because my flesh wants them. My flesh wants to continue to do XYZ. Yes. I've dealt with ABC, but I need these XYZ." Then you come across a passage like this. It chops those lies right out at the knees. It humbles you before God, and this is what we need.

Now, the writer is actually taking this right out of the Torah in Numbers 15:30 **But the person who does anything presumptuously** (the Hebrew root of this is, with a high hand. Rebelliously) **whether he is native-born or a stranger, that one brings reproach on the LORD**. Reproach in Hebrew is **גָּדַף** (*gadaph*). This reproach is blasphemy. You bring reproach; you blaspheme the name of the LORD.

Think of Galatians 2:17 because Paul gets in there and literally says **"But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ (by His grace), we ourselves also are found sinners, is Christ therefore a minister of sin? Certainly not!** What Paul is saying is, you become a blasphemer because when you start walking in sin

according to the dictates of your own heart, and you're just going to follow your own theology, you are now saying Christ is a minister of what I represent and stand for. He is a minister of the words that I speak. It's blasphemy; you blaspheme the name of the LORD. Don't think for a second blasphemers are going to be redeemed. Only repentant blasphemers who are no longer blaspheming will be saved, but not active blasphemers.

It goes on in Numbers 15:31 **Because he has despised the word of the LORD, and has broken His commandment.** This is what it's all about, **His Commandments.** Continuing, **that person shall be completely cut off; his guilt shall be upon him.** In other words, this is exactly what the writer of Hebrews says, **If you willfully sin after receiving the knowledge of the truth (Hebrews 10:26)** there's no help for you. You're cut off. You're in a state of rebellion.

How do we get into this category? I'm going to tell you. Like no other generation, which has existed since the days of Noah, have we seen the church doing the things it is doing and accepting the things it is accepting. How do believers, who are people who are supposedly not operating according to the standard of the world, end up in this box? This writer is specifically talking to believers. This is not a statement to the world. How do you end up in this box?

You want to know how? It's because we look at sin in a completely different way than God does. We no longer feel the weight, the gravity, the death, the destruction, and the horror that comes along with sin. We've reduced it to a crust of bread. It doesn't mean much. So we assimilate to it; we accept it. We've actually acquiesced to it. We've acquired a taste for sin. It is absolutely demonic. It is mind-blowing!

Then you ask, "Well, why have we acquiesced to it? How does this happen? Why do Christians fall into this trap, this pitfall, of literally embracing sin thinking it is not a big deal. The answer is this; there's no fear. When you remove the fear of God, everything else falls. Look at Proverbs 16:6 **In mercy and truth Atonement is provided for iniquity....** I need to stop here because what's interesting is in the Gospel of John 1:17, this is in a sense quoted, **For the Law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.**

So here you see this, and this is just scriptural. When John is speaking that reality to Jews in the first century, they would have been saying, "I could go to a couple places in Scripture and say that resonates with me because what you just said, John is scriptural. It's a fact."

Starting again at the beginning of Proverbs 16:6 **In mercy and truth Atonement is provided for iniquity; and by the fear of the LORD one departs from evil** (emphasis added). In other words, if we do not have that fear, we are not going to depart. It's that fear that gives you the correct understanding and appreciation for the deadly destruction that sin offers and is certain to impose upon you, if you continue in it.

Deuteronomy 5:29 says **Oh, that they had such a heart in them that they would fear Me and always keep all My commandments, that it might be well with them and with their children forever!** (Emphasis added). The one thing I like about this is, **It might be well with them and with their children forever.** Forever in Hebrew is עולם *owlam*. It means, forever. This passage is explicitly in the context of for eternity. There are eternal implications here to fearing God and keeping His Commandments.

We, however, are so short-sighted today because we have all these things the world is throwing at us, things we fill our lives up with and can't get enough of. Because of that, we can't see these things. We can't, as they say, see the forest through the trees.

Now when you look at, **fear me and always keep My Commandments**, we recognize obedience is symptomatic. One thing I remember early on as I started to rationalize and thought through Scripture was, “why do I do the things that I do, and why don't I do these other things? Why am I drawn to this? Why am I not drawn to something else?” I started to work through all this, and one of the things I worked through, and understood, is obedience. Now, we know we're not in and of ourselves justified by works. I get that. But obedience is a symptom; it's not the root.

So here's the thing, obedience is symptomatic of the fear of the LORD. Do you understand? So when I keep His Commandments, it's because I fear Him. It's because I love Him. Obedience is simply a symptom of a correct heart and a correct perspective. If you have those pieces, the obedience will come. If you try to work to be obedient, no, no, that is not what it is about. It's actually about getting on your knees, fearing Him, seeking His face, and loving Him. Out of that is the outpouring of the Spirit and the desire to serve Him to do everything He says. Then what happens? Obedience is a symptom of that relationship with the LORD.

Going on to Ecclesiastes 12:13-14 **Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep His commandments** (emphasis added). Now, you're going to see this throughout Scripture. You see these things tied together. They are in lockstep with one another: fearing God and keeping His commandments. Continuing, **For this is man's all**. This is what it's all about. Do you want to boil down the meaning of life? It's about fearing God and keeping His Commandments. Why? **¹⁴ For God will bring every work into judgment, including every secret thing, Whether good or evil.** That's why.

The very last thing Solomon says in his book is that judgment is coming. There is going to be a day of reckoning. Get ready! Be prepared!

When you think about all of this, it should get your wheels turning. At times I think very systematically. So, the Commandments are symptomatic of fear. Well, how do I get fear? Where does fear come from? Let's go to the Torah in Deuteronomy 31:11-12 **“when all Israel comes to appear before the LORD your God in the place which He chooses, you shall read this law before all Israel in their hearing. ¹² Gather the people together, men and women and little ones, and the stranger who is within your gates, that they may hear and that they may learn to fear the LORD your God and carefully observe all the words of this law.”**

Do you want to acquire the fear of the LORD so that you can have the beautiful symptoms of obedience? If you do, you have got to read His word. And you don't just read it so that you can just simply memorize it and say, “Hey, I can quote Scripture.” No. No. It is reading it so I can put it in my heart. I can hide it in my heart that I might not sin against Him.

That's what it's about. It's about saying, “LORD, this is your voice. I want to do what You say as an obedient child. I want to please my Father.” There is nothing better. All you parents in here know there's nothing better than when your kids obey you, and they do it with a cheerful heart. What do you think that same action does with the Father? (When we obey Him with a cheerful heart.)

I want to be that person who pleases Him. This is who we need to be, but it isn't going to happen until you get into the Torah, until you get into the prophets, and until you start listening to the words of Yeshua found in the gospel of Matthew. They are powerful words that will strip you down to the core and show you how evil you really are. Yeshua says you're to love your enemies, and you're to bless

those who curse you and do good to those who hate you and pray for those who spitefully use you. You just dropped me. You just gutted me of all the filth, all the deception, and all of the hatred and bitterness; you took it right out of my heart. These are the words of Yeshua. He will put you to the wall. That is powerful. This is where we get the fear of God.

I want to give you a sample of this from within the Torah of what this is actually talking about. This is what the children of Israel would have heard, and what their children would have heard. Exodus 32:33 **And the LORD said to Moses, "Whoever has sinned against Me, I will blot him out of My book."**

Ironically enough, the context is Moses has come to intercede on behalf of Israel, and he tells God, "If You are not even going to forgive them, then blot me out of your book." Then the LORD responds, and this is what terrifies me. He responds to Moses and say, "whoever sins against me, that person is done." I want to be clear on something. These are believers. They're in the book. There's only one book; it is called The Book of Life. If you're not found in that book, you're going to be destroyed.

So here the LORD says, **I will blot him out**. You can't be blotted out of something you're not in to begin with. So when believers become complacent in their faith, and they start to acquiesce to the desires and be allured with the things of the world, I'm telling you it is going to come at a price. That price is eternity. We cannot afford it!

This strikes fear into my heart! This does keep me on the path. This keeps me on my knees. This keeps me crying out. This is where we need to be.

Going to Psalm 68:21 **But God will wound the head of His enemies, the hairy scalp of the one who still goes on in His trespasses** (emphasis added). Notice that he still **goes on in his trespasses**. That's rebellion. That's not someone who turned back and asked for forgiveness. That is not someone who turned from his wicked ways and called upon the holy name of the LORD. No, no, no, no! This is someone who says, "No, I'm going to do it my way." Have you ever seen those people who have that attitude, "It's my way or the highway"? They are going to do it their way, and they stiff-arm the LORD. They pretend that's not what's going on because they want to believe the lie that they can walk according to the dictates of their own heart and will have peace in the end. They think, "It will be fine." No, it will not.

You can play the phony Christian; you can talk the talk all you want, but on that day it isn't going to do any good because on the day of judgment, it's all coming out. Your shame is going to be exposed. Your decisions are going to be exposed. Who you really are is going to be exposed.

So go ahead. You can fake it now, but is it going to pay off? There's no payoff in that. There is nothing but shame coming. Grace will not cover rebellion.

Moving on in Hebrews 10:26-27 **For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, ²⁷ but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries.** In other words, if you rebel against God, it's going to come at a price. There's no grace for you at the end. There's no hope; there's no salvation. There's nothing there. This passage drops you.

Here is what the Apostle Paul says in Romans 6:1 **What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?**

It's interesting regarding the conversations I have experienced. Those conversations leave me feeling like I'm in an alternate universe. My heart is crushed while talking to these believers because I know that Satan has woven lies into the tapestry of Christian narrative today. There are Christians who literally believe, "I'm not going to keep the Law. I don't have to keep the Commandments because if I do I'm rejecting the grace of God. I'm rejecting the grace of God, and that's a mockery to that great sacrifice."

The enemy has literally flipped this thing upside down and on its head. When in reality, it's the opposite because after grace has come do we continue in sin and walk in lawlessness? Romans 6:2 **Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it?**

We find that statement from Spurgeon is so powerful, "You can't be married to Christ unless you divorce your sin." Understand something, keeping a little "on the side relationship" with your sin and committing adultery against God will not go well for you. Adulterers and adulteresses are going to see the pit of Hell. Period!

I want to take you to Psalm 119:88. This was our theme verse for the recent revival picked specifically for this reason. Revive me according to Your lovingkindness. The Hebrew is קַח־חַסְדְּךָ יְיָ (kə-ḥas-də-kā ḥay-yê-nî). It means, revive me; make me alive; bring me to life; make me a new creation. How does that happen? How do we become new? It's according to God's love, mercy and grace. That's how I am made new.

So the psalmist says in Psalm 119:88 **Revive me according to Your lovingkindness**, (for what purpose?) **So that I may keep the testimony of Your mouth** (emphasis added). We are to keep this testimony! This is specifically regarding the Ten Commandments. He has delivered us. He made us a brand new creation in the Messiah Yeshua for a purpose. And that purpose is so I may keep His Law. That's the purpose.

Paul says in Ephesians 2:8-9 **For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, ⁹ not of works, lest anyone should boast.** It couldn't be clearer. None of us are worthy enough for Christ to come and die for us. We are not worthy. I always say if you put all the good works every man on this planet has done in their entire life to one person, that person will still not be good enough because every one of us failed. We don't deserve what God gave us. We're saved by grace.

But what is interesting is what Paul says as he goes on. What he says is the exact same structure we just read in Psalm 119:88. He goes on and says this in Ephesians 2:10 **For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them** (emphasis added).

These were prepared beforehand. Prepared before time began. His word, His Torah, His righteousness, His commandments, and His character were set so that we would walk in them. That is why we are redeemed. It is to bring Him glory; in order to worship Him in the beauty of Holiness. This is what we are called to do.

Continuing on in Hebrews 10:28 **Anyone who has rejected Moses' law dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses** (emphasis added). Now, I want to draw your attention to the word, rejected. We're going to dissect this a little bit. In the Greek, it is ἀθετήσας. Listen to the terminology, especially in light of today's narrative, **to do away with what has been laid down**. In other words, that

which has been established. To do away with what has been laid down, to set aside, i.e. (by implication) to disesteem, neutralize or violate: cast off, despise, disannul, frustrate, bring to naught, reject.

So when we read the Hebrews 10:28 verse, you can understand anyone who has rejected, or anyone who does away with Moses' law, will die without mercy.

Now, it's interesting when Christ came on the scene as recorded in Matthew 5:17, He said **“Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill”**, which is πληρώω (*plēroō*) in the Greek. This is the very same word the Apostle Paul uses in Galatians 5:14 **For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”** He is quoting Leviticus 19:18. It is fulfillment. This is what we are called to do. We are called to fulfill it.

However, the writer warns us in Hebrews 10:28 that if you reject the Law of Moses, you will die without mercy. There is no grace. There is no mercy. This is absolutely terrifying.

Let's go to Psalm 103:17-18 and tie into this ¹⁷ **But the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting On those who fear Him, And His righteousness to children's children,** ¹⁸ **To such as keep His covenant, And to those who remember His commandments to do them** (emphasis added).

There's that fear again, that's where you find mercy. If you want mercy, it is **on those who fear Him, and His righteousness to children's children,** ¹⁸ **To such as keep His covenant, and to those who remember His commandments to do them** (emphasis added).

They remember. So there's that fear and keeping the commandments again. It just keeps playing over and over in scripture. Do you want the mercy of God? This is where we need to be. We need to be in the fear of the LORD, and the symptom of that will produce obedience.

Looking at Hosea 10:12-13 **Sow for yourselves righteousness; Reap in mercy; Break up your fallow ground, For it is time to seek the LORD, Till He comes and rains righteousness on you.** ¹³ **You have plowed wickedness; You have reaped iniquity. You have eaten the fruit of lies, Because you trusted in your own way, In the multitude of your mighty men** (emphasis added).

So think about that. You trust in your own heart. I'm going to do it my way. Let me be clear, what comes natural to me is to do it my way. And don't tell me it's not the same with every single person in this audience. What comes naturally is to do it your way. But when you come into relationship with Christ, you break yourself. You humble yourself. That's what humility is. Doing it our way is the opposite of humility. That's me acting in pride when I say, “No, I'm not gonna do this.”

Even 1 Samuel 15:23 talks about how stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry, **For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, And stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry.** We are so stubborn; we're going to do it our way at all costs, and it's going to cost you everything. It is sad!

Going back now to Hebrews 10:28-29 **Anyone who has rejected Moses' law dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses.** ²⁹ **Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace?** (Emphasis added).

In other words, it was one thing to sin prior to the coming of Yeshua when you reject Moses; you deserve to die without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. When Yeshua came, it is

doubled. It just got worse. If you reject the law after Christ has come, that is a far more egregious sin than ever before because He gave His life. Never before did He give His life, but now He has come to give His life, and now there's a mandate and pressure on us to walk closer to Him than ever before. He is worthy of our allegiance. He is worthy for us to divorce the world. He is worthy for us to love Him more than we love the things of the world; to desire Him more than the things we desire in the world. And there is a lot of world.

You know, sin lies at the door; its desire is for you. You know, it's amazing because sin comes looking for us. Your flesh craves it, but sin will come looking for you because it desires you. It wants to kill you. It's the nature of it. It's scary!

Moving on in Hebrews 10:30 **For we know Him who said, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the LORD. And again, "The LORD will judge His people."** Here we find the writer of Hebrews quoting Deuteronomy 32:35-36 **Vengeance is Mine,.....³⁶For the LORD will judge His people...** How scary is that? You see, when these two things come together, I get uncomfortable. When you start talking about the vengeance of God and then you bring God's people into the equation, into this context, that's terrifying.

The writer of Hebrews knows exactly what he's doing. He's dropping his brother to their knees. He's instilling the fear of God because that's what good prophets did. The prophets instilled the fear of God. They brought the reality of sin to the table, and nobody wanted to hear it. Therefore, the people scoffed at them. They mock them. They imprison them. They killed them because nobody wants to hear it. What they want to hear is smooth things. We have itching ears; tell us things we want to hear so that we can stay married to the world and pretend we are married to Christ. It's absolutely demonic.

If you want to insult the Spirit of Grace, it's not going to work out. It's not going to happen.

I want to take you back in time to help you appreciate the power of what the writer just conveyed. Again, what he just quoted comes straight out of the Torah. But going back to the 1700s, we have Jonathan Edwards. Edwards is responsible for and credited with being one of the primary guys in revival. He is credited with one of the greatest revivals this world, this nation, has ever known. It is referred to as the first Great Awakening.

He was a brilliant theologian. His most famous sermon ever is known as "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God." Keep in mind, this was during the time of revival. Jonathan Edwards was successful at bringing people into the Kingdom of Jesus. I want to show you how he did this in his message "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God." Do you know what the base text for this message was? This message was based on Deuteronomy 32:35, which is the very one that the writer of Hebrews just quoted to us. It was the base text by which Edwards made this sermon, and he gave it multiple times.

I have to tell you this before I show you some fragments of this sermon so you can appreciate how preaching used to happen in this country. They say that during this message the crowd was so overwhelmed with agony. They were mourning and groaning out loud, and people were crying out, "How can we be saved?" They were interrupting his message. It was too heavy; it was too powerful. They felt the conviction of the Holy Spirit. This is how people get radically saved. This is how they cut out the world. This is how they give their hearts to Jesus.

I want to read to you the opening passage—

DEUT. XXXII. 35.

—Their Foot shall slide in due Time —

N this Verse is threatned the Vengeance of God on the wicked unbelieving Israelites, that were God's visible People, and lived under Means of Grace; and that, notwithstanding all God's wonderful Works that he had wrought towards that People, yet remained, as is expressed,

This is just the beginning of his message. There are three things you want to note about this. Number one, he recognized Israel was God's people. We are dealing with God's people. Number two, these people received grace. There's no question about it. The blood of the lamb brought them out of Egypt. It wasn't until that lamb's blood was shed that the wall of bondage and oppression was broken. It was only through the lamb's blood they were delivered. It is the grace of God they were spared death. He set them free. They were at liberty.

The writer Jonathan Edwards recognizes this, but then he also recognized they were unbelieving and disobedient. They were wicked. When the children of Israel stopped listening to the LORD in the wilderness, He left their corpses in the wilderness. They never saw the Promised Land. The Promised Land is symbolic of Heaven, the Kingdom of God. They never saw it, and they were His people. They had received His grace, and yet because they continued in rebellion, they continued to do things their way, they were left in the wilderness.

So Jonathan Edwards, back in the 1700s, was preaching to people to come to Jesus. That first Great Awakening literally transforms this entire nation from top to bottom.

Now he continues, [There is no Want of Power in God to cast wicked Men into Hell at any Moment. Men's Hands can't be strong when God rises up: The strongest have no Power to resist Him, nor can any deliver out of His hands. He is not only able to cast wicked Men into Hell, but he can most easily do it.](#)

Now listen to this next statement, [Almost every natural man that hears of hell flatters himself that he shall escape it.](#) Edwards hits it on the head! He said he saw this problem in his days the exact same problem we have now. We have people in the church flattering themselves thinking they will never grace Hell. They think they are going to escape it. This is an unbelievable thought!

This is interesting because Yeshua told us as recorded in Matthew 7:21 **Not everyone who says to Me LORD, LORD [These are professing believers] shall enter into the kingdom of heaven. But he who does the will of My Father in Heaven.** It says, **Who does the will of My Father.** Doesn't Yeshua say, **"....not to do My own will but the will of Him who sent me"**? (John 6:38)

These are the things that pierce me. They pierce me saying, "How long, Daniel, are you going to continue in your own will to your own death and stupidity and lies? For what? For temporary satisfaction for temporary pleasures? For delusions?" God have mercy! This is not what we need to be doing.

Continuing in Matthew 7:22 **Many will say to Me in that day, 'LORD, LORD, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?'** They are calling on Him; they know Jesus! These are radical professors. These people would have been the renowned believers of the day. They're doing great work. They're doing ministry. They are in the heart of ministry. **And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'** (Matthew 7:23).

They walked away from the law. They abandon it. They didn't listen to Him. They didn't keep the commandments. They did well in their ministry, but it wasn't for Him. That is frightening!

Now continuing on in the message "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God." **They don't only justly deserve to be cast down thither [Hell]; but the Sentence of the Law of God, that eternal and immutable Rule of Righteousness...** (emphasis added).

Let me ask you, what Pastor talks like this today? They're actually telling you that you don't need to worry about the Law because the Law has nothing to do with the gospel. Jesus came and did away with everything. Have we not listened to the great revivalist? This is how they brought the message, **that God has fixed between Him and mankind, is gone out against them, and stands against them; so that they are bound over already to Hell. So that every unconverted man properly belongs to Hell.**

I'm going to tell you right now; if I could go out and read his message verbatim, nine of ten churches I would go to would ask me to leave. I'm telling you that's not a joke. I'm absolutely being serious. I wouldn't make it.

This guy, Edwards, is bringing the heat. He is somebody who understands the kingdom of God is tangible. He feels the weight of sin. He knows what's going on.

He goes on, **There are black clouds of God's Wrath now hanging directly over your heads, full of the dreadful storm, and big with thunder; and were it not for the restraining hand of God it would immediately burst forth upon you.** Can you imagine this guy said this from the pulpit? I mean this is as powerful as it gets.

O Sinner! Consider the fearful danger you are in: 'Tis a great furnace of wrath, a wide and bottomless pit, full of the fire of wrath, that you are held over in the hand of that God, whose wrath is provoked and incensed as much against you as against many of the damned in Hell: You hang by a slender thread, with the flames of divine wrath flashing about it. (Jonathan Edwards, *Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God*). You can read the rest of this sermon online, and certainly he gave this message much better than I (Daniel) did.

This is how they stirred revival. This is what brought people to repentance. This is what brought people to understand what Christ really did at the cross, the great payment and great sacrifice. Because of that, they wanted to live lives worthy of that sacrifice. They knew the payment and penalty of sin. It was terrifying; they were filled with fear.

Hebrews 10:30 says **For we know Him who said, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the LORD. And again, "The LORD will judge His people."** He's going to judge us. Move the world outside of the scope right now. He is going to judge us. This is reckoning day. Reckoning is coming.

Psalm 50:16-17 is just as terrifying, ¹⁶ **But to the wicked God says: "What right have you to declare My statutes, or take My covenant in your mouth, ¹⁷ Seeing you hate instruction and cast My words behind you?"** He's not talking to the world. He's talking to His people. They have taken His Covenant in their mouths and have professed Him to be their God. What is His response? You are wicked. You have cast My instructions behind you. You are not listening to Me.

Then dropping down to Psalm 50:21-22 **These things you have done, and I kept silent; You thought that I was altogether like you; But I will rebuke you, and set them in order before your eyes. ²² "Now consider this, **you who forget God, Lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver** (emphasis added).**

There's going to be no intercession for you on the Day of Judgment. You spent your life walking in rebellion. When God is your enemy, who is going to save you? No one! You want to talk about despair and hopelessness when you find out you're the actual enemy of God. In your entire life, you were delusional like those Christians in Matthew 7:21-23 who are confused that they're not getting in only to find out they're going to be torn to pieces. They are His enemy.

That terrifies me! If I gave this message every single day of my life for the rest of my days, it wouldn't be enough. Not for this generation. This is the truth.

In Psalm 50:22, I highlighted the words **consider this, you who forget God** for a reason. Do you know that is a statement explicitly used in Scripture to refer to those who literally walked away from His law and His commandments? An example would be Deuteronomy 8:11 **Beware that you do not forget the LORD your God by not keeping His commandments, His judgments, and His statutes which I command you today.**

So here's the thing. I'm not walking in His commandments. I am not thinking about Him. I've realized something; for me to walk in His commandments, it doesn't come naturally to the flesh. I have to meditate on Him. I have to focus on Him. I have to pray to Him. I have to confess to Him.

That's the reality. This is part of relationship. I am given my heart over to Him. But when your heart is distracted and in the world, you don't do those things. You walk away, and you don't even realize it. You could say, "You know, I said a prayer at one time. I'm okay. I'm not a bad person." Not a bad person according to whom? You. How about when you pick up the Bible and start looking at the commandments of God, and then ask yourself how you are doing? It'll drop you to your knees.

Hebrews 10:30-31 **For we know Him who said, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the LORD. And again, "The LORD will judge His people." ³¹ It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God** (emphasis added). It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the Living God.

Think about Job at the end of the book of Job 42:5-6. Job makes a statement that I'll never forget. He has had this whole discourse, and God's finally showed Himself to Job. Job says ⁵ **I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear, But now my eye sees You. ⁶ Therefore I abhor myself.**

Think about the kind of man Job was. He was holy, honorable, and a man that has integrity. Despite all the hell he went through, he said, "blessed be the name of the LORD." Job was one of the most righteous men ever mentioned in scripture; yet the moment he saw the LORD, he abhorred himself. You need to let that resonate with you. Don't ever let it leave your awareness, because that's what's going to happen at the judgment.

Men are going to abhorred themselves. They're going to vilely see, "I don't measure up." They're going to see how holy He is. They're going to be full of regrets. Every vain thing you have spent time on, that is meaningless and worthless in this world, you will despise on the Day of Judgment. You will hate them. You will regret falling into that trap. It is better for the righteous to fall into the hands of a merciful God than for the sinner to fall into the hands of an angry God. Amen?

Moving on to Hebrews 10:32-33 **But recall the former days in which, after you were illuminated....** Let me be very clear. It's talking about when you came into the light of Messiah Yeshua. He is the light of the world; you were illuminated. **After you were illuminated, you endured a great struggle with sufferings.** You came into the faith, and what were you presented with? Persecution. Why? ³³ **partly while you were made a spectacle both by reproaches and tribulations, and partly while you became companions of those who were so treated.** In other words, you not only suffered for your own sake, for the sake of the gospel. But you also suffer because you stood with those who stood for the gospel. This is persecution.

You know, as we get deeper into chapter eleven, the writer is going to bring some things out that are heavy regarding persecution, and the timing of this could not be better. I say this because when you understand how persecution works, the faith and the reality of it, and what is happening in this country right now, we're looking at the end of a barrel. For those who are in the Christian church who are going to be unwilling to compromise their faith, their morals, and the integrity of the word of God, there is going to be horrific persecution.

I want to spend the last part of today's message taking you back into history. I want to take you back to the first century. I am not going to do this by using a biblical commentary. I am not going to use Christian commentary or Christian recordation. I am not even going to use Josephus, who certainly wasn't a Christian but a phenomenal historian. I am going to show you pagan, secular, historical accounts of Christian persecution, and I'm doing this for multiple reasons. I'm setting the stage as we get deeper into Hebrews chapter eleven. There are things here that you need to see, that we're looking at right now.

You see, there's an environment in society which cultivates true persecution against believers, and I want you to appreciate this. The first person I want to bring up here is Suetonius, a Roman historian from the first century. This is what he says, **Since the Jews constantly made disturbances at the instigation of Chrestus [Christ], he expelled them from Rome.**

It's just a little snippet, but it's interesting because people tie this into Acts 18:2 **And he found a certain Jew named Aquila, born in Pontus, who had recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla (because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to depart from Rome); and he came to them.** (Suetonius, the Lives of the 12 Caesars, Claudius 25).

That's interesting because Suetonius' commentary is about Claudius. The reason I juxtaposition these two things is the book of Acts is more broad. It simply states that the Jews are to leave Rome, but Suetonius says the Jews who were investigating Christ were the ones who were being asked to leave.

Now, let's build on this. Going to Suetonius' commentary on Nero, which came after Claudius, **During his reign many abuses were severely punished and put down, and no fewer new laws were made: a limit was set to expenditures.** Do you just see what he just said? You have to pick up on this because history repeats itself. **No fewer laws were made.** In other words, Nero started bringing in a gluttony of laws.

You see, when your government is imposing laws upon laws upon laws, I'm telling you right now persecutions around the corner. Oppression is around the corner.

Suetonius goes on and says, [the public banquets were confined to a distribution of food; the sale of any kind of cooked viands in the taverns was forbidden, with the exception of pulse \(beans\) and vegetables, whereas before every sort of dainty was exposed for sale.](#) (He's killing business capital. Nero's like the spirit of Antichrist in killing capitalism.) [Punishment was inflicted on the Christians, a class of men given to a new and mischievous superstition.](#) (Suetonius, Nero 16).

This is not Christian commentary. This is not bias. This is flat-out looking at the early century, the time of Nero, which is the mid first century. Amongst Christians then, and even Christian scholars today, Nero is seen as the embodiment of the Antichrist.

You need to pay close attention to what's going on when you start reading about Nero. In fact, I'm going to build on this. I'm going to take you to another Roman historian, Tacituc. He comments on the great fire of Rome. That was 64 BC. Two-thirds of Rome burned down to the ground in the six-day fire. As a result, there were all sorts of conspiracies tied with this and how this happened. Supposedly, Nero, conveniently, was nowhere to be found. He was not in Rome at the time this happened.

Listen to what Tacituc says in his commentary, [But all human efforts, all the lavish gifts of the emperor, and the propitiations of the gods, did not banish the sinister belief that the conflagration was the result of an order.](#)

So interestingly, this commentary is saying, "You know, there's a conspiracy that exists among the people saying Nero set fire to the city himself." Continuing, [Consequently, to get rid of the report, Nero fastened the guilt and inflicted the most exquisite tortures on a class hated for their abominations, called Christians by the populace.](#)

So Nero went after them to kill this conspiracy. Whether it was true or not doesn't make any difference. It was the way to get the people to not worry about what he's doing or what he didn't do by blaming it on the Christians. You see, this is the spirit of Antichrist.

So make no mistake; as things start to unfold in this country and start to go sideways, don't think for a moment they're not going to start blaming the Christians. I can already give you testimony; this is already happening. Do you know that they want to pass a law in California that would blame Christians for transgender committing suicide saying the Christians are at fault for transgenderism suicides? This type of thing is already happening. You have to know what the spirit of Antichrist looks like because it's already manifesting itself. This is absolutely crazy!

Now, Tacituc goes on and says, [Christus, from whom the name had its origin](#) (In other words, the word Christians comes from the word Christ), [suffered the extreme penalty during the reign of Tiberius at the hands of one of our procurators, Pontius Pilatus, and a most mischievous superstition, thus checked for the moment, again broke out not only in Judea, the first source of the evil, but even in Rome, where all things hideous and shameful from every part of the world find their center and become popular.](#)

Isn't that interesting? In other words, Tacituc actually records what the Bible records. Remember that his account is a secular account. This is not the Bible. He records that Christ died at the hands of Pontius Pilate. This is powerful history here.

Continuing, [Accordingly, an arrest was first made of all who pleaded guilty; then, upon their information, an immense multitude was convicted, not so much of the crime of firing the city, \[but\] as of hatred against mankind.](#)

So Christians are being rounded up not so much because they're going to be held guilty because of the city, but they are being accused of being a plague on mankind. Fast forward to today: transgenders are killing themselves because of what you believe; because of what's in the word of God. By comparison to Roman history, this is coming.

Tacituc goes on, [Mockery of every sort was added to their deaths. Covered with the skins of beasts, they were torn by dogs and perished, or were nailed to crosses, or were doomed to the flames and burnt, to serve as a nightly illumination, when daylight had expired.](#) (Tacituc, The Annals, Bk 15, Ch 44).

They were literally putting Christians on stakes lighting them on fire as torches so they could see at night. This is Antichrist type persecution. Now, I ask you; are you ready? Are you ready for this? Are you ready to hold fast to your morality, or are you going to compromise?

I want to introduce you to one more historian. His name is Pliny the Younger, and he's actually friends with Suetonius. All these guys are from the same time period. Pliny wrote to Trajan around 110 or 112 BC, and this is what he said, [Sir, it is my constant method to apply myself to you for the resolution of all my doubts; for who can better govern my dilatory way of proceeding or instruct my ignorance? I have never been present at the examination of the Christians \[by others\], on which account I am unacquainted with what uses to be inquired into, and what, and how far they used to be punished; nor are my doubts small, whether there be not a distinction to be made between the ages \[of the accused\] \(children\) and whether tender youth ought to have the same punishment with strong men? Whether there be not room for pardon upon repentance?"](#) or whether it may not be an advantage to one that had been a Christian, that he has forsaken Christianity?

Now, this will begin to make sense. [Whether the bare name, without any crimes besides, or the crimes adhering to that name, are to be punished?](#) In other words what he's saying is, "Do I punish Christians because they're called Christians or profess to be a Christian, or do we need to punish them for actually committing crimes?" This is hilarious, right? Not in a funny way, but you're kidding me. This is what he's saying.

[In the meantime, I have taken this course about those who have been brought before me as Christians. I asked them whether they were Christians or not? If they confessed that they were Christians, I asked them again, and a third time, intermixing threatenings with the questions. If they persevered in their confession, I ordered them to be executed; for I did not doubt but, let their confession be of any sort whatsoever, this positiveness and inflexible obstinacy deserved to be punished.](#)

In other words he kept asking these people, "Are you a believer in Jesus? Are you a believer in Jesus? Are you believer?" If they said, "Yes, I'm just a believer in Jesus," and they would not hide the name of Jesus; they would not hide their faith, he killed them just for professing to be a Christian.

There have been some of this mad sect whom I took notice of in particular as Roman citizens, that they might be sent to that city. After some time, as is usual in such examinations, the crime spread itself and many more cases came before me. (The gospel is spreading).

A libel was sent to me, though without an author (Listen to what happens. This is just amazing to me), containing many names (of persons accused). These denied that they were Christians now, or ever had been. They called upon the gods, and supplicated to your image, which I caused to be brought to me for that purpose, with frankincense and wine.

Isn't this amazing? So what happens is the government is getting anonymous letter saying, "I know this person who is a Christian." So the government officials go out and check it out. But in this circumstance, he went to check to see if these people were Christians, and these people said, no. They began to worship the image of the Beast; they agreed to do this.

They also cursed Christ; none of which things, it is said, can any of those that are ready Christians be compelled to do; so I thought fit to let them go.

In other words, if you're going to worship the Beast, you get to live. You can't confess Christ; you have to deny Him. Then you get to live.

Others of them that were named in the libel, said they were Christians, but presently denied it again; that indeed they had been Christians, but had ceased to be so, some three years, some many more; and one there was that said he had not been so these twenty years. All these worshipped your image, and the images of our gods; these also cursed Christ. (Pliny the Younger, Pliny's Epistle to Trajan).

Now, this is a secular account of what happened under Nero, and this is important because Nero is the embodiment of the Antichrist. So again, I ask you, "Are you ready for this?" I ask this because when you start looking at everything happening in this nation, you better get ready. You better get resolved in your heart. You better abandon the things in the world; close the doors of all your idols. Get rid of your idols because it is coming.

This is not a joke. It is unbelievable the articles that come across my desk weekly. Being a Shepherd, it is time to get you ready, because this is where we're going.