

A Greater Possession

Jesus is Greater #18 - Pastor Gary Combs - November 24, 2024 - Hebrews 10:26-39

INTRO: Good morning church! We are continuing our series entitled, “JESUS IS GREATER: An Exposition of Hebrews.” Remember our theme verse is:

Hebrews 1:4 (NLT) This shows that the Son is far greater than the angels, just as the name God gave him is greater than their names.

Today, we’re in part #18 of our series in a message entitled, “A Greater Possession.” Because Christ is our great possession and in Him we have the promise of eternal life in heaven and of heavenly reward.

ILL: Do you have a valued possession that is only valuable to you because of who gave it to you or left it to you as an inheritance? I have my father’s Korean War army uniform, his medals, and several photos of him in Korea. When my mother died, they were passed to me. A couple of years ago, I put them in a shadow box and hung it on the wall of my home office. It’s a prized possession to me. Wouldn’t be to you. But it is to me because it belonged to my Dad.

Need: Do you understand the great possession offered to in Christ Jesus? Perhaps you once did. But you’ve been feeling disheartened? Maybe you’ve been hurt by someone in the church and you’ve lost sight of the prize you have in Christ. Maybe you’ve wondered if staying faithful is worth the struggle. The early readers of Hebrews faced those same doubts. Some had suffered great loss for their faith. Others were tempted to return to the familiar rituals of their old life. They were at risk of turning away from their greatest treasure: their possession in Christ.

Trans: Today, we face similar challenges. Disappointment, suffering, or the busyness of life can distract us. The world promises possessions and comforts that seem tangible and immediate, but these things pale in comparison to the eternal and abiding possession we have in Christ. Hebrews reminds us of the surpassing worth of Jesus!

BODY: In Hebrews 10:26-39, the author warned believers to remember their greater possession in Christ. We can remember our greater possession in Christ. How can we remember our greater possession in Christ? The text gives **three ways** we can remember our greater possession in Christ.

Read text: Hebrews 10:26-39 (ESV) 26 For if we go on sinning deliberately after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, 27 but a fearful expectation of judgment, and a fury of fire that will consume the adversaries. 28 Anyone who has set aside the law of Moses dies without mercy on the evidence of two or three witnesses. 29 How much worse punishment, do you think, will be deserved by the one who has trampled underfoot the Son of God, and has profaned the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has outraged the Spirit of grace? 30 For we know him who said, “Vengeance is mine; I will repay.” And again, “The Lord will judge his people.” 31 It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. 32 But recall the former days when, after you were enlightened, you endured a hard struggle with sufferings, 33 sometimes being publicly exposed to reproach and affliction, and sometimes being partners with those so treated. 34 For you had compassion on those in prison, and you joyfully accepted the plundering of your property, since you knew that you yourselves had a better possession and an abiding one. 35 Therefore do not throw away your confidence, which has a great reward. 36 For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God you may receive what is promised. 37 For, “Yet a little while, and the coming one will come and will not delay, 38 but my righteous one shall live by faith, and if he shrinks back, my soul has no pleasure in him.” 39 But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who have faith and preserve their souls.

HOW TO REMEMBER OUR GREATER POSSESSION IN CHRIST...

1. Recognize the cost of not drawing near.

EXP: (26-31, 39) Look at “shrink back” (39). This is a summary of 26-31. “For if we go on sinning deliberately...” (26). The pronoun “we” which includes the author, shows that the author is speaking to believers. What is the context of this deliberate sin? Remember the three “Let us” commands from earlier in Hebrews 10?

“Let us draw near...” (Heb. 10:22)

“Let us hold fast to our confession...” (Heb. 10:23)

“Let us stir up one another...” (Heb. 10:24)

What will happen if we neglect these commands? This is the 4th of 5 warning passages in Hebrews, as in the previous warning passages, there are at least 3 major interpretations. The three views are: (1) They’re believers who backslid and lost their salvation, (2) They only appeared to be saved, but actually never were saved. (3) My view, which is perhaps best stated by Swindoll’s commentary:

“So, the author is addressing a potential category of people who are genuine believers but whose lives are so contrary to a life of faith and obedience to Christ that they are visibly indistinguishable from unbelievers. They are believers who backed away from Him rather than drew nearer to Him. They have withdrawn from the community of spiritual growth and encouragement and have become isolated from accountability. As such, they have betrayed their confession of faith in the person and work of Christ—the only one whose work can pay for their sins. They have been born again, but they go on sinning—willingly, knowingly, and continually (10:26)” (Charles Swindoll, *Insights On Hebrews*, 161).

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“Sinning” (26) (ἁμαρτάνω, *hamartanō*) (PAP) - continual sinning, continuing without repentance.

“Deliberately” (26) (ἐκουσίως, *hekousiōs*) - voluntarily, willfully, sinning knowingly.

“Receiving” (26) (λαμβάνω, *lambanō*) - to receive. Not only hearing, but actually receiving...

“Knowledge” (26) (ἐπίγνωσις, *epignōsis*) - precise and correct knowledge, “Truth” - the gospel.

“Fearful” (27, 31) (φοβερός, *phoberos*) - inspiring fear, terrible, formidable, affected with fear

“Fury of fire” (27) (ζήλος, *zēlos*) - excitement of mind, ardor, fervor of spirit, zeal of fire.

“Adversaries” (27) (ὑπεναντίος, *hupenantios*) - opposed to, adversary. Have become adversaries of God.

“Law of Moses” (28) - of the Mosaic law, quoting Deut. 17:6; 19:15 “dies without mercy on the evidence”

“How much worse?” (29) - In comparison to the offense as now listed against the Trinitarian God:

“Trampled underfoot” (29) (καταπατέω, *katapateō*) - to treat with rudeness and insult; “to treat like dirt”

“Profaned” (29) (κοινός, *koinos*) - common i.e. ordinary, profane, unclean.

“Outraged” (29) (ἐνυβρίζω, *enubrizō*) - to insult:—do despite unto.

“Vengeance is mine” (30) - quoting Deut. 32:35. “Lord will judge” (30) -quoting Deut. 32:36

“Hands of the living God” (31) (χεῖρ, *cheir*) - symbolizing God's might, activity, power

ARG: The believer who continues sinning deliberately will be disciplined and suffer loss of reward.

1 Corinthians 3:11-16 (ESV) ¹¹ For no one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. ¹² Now if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw—¹³ each one's work will become manifest, for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed by fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done. ¹⁴ If the work that anyone has built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward. ¹⁵ If anyone's work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire.

ILL:

APP: When we think of sin we probably think of breaking one of the Ten Commandments, but here the deliberate sinning is closer to John Piper's definition of sin. He says “sin is any thought, feeling, action, or speech that comes from a heart that doesn't value God above all else. Reflect for a moment: Ask yourself: “Have I trivialized Christ's sacrifice by failing to take sin seriously?” Instead of “shrinking back,” let's “draw near!”

2. Recall your confidence of a better and abiding possession.

EXP: (32-35) Look at “do not throw away your confidence” (35). Confidence of what? Remember earlier in 10:

Hebrews 10:19-20 (ESV) ¹⁹ Therefore, brothers, since we have **confidence** to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, ²⁰ by the new and living way that he opened for us...

Recall that because of Jesus, you can have confidence to draw near to God and also that because of Jesus you have “a better possession and an abiding one” (34). Also, recall that the command “Let us hold fast to our confession of hope” (23) is the opposite of “do not throw away.”

“Recall” (32) (ἀναμνησκω, *anamimnēskō*) (Imperative) - to remind, call to remember and consider

“Enlightened” (32) (φωτίζω, *phōtizō*) - to give light, to shine; to enlighten. By the light of the gospel.

“Endured” (32) (ὑπομένω, *hupomenō*) - to persevere: under misfortunes and trials to hold fast to one's faith in Christ; to endure, bear bravely and calmly: ill treatments

“Publicly exposed” (33) (θεατρίζω, *theatrizō*) - Lit., to bring upon the stage; expose to contempt

“Reproach and affliction” (33) (ὀνειδισμός, *oneidismos*) - a reproach: such as Christ suffered, for the cause of God, from his enemies; oppression, affliction, tribulation, distress, straits

“Joyfully” (34) (χαρά, *chara*) - joy, gladness; the joy received from you; the cause or occasion of joy

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“**Possession**” (34) (ὑπαρξις, *huparxis*) - possessions, goods, wealth, property. Kingdom of heaven.

“**Abiding**” (34) (μένω, *menō*) - abide, continue, dwell, endure

“**Do not throw away**” (35) (ἀποβάλλω, *apoballō*) (Subjunctive) - to throw off, cast away

“**Confidence**” (35) (παρρησία, *parrēsia*) - free and fearless confidence, boldness, assurance

ARG: We are called to rejoice and be glad in spite of suffering because of our reward in heaven.

Luke 6:22-23 (ESV) ²² “Blessed are you when people hate you and when they exclude you and revile you and spurn your name as evil, on account of the Son of Man! ²³ Rejoice in that day, and leap for joy, for behold, your reward is great in heaven; for so their fathers did to the prophets.

We have a living hope in Jesus of our possession, our inheritance, in heaven.

1 Peter 1:3-5 (ESV) ³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴ to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, ⁵ who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

ILL:

APP: The believers the author spoke of endured suffering, ridicule, and even the loss of possessions, they held fast because they valued their eternal inheritance in Christ. Their confidence was rooted in the “better possession”—an enduring treasure far greater than anything on earth. Where is your treasure?

3. Resolve to persevere by faith for your promised reward.

EXP: (35-39) Now we turn to the third “let us” response: “Let us consider how to stir up one another” (24).

“**Great reward**” (35) (μέγας μισθαποδοσία, *megas misthapodosia*) - great recompense, reward

“**Endurance**” (36) (ὑπομονή, *hypomonē*) - steadfastness, constancy, endurance; also perseverance.

“**Promised**” (36) (ἐπαγγελία, *epangelia*) - promise; the act of promising. Promised rewards and possessions.

“**Coming one will come**” (37) (ἔρχομαι, *erchomai*) - to appear, Christ's second coming

“**Live by faith**” (38) (πίστις, *pistis*) - faith, believing. Quote from Hab. 2:3-4.

“**Shrinks back**” (38, 39) (ὑποστέλλω, *hypostellō*) - to draw back, let down, withdraw, shrink back.

“**Preserve**” (39) (περιποιήσις, *peripoiesis*) - a preserving, a preservation, possession, to keep.

ARG: Have you ever felt like Isaiah? You labored in vain? Yet, you had faith your reward was with God?

Isaiah 49:4 (NIV) But I said, “I have labored in vain; I have spent my strength for nothing at all. Yet what is due me is in the Lord's hand, and my reward is with my God.”

ILL: I remember feeling like Isaiah in the early days of the church. But encouraged myself in the Lord.

APP: Will you trust God's promises even when circumstances challenge your faith, knowing that His reward is sure?

CONCLUSION: Will you hold fast to your greater possession in Christ? Let us treasure what we have in Him and live each day with confidence, knowing His promises are unshakable.

We can do this by...

1. Recognizing the cost of not drawing near,
2. Recalling our confidence of a better and abiding possession, and
3. Resolving to persevere by faith for our promised reward.

Let's pray