

A BETTER POSSESSION

Hebrews 10:32-39

A tune in your head . . .

I had a Spanish chorus on my mind that wouldn't go away.

"Con Cristo en tu barco, todo marcha feliz...!"

...therefore, "I won't be afraid!"

Ask Peter about that!

At times Christ was literally in his boat

–but they *WEREN'T* always happy!

Ask early Christians—times of suffering *weren't* happy!

They were ready to throw in the towel!

These witnesses affirm that we don't have to be afraid.

We can trust God in the dark

BUT times *AREN'T* always *HAPPY*!

–even when we know Christ is with us in the boat!

Heb. speaks to believers who're about to give up & go back to Judaism.

Because of previous faithfulness in face of persecution,

he's confident they'll continue to trust God & be faithful

God's people should hang in there

and watch God work on their behalf.

Facing affliction, they have 2 alternatives

1. Faith –trust God to deliver them–keep going

2. Retreat (Unbelief) Decide suffering costs too much.

Decide it's better to escape & return to Judaism.

10:32-12:27 –*importance of trusting God.*

Affirms confidence that they'll make the right choice:

[His] **EXPECTATION OF** [their] **FAITH 10:32-39**

They've already suffered greatly for Christ

32-34 “Remember those earlier days after you received the light, when you stood your ground in a great contest in the face of suffering. ³³Sometimes you were publicly exposed to insult & persecution; at other times you stood side by side with those who were so treated. ³⁴You sympathized with those in prison & joyfully accepted the confiscation of your property, because **you knew you had better & lasting possessions**

God **remembers** & wants *them* to **remember** how they’ve *already* **stood firm** in the past.

At times they were publicly **ridiculed & persecuted**.

–**identified with others** being persecuted.

–showed sympathy to people in prison for gospel.

–**joyfully accepted** confiscation of possessions for His sake.

–accepted suffering because they **looked ahead to reward**.

–knew we’re waiting for **better**, lasting, **possession**.

Their previous **faithfulness** in persecution is evidence they **have the real thing**.

He’s confident they’ll trust God & remain faithful now.

They don’t **buy** their reward by remaining faithful.

They’ve shown they’re **trusting Christ** for salvation.

Their *past* faithfulness leads to confidence for *future*

Keep going with faith & patience 10:35-39

Don’t throw away your confidence 35

“So don’t throw away your confidence;
it’ll be richly rewarded”

That confidence is connected to the reward

You ought to endure –bear up under affliction. **36**

“You need to persevere so that when you’ve done the will of God, you’ll receive what he’s promised.”

Goal: *receive* what God *promised* His people.

2 alternatives: way of faith vs. way of retreat

37-38 *“In just a little while, he who’s coming will come & will not delay. ³⁸But my righteous one will live **by faith** & if he shrinks back, I’ll not be pleased with him.”*

The righteous—who live by faith—**trust in certainty of His coming.**

Those who shrink back can’t please God, because of unbelief.

He wants us to see affliction from perspective of eternity, & stand firm.

How significant will our present affliction seem when we look back from perspective of eternity?

Affirms his commitment, like Joshua:

*“Decide today whom you are going to serve,
but as for me & my house, WE will serve the LORD.”*

He’s committed to take the way of faith: 39

“We’re not of those who shrink back & are destroyed,...”

“We’re making OUR choice! We won’t retreat!

We’re going to trust Him!”

*“We’re choosing way of faith, which leads to victory
—to preservation!”*

He believes they’re on same side!

He’s stated repeatedly: they’ve already shown
they have the real thing—they’ve trusted Christ.

Question is: Which alternative will *they* choose?

Will they take a stand, willing to suffer physically

–identify publicly with Jesus even in affliction.

Or, will they shrink back to protect themselves

& suffer *physically* in judgment with that generation.

What lessons should we learn?

Which alternative will *WE* choose?

Like them, we trust Christ –but not *just* for salvation.

Our salvation is secure, because we’ve trusted Christ & His work on our behalf.

We also trust Him daily, esp. for help in hard times

People who refuse to trust God can expect severe consequences.

God disciplines His children when we don’t obey.

We could suffer physically.

We could even die physically. Acts 5; 1 Cor 11 Jas 5; 1 Jn 5.

People who take God’s Word lightly & bring His name into disrepute can expect severe consequences, even physical judgment and death.

Trust Him; obey exhortations He addresses to us as God’s children (12:5): “*Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as sons.*” 12:7

God wants us to trust Him,

even when we can’t see where we’re going!

What kind of adverse circumstances do we face?

God tells us: trust Him in the dark.

Darkness may seem long & hard. But He’s trustworthy.

**When we trust Him, & wait for Him to accomplish
His will in us, we can expect victory in the end!**

(Daniel)

God calls us: trust Him; patiently endure;
watch God work.