

Intro... "The Day" in v25 seems to spark the writer into tackling the following hindrances to being a Confident Christian.

Parallels with 'the churches' in Rev 2-3.

A. v26-31 A call to reflect on the present situation – deliberate sin

V26 Christians who deliberately keep on sinning. (Ref Romans 6:1-2.)

No sacrifice left, i.e. no amount of money, doing good works, crocodile tears etc, except a genuine repentance – back to Jesus.

V27 Judgement – brought on by oneself.

Raging fire - God's response to defiant, unrepented sin.

Consumed – finality, nothing left to live for.

Enemies – perhaps the unrepentant sinner being described here is as pitiful, as a 'straight enemy' in God's sight, as if they were never saved.

Here is the 'hanging over the fire of hell' picture that we struggle with in our modern, enlightened age of human rights and 'all religions are good, and lead to the same end' style of thinking.

V28 The OT example of how the deliberate sinner was dealt with.

Deut. 17:2-7.

a) In Hebrews, the church is under attack, but the greater attack was from within – apostasy. Members a bad advert, a handicap to growth. A Christian must be loyal to Christ and His teaching – or get out!

b) Now in the New Testament era we have double the understanding (of sin) therefore double the responsibility, 'because we have read this book (the Bible).'

V29 HOW MUCH MORE - the theme of Hebrews again. Again the comparing of the Old and New Testaments - Law and Grace.

Punishment. Do we forget that God is just and must punish – even though we know him as a God of Grace and Mercy?

a) *Trample under foot*. I think we know how repulsive this is.

An illustration from Eastern cultures re use of foot. It breaks a heart of love.

Jesus has redeemed our feet, 'How beautiful are the feet' (Rom.10:15).

b) *The blood of Jesus is unholy*, not sufficient, barbaric, out of date etc, or taking the Lord's name in vain.

c) *Insulted the Spirit of grace* - the grace of God is remitted to us by the Holy Spirit. He is God. The denigrating of the Holy Spirit. The denial of the Holy Spirit's presence and power. Even disbelief in the efficacy of prayer.

V30 FOR WE KNOW HIM - How well do we know our God and His ways with us? We believe in a God of love, BUT we must never lose sight of His right to judge and do as He pleases with us – even judgement. (Deut.32:18, 35-36).

Illustration, the balance of law and grace. Takfa church - 10 commands.

B. v32-39 - A call to remember our first love

Ref Rev.2:4-5 the church at Ephesus and others in ch2-3.

V32-33 It was no easy thing for a Jew to believe in Christ in the first century, nor is it in 2011. And some of you here this morning may well have started your Christian life against opposition and suffering. I venture to say you are now the stronger in your faith because of that. It's especially true of school-age conversions, especially at High school.

Illustration – the Rongotai crusader group with Gordon Junk. Thailand examples.

V34 Here is a group of believers who have suffered prison and property loss because of being a Christian. Have I, have you? How attached are we to our possessions? Do they possess us !?
Better and lasting possessions - “the things of earth will grow strangely dim, in the light of His glory and grace”.

Illustration: Chinese non-Christian burials with money and things.

V35-36 Here is a glimpse into the great chapter 11 of faith. Here is a gentle lead into a key word and value of Christianity. THE CHRISTIAN **FAITH - don't throw it away now!**

V37 You have gone this far in your walk with the Lord, don't back away now because “in a little while” all will be revealed.

V38 What has been promised you by God? From the context it is obviously a safe and secure eternal life. Hang in there. Remain loyal to Christ and His Cause – His Cause for you personally and for the world. Anyone this morning who is struggling in this area – as Acting Senior Pastor I want to see you, I want to talk with you, it is my responsibility before God to encourage you to press on in your Faith.
We have faith in God because He has faith in us.

V39 “Of those who believe and are saved”. Are you? If so, we praise God together this morning. BUT if not – I need to see you also, for now having heard the Word of God, I feel responsible that you understand the consequences of not believing in Jesus.