THE TRAGEDY OF WILLFUL SIN

**DATE: 7/9/2014 Wed.**

**TEXT: Hebrews 10:26-31**

**INTRODUCTION**

Many today are promoting a message of cheap Grace

I call it Grace Abuse

Someone can make a profession of faith, claim the promise of Heaven, and continue on with little or no change in lifestyle

While the Word of God does teach the eternal life of the believer,

It also teaches that sin is a very serious matter and will be dealt with

John the Baptist declared - **Matthew 3:8 *– “Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance:”***

If sin is not dealt with by God in our lives, then maybe it is that you are not a child of God

**Hebrews 12:8 – *“But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, [illegitimate children], and not sons”***

We better examine ourselves

**II Corinthians 13:5 –** ***“Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?”***

Let’s pray and then we will begin to look at …

***“The Tragedy of Willful Sin”***

***~~~Prayer~~~***

The passage at hand is the 4th of 5 warnings found in the book of Hebrews

The others are found in Chapter …

… 2 - The danger of slipping

… 3, 4 - The danger of not entering into rest

… 5, 6 - The danger of not going on to maturity

… 12 - The danger of indifference, to the point of denial

… 10 - The danger of willful sin

- These 5 Warnings are parenthetical (pauses)

In this section the writer pulls no punches in dealing with willful sin in the believer's life

**I. THE SAINT’S DILEMMA – v.26b**

***“…the knowledge of the truth...”***

Like the other warning passages,

…this one is also surrounded by a lot of controversy

The difficulty is, does this passage apply to the lost or to the Christian?

I believe the answer lies in the text

Notice that the writer uses the word ***“we”*** twice in **v.26**

He includes himself in the warning

Who are we kidding? The evidence points to the Apostle Paul has the writer of Hebrews

… And Paul was certainly a saved man

Furthermore, Paul was speaking to those who had

*“****received the knowledge of the truth”***

**I Timothy 2:3, 4 – *“For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the Knowledge of the Truth”***

***“To come unto the Knowledge of the Truth”*** speaks of the definite act of receiving the gospel

These people not only Heard, but had, Received the Truth

**v. 29 …** tells us that they had been sanctified by the blood

***“the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified”***

This passage applies to the believers that Paul has been addressing all along

Look at **vs. 22, 23** …

We cannot divorce this section from the context and make it apply to someone else

Paul is still addressing believers

**A SAINT’S DILEMMA**

**II. A SINFUL DECISION – v.26a**

***“For if we sin willfully...”***

The word *“****willfully”*** means *voluntary* or *deliberate*

This is not sin that is committed ignorantly

This is sin that is committed as a deliberate act

It is not due to a lack of good judgment or ignorance

Rather it is intentional sin committed in rebellion

It is also important to note that the word sin is in the present tense

And does not mean an act of sin but a lifestyle of sin

In the context, it is blatant disobedience to the knowledge of the truth that has been received

It is the result of a failure to draw near and to hold fast as previously commanded in **vs. 22-24**

**A SAINT’S DILEMMA; A SINFUL DECISION**

**III. A SCRIPTURAL DECREE – vs. 26c-28**

**A. v. 26c - *“... there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins,***

This conclusion simply means that there was no Levitical sacrifice which could remove presumptuous sin (which we will discuss in a moment)

In addition, there was nothing more that Christ could do to remedy their situation

Christ died ***“once for all”*** …

Anyone who gets saved and then reverts back to a sinful lifestyle is living in danger of God's judgment

**B. v. 27 -** *“****But … a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries”***

You better be looking over your shoulder

Paul speaks of *“****fiery indignation”***

Fire is often associated with Divine judgment

We find this in …

- **Lev. 10:1, 2 – *“And Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took either of them his censer, and put fire therein, and put incense thereon, and offered strange fire before the Lord, which he commanded them not” “And there went out fire from the Lord, and devoured them, and they died before the Lord”***

- **Numbers 11:1, 2 – *“And when the people complained, it displeased the LORD: and the LORD heard it; and His anger was kindled; and the fire of the LORD burnt among them, and consumed them that were in the uttermost parts of the camp” “And the people cried unto Moses; and when Moses prayed unto the LORD, the fire was quenched”***

-  **Numbers 16:35 – *“And there came out a fire from the LORD, and consumed the two hundred and fifty men that offered incense”***

God's judgment will *“****devour the adversaries”***

Here we see that sin puts us at odds with God to the point that we actually become His adversary

An adversary is an enemy or an opponent and has to do with opposition and warfare

It is a word used to describe Satan

**I Peter 5:8a – *“Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil …”***

Deliberate and willful sin puts us in an adversarial position with God

**Isaiah 63:10** says that Israel

*“…* ***rebelled, and vexed His holy Spirit: therefore He was turned to be their enemy, and He fought against them”***

Paul now reminds them what happened under the Law

**C. v.28 – *“He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses:”***

Paul points out that in the Old Testament there was no sacrifice for willful sin

If a man rebelled and sinned, the penalty was certain death and that without mercy

This was called Presumptuous Sin

**Deut. 17:5, 6 …**

**Exodus 21:12-14 …**

**Numbers 15:27-31 …**

David prayed that God would deliver him from Presumptuous Sin

**Psalms 19:13 *– “Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression”***

However, a sacrifice could be offered for any sin that was committed ignorantly

God is merciful, but He is also just, and rebellion is an abomination that He deals with severely

**I Samuel 15:23 – *“For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry”***

Again we find Paul contrasting the Old and the New

He that despises God Grace is in serious jeopardy of being dealt with

**A SAINT’S DILEMMA; A SINFUL DECISION; A SCRIPTURAL DECREE**

**IV. A SAVIOUR DEGRADED – v.29**

***“Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?”***

Notice that all 3 Persons of God are represented here

When someone sins willfully he is rebelling against the Godhead – ***“God”***

- Presumptuous sin is against the Father who gave His Son

- It is against the Son who died in our place

- And it’s against the Holy Spirit who convicts and empowers us to live in a holy way – ***“the Spirit”***

Those who commit such sin will receive a much sorer punishment

The word ***“sorer”*** means *worse, more severe, & more grievous*

Let us understand that grace is not a license to sin and live a loose life

The cry today by the Laodicea church is *“liberty”*

Jesus said in **Luke 12:48 – *“... For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more”***

Grace requires a greater responsibility than the law and therefore a more severe accounting

When a Christian deliberately and habitually lives in sin

He disgraces God and does great damage to the cause of Christ

Such believers will suffer a much sorer judgment

Those who choose to live in sin...

***“hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing”***

The phrase ***“trodden under foot”*** is vivid language and means *to reject and trample upon*

It is a word that speaks of disdain and contempt

Notice that the contempt is against Christ and His blood,

**Proverbs 28:17 *– “A man that doeth violence to the blood of any person shall flee to the pit; let no man stay him”***

God will take this seriously!

**A SAINT’S DILEMMA; A SINFUL DECISION; A SCRIPTURAL DECREE; A SAVIOUR DEGRADED**

**V. A SOBERING DECLARATION – v.30, 31**

**A. v. 30 - *“For we know Him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto Me, I will recompense, saith the LORD. And again, The LORD shall judge His people”***

Paul quotes an Old Testament passage to further remind us that God will judge His people

**Deuteronomy 32:35, 36 – *“To Me belongeth vengeance, and recompence; their foot shall slide in due time: for the day of their calamity is at hand, and the things that shall come upon them make haste” “For the LORD shall judge His people, and repent Himself for His servants, when He seeth that their power is gone, and there is none shut up, or left”***

**Proverbs 3:11 –** ***“My son, despise not the chastening of the LORD; neither be weary of His correction:”***

God's purpose in chastening is to correct sinful Christians and restore their fellowship with Him

If we refuse His correction, He often brings more severe judgment—even premature death

**I John 5:16 *–“If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it”***

I know there have been many suggestions as to what …

…the ***“sin unto death”*** is, Let me suggest that …

The Sin unto Death is the physical death which occurs when a believer refuses to repent under the chastening hand of God

**Proverbs 29:1 –** *“****He, that being often reproved hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy”***

There is no determined time limit

It may not be one month, six months, one year, or ten years

It is entirely at God's discretion

King Saul continued for 30 or 35 more yrs.

God alone decides when enough is enough

That is why it is so important to accept correction when God convicts us

**3:7, 8 -** *“****Wherefore as the Holy Ghost saith, to day if ye will hear His voice, Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness”***

The hardening effect of sin leads to death

**James 1:15 –** *“****Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death”***

Ananias and Sapphira in **Acts 5** are a perfect example

Several members of the Corinthian church are another example

**I Cor. 11:30-32 – *“For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep” “For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged” “But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord”***

**B. v.31 – *“It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God”***

Make no mistake about it

God will judge His people

God dealt with Israel when then went their own way

God will deal with the backslidden Christian through discipline or through death!

**THE TRAGEDY OF WILLFUL SIN**

**-- A SAINT’S DILEMMA**

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**-- A SAVIOUR DEGRADED**

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