



Church in Regina Newsletter

Meeting Place: 3860 Buckingham Drive E, Regina, SK, Canada S4V

THE NEW TESTAMENT SERVICE BEING THE CORPORATE SERVICE OF THE SAINTS

The service of the church is the corporate service of all the saints in a local church. In the Bible the church refers to both the house of God and the Body of Christ. The **house of God** is a matter of **enjoyment**, whereas the **Body of Christ** is a matter of **service**. In the house of God every saint should have enjoyment, and in the Body of Christ all the members should carry out their function and serve one another. The New Testament service is not an individualistic service, a service of individuals; rather, it is a corporate service, a service of all the saints (Rom. 12:3-8). It is not an individual move but a corporate move.

Concerning the saints' service to God, the Bible does not give any ground to individuals. When we serve God, we must serve as members one of another. God sees the church on the earth as the Body of Christ, and all the believers are the members of the Body. Hence, the saints cannot serve God individually. Every member has a function, and all the members must **be coordinated** together in order **to manifest the beauty of the Body**... In the service of God the saints can never act alone, serving as an individual, because we are not individuals. In our service we cannot be individualistic or be separated from the other members.

A member who is detached from the body not only looks ugly, it even frightens people. No matter how great the function of a member is, he is only a member; and no matter how small the function of a member is, he is still a member. **Our status will forever be as a member, that is, a member of the Body; as such, we cannot be separated from the Body and exist by ourselves. Hence, our service should always be as members one of another; it should be the service of the church, not a service of individuals.** In the church all the members are equal, and all are in the Body of Christ.

"Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in incorruptibility"

Ephesian 6:24

To love the Lord in incorruption means to love Him in the new creation.
To love the Lord in incorruption is to love Him in the regenerated, renewed, and indwelt spirit.
Doing things in the way of not making a display or a show of oneself is in the new creation.

GOD'S BLESSING BEING UPON THE SERVICE OF THE SAINTS

The service of the saints involves more than preaching the gospel, helping people, and perfecting people. Even **miscellaneous affairs**, such as cleaning chairs, sweeping the floor, and preparing meals, are part of the service. Even if there are specific people serving in relation to specific items, there should always be an opening for other saints to serve. **There is a spiritual element in every kind of service.** The heart and prayer of the saints for the service will always bring in God's blessing.

... In order to serve God, we must learn the lessons of being dealt with and being broken. A person who has learned the lessons in the Holy Place is a person who has learned the lessons in the church, and he is also a person who has learned the lessons in the service. In the service of the church, **God does not require us to be efficient; rather, He requires us to be dealt with, to be broken, and to learn to be submissive, being able to be subject to authority and to obey His leading.**

Upcoming Activities:

- ▶ December 01, 2016 - Campus Work
- ▶ December 11, 2016 - Love feast
- ▶ December 18, 2016 - YP/Children's Fun Day
- ▶ December 18, 2016 - Brother's Meeting

Church Address:

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Contact Numbers:

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Meeting Schedule:

Lord's Table Meeting

Lord's Day
10:00AM to 12:00PM

Prayer Meeting

Tuesdays & Wednesdays
Saints Homes
8:00PM to 9:00PM

YP Meeting

Fridays
7:00PM to 9:00PM
Brother Hedrick's Place

Small/Home Meeting

Friday Evening
Saint's Home

Seven Annual Feasts

1. International Chinese-speaking Conference, Anaheim, CA February 12-14, 2016
2. International Training for Elders and Responsible Ones (Spring) Anaheim, CA - April 8-10, 2016
3. Memorial Day Conference Washington, DC May 27-30, 2016
4. Summer Training Anaheim, CA - July 4-9, 2016
5. International Training for Elders and Responsible Ones (Fall) Gold Coast, Australia - October 6-8, 2016
6. Thanksgiving Conference San Jose, CA - November 24-27, 2016
7. Winter Training Anaheim, CA - December 26-31, 2016

PRAYER BURDEN

“... come forward to the Holy of Holies with a true heart in full assurance of faith, ...” “... come forward with boldness to the throne of grace that we may receive mercy and find grace for timely help.”

1. Lord, thank You for giving us the “**tablet of the Testimony**” testifying Your nature of holiness and righteousness. Hence we need to **conduct ourselves** in a way that corresponds to Your nature through Your bountiful supply.
2. Lord, You are the **reality of the law**. We want to **continually enjoy** You that You may replace all idols in our heart, and to enable us to keep Your commandment.
3. Lord, we also thank You for all the “**gold**” You’ve given us, and make us **faithful** to use them for the building up of Your “**tabernacle**,” the church.
4. Lord, we pitched our “**tent outside the camp**” and we have become “**Your tent**” in the **local churches**. Lord we honour You and we set our hearts only to You, continue to separate us and build us today as Your **real tabernacle**.
5. Lord, we want to “**enter within the veil**” into Your presence in the **church meetings** where we **anchor our hope** with full assurance and where we receive grace and strength to follow You on the **pathway of the cross**.
6. Lord, we “**stay within the veil**” to be **filled** with glory, that our hearts be **freed** from the possession of the earth’s enjoyment, to **behold** You and follow Your footsteps, and to participate in Your ministry and be empowered to **minister** You to others.
7. Please pray for the church in **Vancouver** - the **reconstruction** of the **meeting hall** according to their needs will merit approval by the City Hall. Please pray also for the church in **Coquitlam** - the acquisition of **1.625 acre** property for the meeting hall.
8. Please pray for the church in **Regina**:
 - be the tent of God
 - Young people’s meeting within the veil
 - Campus work in UofR to gain students
 - His presence in our **small group meetings**
 - The recipients of the Bible
 - Recover dormant saints

This Weeks’s Pursuit: Crystallization-Study of Exodus (4) - Message One

Going outside the Idolatrous Camp and Entering within the Veil

Scripture Reading: Heb. 6:19-20; 13:13; Exo. 33:7-11

I. In Exodus the Ten Commandments are called the tablets of the Testimony; the commandments testify of God in two ways—32:15:

They testify that God is the unique God, and that God is a God of love, light, holiness, and righteousness.

II. The law and its ordinances were decreed by God in 20:1—23:19; then, in 24:12 God called Moses up to the top of the mountain to give him the tablets of the law, the Testimony:

As the word of God and the testimony, **the law is a type of Christ** as God’s Word and testimony. Christ is the reality of the law as the testimony of God, as the living portrait of what God is.

The **reality** of keeping the law is to live God and express God, a life of continually exercising the spirit to deny the self and be crucified to live Christ, by the bountiful supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ for the enlarged and expanded expression of God.

III. Even before the decree of the law was completed, the people broke at least the first three commandments of the law (Exo. 20:2-7) by falling into the sin of idolatry; the shattering of the tablets of the Testimony (32:15-19) indicates that before the children of Israel received the law, they had already broken the law and the covenant of the law:

Man’s replacing of God with idols causes man to be unable to keep God’s commandments. **An idol in our heart is anything within us that we love more than the Lord and that replaces the Lord in our life, corrupting us and bringing in many sinful things.**

IV. After the children of Israel worshipped the golden calf, Moses moved to a place outside the camp, where everyone who sought the Lord went to meet with him, for both the Lord’s presence and speaking were there—Exo. 33:7-11:

We need to see and be warned by the principle of the **golden-calf idol**, an idol made by God’s redeemed people to make them an idolatrous camp: The gold earrings were worn by the people for self-beautification; this indicates that self-beautification leads to idolatry. The **gold** in the earrings was given to the children of Israel by God before their exodus from Egypt and was to be used for the **building of the tabernacle**. However, it was usurped by Satan and used by God’s people to make an idol.

God’s redeemed people worshipped an idol in the name of Jehovah their God and in the way ordained by God. With idolatry there is the pretense of worshipping the true God, and there is mixture in the worship of God. Because Moses realized that the Lord’s presence would no longer be in the midst of the people, he removed his tent and pitched it some distance from the camp; his tent then became the **tent of God**.

The **camp** signifies a religious people, who belong to the Lord in name but who, in actuality, worship idols, worshipping something and seeking something other than the Lord Himself. In the history of God’s people, the camp may be seen in **three periods**: the children of **Israel after they worshipped the golden calf**; The **Jewish religion** became the camp at the time of the Lord’s living on the earth; the church changed in nature from being a tent to being a camp, a **religious system**, religious Babylon, comprising a group of religious people belonging to the Lord in name and honoring the Lord with their mouth but having their hearts set on something other than the Lord. We need to enter within the veil and go outside the idolatrous camp to have the closest and most intimate relationship with the Lord so that we can be persons who share a common interest with God and who can be used by Him to carry out His enterprise on earth.

V. The goal and ultimate conclusion of the book of Hebrews are that we would enter within the veil and go outside the camp—6:19-20; 13:13:

To enter within the veil means to enter into the Holy of Holies, where the Lord is enthroned in glory, and to go outside the camp means to come out of religion, whence the Lord was cast out in rejection: The camp signifies the organization of religion, which is earthly and human. Every religion is a human organization and an earthly realm that keeps people away from God’s economy.

We must be in our spirit, where, experientially speaking, the practical Holy of Holies is today, and outside religion, where the practical camp is today: The more we are in our spirit, **enjoying the heavenly Christ**, the more we will come outside the camp of religion, **following the suffering Jesus**. The more we remain in our spirit to contact the heavenly Christ, who is in glory, the more we will go forth outside the camp of religion unto the lowly Jesus to suffer with Him.

The genuine New Testament ministry brings us into the enjoyment of Christ in our spirit, **within the veil**, and strengthens us to follow Jesus **outside the camp** in the fellowship of His sufferings for the sake of His Body. Within the veil we participate in the ministry of the heavenly Christ that we may be equipped to minister Him to the thirsty spirits outside the camp. By entering within the veil and going outside the camp, we are perfected in every good work for the doing of the will of God, who does in us that which is well pleasing in His sight.

WEEK	LORD’S TABLE MEETING	PRAYER MEETING	YP MEETING	HOME MEETING	OFFERING
Nov. 20 - Nov. 26, 2016	23	13	10		\$280.00
Nov. 27 - Dec, 03, 2016	18	13	11	8	\$360.00

LIFE-STUDY OF HEBREWS

November 28, 2016: Message Nineteen - THE REMAINING SABBATH REST (2)

"I will declare Your name to My brothers; in the midst of the church I will sing hymns of praise unto You." Heb. 2:12

*"But Christ, as a Son over His house, **Whose house we are**, if we hold fast the boldness and the boast of hope firm to the end." Heb. 3:6*

God's desire according to His eternal plan is to have Himself expressed and represented by man. When man is on the earth expressing God and representing Him, God's desire is satisfied. In the New Jerusalem God's image will be expressed and His authority will be exercised. That will be the true Sabbath rest to God. At that time, God will be fully at rest because His heart's desire will have been completely satisfied. He will have obtained what He desired to have. This is the real meaning of the Sabbath rest.

The children of Israel in the Old Testament age were God's Sabbath. The children of Israel expressed God and represented Him on earth. Israel secured the good land, and that good land became "the land of Emmanuel". The word Emmanuel means "God with us." The land of Canaan was called the land of God with man, the land where God was able to be with man. Eventually the children of Israel built the temple for God, and the shekinah glory of the Lord filled it. When the temple had been built and was filled with God's glory, God rested. That was the **first stage of the Sabbath rest**.

When the Lord Jesus was baptized, God was happy and satisfied, saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased". When God said that He was pleased with His Son, it meant that He was satisfied. At that time, **the Lord Jesus was the Sabbath rest to God**. The Lord Jesus was the Sabbath rest to God and His followers.

The church today is the kingdom where God's authority is exercised and represented. Where God has His dominion, there is rest. So **the church, being the kingdom of God today, is God's Sabbath rest**. Since the church has God's image and is God's kingdom, it is a Sabbath rest for God. Today the Sabbath rest is the house of God. If we do not remain in the house of God, we shall miss the Sabbath rest. The church is God's house, God's habitation, and God's kingdom. Thus, the church is today's good land. If we miss this, we miss today's Sabbath rest. The church is our Sabbath today. We are the real Sabbath keepers; we keep the Sabbath day by day. What a Sabbath we are enjoying today! What a rest this is!

When the God of peace is present and Satan is crushed, that surely is the Sabbath rest. The grace of the Lord also points to the rest. We should not be distracted by the dissenting ones but stay with the church to enjoy the Sabbath rest. The church is God's desire today. Therefore, it is God's Sabbath rest.

November 29, 2016: Message Twenty - THE REMAINING SABBATH REST (3)

In Genesis 2 we see that God's **first Sabbath** was immediately after He had gained a man on earth in His image to express Him and with His authority to represent Him. Immediately after securing a man on earth in His image and with His dominion, God rested. God's **second Sabbath** was with the children of Israel. After the children of Israel had gained the good land of Canaan and had built there a temple which was filled with God's shekinah glory, God had His second Sabbath on earth.

When the Lord Jesus came, He also was God's Sabbath. Following the Lord Jesus, we have the church as the Sabbath rest to God. Christ is the Head and the church is the Body. When we come to the day of Pentecost in Acts 2, we see that the glory of God filled the temple once again, and God again secured a habitation with man on earth for His rest. We may say that this is the **third Sabbath**. God had gained a man on the earth.

The first two Sabbaths, the Sabbath after the creation of man and the Sabbath after the **building of the temple**, both were **pictures**; neither of them was the real thing. The first **real** Sabbath that God secured with man on earth was the **building up of the church**. The church is not a Sabbath rest in figure but in reality. The Sabbaths with Adam and with the building up of the temple were types, but the building up of the church is not a type—it is the fulfillment.

Yes, the church life is a Sabbath rest to God, but it is not a Sabbath with maturity. The church life is wonderful as far as the **seed** goes, but we have not yet reached the harvest. There is a Sabbath for God in the church life today, but this Sabbath is not yet complete, perfect, or mature. Hence, there will be another stage of the Sabbath—the **age of harvest** at the time when the Lord Jesus comes back. Undoubtedly, there is a real Sabbath for God in the church life because God has sown Himself as the seed into the field and the field is now growing. Nevertheless, we must remember that we are still not in the harvest. **Today's Sabbath in the church life is a real Sabbath, but it is not a Sabbath with perfection or maturity.**

We all can be in the **growing Sabbath**, but whether or not we are in the harvest Sabbath depends completely on our maturity. The Sabbath rest today cannot be found in any religion, organization, or free group. Today's growing Sabbath is the real church life with the riches of Christ, and all true Christians should be encouraged to be diligent to enter into this Sabbath.

Practically speaking, the Sabbath in the next age will be a prize for our proper growth during this present Sabbath. The next Sabbath, **the Sabbath of maturity**, will be actually and practically a reward for those who have grown properly in this present growing Sabbath. God is wise to use the coming Sabbath as a reward to encourage us to enjoy the present Sabbath. If we miss the present Sabbath, we shall certainly suffer the loss of the coming Sabbath. Our wise Father uses the coming Sabbath in the millennium as an encouragement for us to run the race properly today.

Paul was sure that he had the prize: "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a **crown of righteousness**, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." Paul said that this crown would be given not only to him but to all those also who love the Lord's appearing.

November 30, 2016: Message Twenty-One - THE REMAINING SABBATH REST (4)

Today God does have a true Sabbath in the church life. God's economy is not only that you be saved and regenerated; His economy is that you come into the proper church life, which is today's Sabbath. God's economy is to have a corporate expression and representation of Himself. We are now in the church life, **the growing Sabbath** that is leading us into the **harvest Sabbath** of the millennial kingdom. But not even the harvest Sabbath will be the ultimate Sabbath. **The ultimate Sabbath rest** will be the New Jerusalem. There will be a new earth, and upon that new earth there will be a city built up with transformed people as the living materials. That living composition, the New Jerusalem, will be God's complete expression in eternity future. There, in the New Jerusalem, we shall see **God's expression and dominion**. In the New Jerusalem will be **God's throne and authority** for His kingdom. The New Jerusalem will be the ultimate and eternal Sabbath because there God will be fully expressed and represented. That will be the ultimate consummation of God's work of grace, and we all shall be there.

There will be a total of **three real Sabbaths**: the church, the millennial kingdom, and the New Jerusalem in the new heaven and the new earth. Although all these are Sabbaths to God, the second will be better than the first, and third will be fuller than the second. I have the complete assurance that we all shall share in the third and fullest Sabbath, for that Sabbath is wholly a matter of grace, not of reward. It is not a prize but our Father's eternal portion for all of His children. As long as you are a child of the Father, He has a way to make you mature so that eventually you will participate in that third Sabbath.

Our wise Father uses the church age and the coming age of the millennial kingdom to cause us to mature. God has brought us into His salvation, put Himself into us, and is **now charging us to grow**. But the way we grow is up to us. If we do not cooperate with Him, we shall suffer the loss of the enjoyment of the church life in this age and the prize in the coming age. The present church is the **Sabbath of enjoyment**, and the coming kingdom is the **Sabbath of prize**.

Since we have been chosen forever, once we have been saved, regenerated, and have received eternal life, we can never perish. The eternal life will keep us. But this does not mean that we should be loose about committing sins, for we shall be chastised, punished either today or in the coming age, for whatever sins we commit. God is righteous. If His children commit sin and do not care for His will, they must suffer chastisement, punishment. If you do not care for His will in this age, you will miss the kingship as the reward in the coming kingdom. We must give heed to this warning.

December 01, 2016: Message Twenty-Two - THE REMAINING SABBATH REST (5)

Before Adam, there is a period called the pre-Adamic age, the **period of the fall**. God created, Satan damaged, and God came in to judge the universe. In Genesis 1:2 we have the start of **God's re-creation**. Within God's re-creation there was **further creation**. **Man**, for instance, was not a re-creation but a creation. From the time of God's re-creation until the full completion of His purpose will be a period of approximately seven thousand years. Since it is during this span of time that God accomplishes His eternal purpose, we may call this **the period of accomplishment**.

The period of accomplishment began with the creation of man. Man was God's creation. God's re-creation only recovered the fallen universe back to a condition suitable for man's creation and existence. The second coming of the Lord Jesus will not end the period of accomplishment, because the old heaven and old earth will continue for another thousand years after the Lord's coming back. Those one thousand years will be a continuation of the period of accomplishment. The Lord's second coming is even a further step in the accomplishment of God's purpose. Therefore, **God's accomplishment of His purpose began with the creation of man and will be completed not at the time of the Lord's second coming but at the end of the millennium**.

After the period of accomplishment, the new heaven and the new earth with the New Jerusalem will come. That will be **the period of the eternal Sabbath**, the time of the complete Sabbath. The eternal period in the future will be an unending Sabbath. Our Father, our Savior, and all the redeemed ones will be there. This is our destiny, our future. Our future is the eternal Sabbath where our Father, our Savior, and all of us will be at rest for eternity.

In order for Him to accomplish His purpose in a genuine way, He needs to come twice. In **His first coming**, He sowed Himself into mankind, and in **His second coming** He will reap what He sowed in His first coming. Something was accomplished with His first coming—the church was produced, and there was a Sabbath—but this is not the full completion of His purpose. His second coming will accomplish more, bringing in a fuller Sabbath. His first coming brought in the first **real Sabbath**, but this Sabbath is not the **full Sabbath**, because the accomplishment of God's purpose has not yet been completed. Thus, there is a need of His coming again to complete His accomplishment of God's eternal purpose. This means that God's eternal purpose could never be accomplished before the Lord's second coming. In other words, God's eternal purpose cannot be fully completed without the millennium.

Today we are enjoying the Sabbath rest in the church life. Although this is good, we are waiting for the Lord's coming back, because that will usher in a better Sabbath. This Sabbath is called a "restoration". But even this is not the best, the ultimate Sabbath. Satan, the rebellious human nature, death, the sea, and the unsaved dead people will all need to be dealt with. The first Sabbath will bring in the second, and the second Sabbath will bring in the third. The church will bring in the kingdom, and the kingdom will usher in the new heaven and new earth with the New Jerusalem.

Second Corinthians 5:10 says, "*For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.*" This judgment will not be the judgment at the white throne for salvation or perdition, but the judgment at the second coming of Christ before the millennium for prize or chastisement. At the time of His coming back, the Lord will set up His judgment seat, and all the raptured and resurrected saints will stand there to give an account to Him. We find the same thing in Romans 14:10-12: "*For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of God. For it is written, As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to Me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then, each one of us shall give account of himself to God.*" We shall stand there and give an account of what we have done after we were saved.

December 02, 2016: Message Twenty-Three - THE REMAINING SABBATH REST (6)

First Peter 4:17 says, "*For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?*" God deals with His house, that is, His children, in one way and at one time, and He deals with those who do not obey the gospel in another way and at another time. Although we have been saved and have become God's household, God's family, this does not mean that we shall never again be judged by God.

God's purpose is to sow Himself into His chosen people, making them His children. Once we have become God's children through regeneration, having God's life as our seed and content, we need to grow with and into God and be fully transformed by being permeated with all His divine elements. God's intention is not to gain a group of pure, righteous people; it is to gain a people who have been saturated with Him and built up in Him. Satan came in to frustrate God's work mainly through sin, the world, and the self. Thus, if we are to grow in God's life, we must hate sin, forsake the world, and deny the self. We all are human and easily fall into sin. But as long as we desire to grow in life, God will spontaneously take care of our sins and cleanse us with the blood of Jesus. However, if we are not willing to grow and yet ask God to forgive our sins, He will be faithful to do it, but we shall not be in the fulfillment of God's purpose. Simply having our sins forgiven on the negative side does not fulfill God's purpose. We also need to grow and enter into the Sabbath rest.

We have not only been regenerated that we may have the divine life to be God's children, but we have also been talented to serve the Lord as His servants. We all have some ability, and the **talents given to us** are according to our ability. However, all our natural ability has to be dealt with by the death of Christ that it may be brought into resurrection to cooperate with the Lord-given talent. Our natural ability is always a frustration to our usefulness in the Lord's hand. In the Lord's work, only the resurrected ability, not the natural, can match the talent which the Lord gives.

The complete revelation of the Holy Word does not only show us the eternal salvation by faith but also unveils to us the dispensational reward (either prize or punishment) by works. The dispensational reward of a prize will be the coming Sabbath rest in the millennial kingdom. For us to enter into that Sabbath rest, we need, after being saved forever by faith, to **live a watchful life** as the wise virgins, and to **do a faithful work** as the faithful servants. Otherwise, we shall lose the coming Sabbath rest in the millennial kingdom and suffer some discipline.

Although **salvation is absolutely a matter of grace**, we must be willing to be saved and willing to believe in the Lord. Even the Almighty God cannot do anything for us if we are not willing to believe in Him. Being willing to **believe is our responsibility**, the cooperation we render to God's saving. Regardless of the grace extended to us, we all must be willing to believe in the Lord, look to Him, open ourselves to receive His grace, and allow it to work on our behalf.

Our growth in life will determine the time of our **maturity**. While our growth in life determines whether or not we mature early, our work, our exercise, and our use of the talent determines whether or not we share in the Lord's **kingship**. The whole earth is waiting and groaning to be released from the improper rulers. The earth will be released from that kind of rule when the Lord Jesus comes back.

The slothful, one-talented servant will not only miss the enjoyment of being a co-king with Christ during the millennial kingdom, but he will also have some suffering. Whether or not we will reign with Christ during the millennium depends on how we are doing now. Our Lord is sovereign, having a way to ripen us and make us mature. If we do not ripen in this age, He **will** see to it that we **ripen in the next**.

Salvation is free, but transformation is not. We must pay for it. If we do not **pay the price today**, we shall have to pay it in the future. No one can pay it for us. Although we are enjoying a good Sabbath in the church age, it is not as good as the Sabbath to come in the kingdom age. Entering into the Lord's joy is to enter into the Sabbath rest with the Lord in the millennial kingdom. When the Lord looks at all the overcomers, He will be satisfied and enter into His Sabbath rest. If we are among the overcomers, we shall enter into that rest with Him.

December 03, 2016: Message Twenty-Four - THE REMAINING SABBATH REST (7)

For when we sin willfully after receiving the full knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins." Heb. 10:26

After we have been saved and regenerated, we must hold on to God's grace, enjoying all that God has prepared for us in His grace. If we live and work in the proper way ordained by God, we shall receive a prize. But if we neglect God's grace, we shall suffer loss, and a certain punishment will await us.

In the book of Hebrews there are **five warnings**. The **first warning** in Hebrews is in 2:1-4, telling us *"to give heed more abundantly to the things which were heard, lest at any time we drift away"* and not to *"neglect so great a salvation."* The **second warning**, found in 3:7 through 4:13, tells us not to come short of the promised Sabbath rest but to *"be diligent to enter into that rest, lest anyone fall after the same example of disobedience."* In a sense, these messages on the remaining Sabbath rest have all been concerned with the second warning. The **third warning**, regarding being brought on to maturity (5:11-6:20), tells us not to be like the earth that brings forth *"thorns and thistles"* because *"it is disapproved and near a curse, whose end is to be burned."* In the **fourth warning** we are told to come forward to the Holy of Holies and not to shrink back to Judaism (10:19-39). And in the **fifth warning** we are encouraged to **run the race** and not to fall away from grace (12:1-29).

Let us now consider the fourth warning. Hebrews 10:26 says, *"For when we sin willfully after receiving the full knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins."* What does it mean to *"sin willfully"*? To understand this we must go back to verse 25 as the word *"for"* at the beginning of verse 26 indicates. Verse 25 says, *"Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the custom with some is, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the day drawing near."* To sin willfully in verse 26 is to forsake the assembling together in verse 25. You **must attend all the meetings of the church**. If you don't, it means that you **sin willfully**.

We come now to the fifth warning in chapter twelve of Hebrews.

Verse 5 says, *"And you have completely forgotten the exhortation which reasons with you as with sons, My son, do not make light of the discipline of the Lord, nor faint when reproved by Him."* The word discipline in this verse points to some kind of punishment.

Verse 6 continues, *"For whom the Lord loves He disciplines and scourges every son whom He receives."* To scourge here means to whip. Most of us received some kind of scourging from our parents when we were children. In like manner, our Father scourges His children.

Verse 7 says, *"It is for discipline that you are enduring; God is dealing with you as with sons; for what son is there whom the father does not discipline?"* A father will scourge his own children, not the children on the street. For God to scourge us does not mean that we lose our eternal security. The more a child is disciplined by his parents, the more secure he is.

Verse 8 says that *"if you are without discipline, of which all have become partakers, then you are bastards and not sons."* I am afraid that if God the Father would not discipline me, it would mean that I am a bastard, not a son.

Verse 9 says that *"we have had the fathers of our flesh as discipliners and we respected them; shall we not much rather be in subjection to the Father of spirits and live?"* Being in subjection to the Father of spirits gives us more life.

Verse 10 says, *"For they indeed disciplined us for a few days as it seemed good to them, but He for our profit that we might partake of His holiness."* To partake of His holiness means to partake of His holy nature. This implies the growth in life. The discipline that we receive of our Father helps us to grow. When He disciplines us, our eternal salvation is even more secure because He is dealing with us as His dear sons, not as bastards.

Verses 15 and 16 say, *"Looking carefully lest any one be falling away from the grace of God, lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and through this many be defiled; lest there be any fornicator or profane person as Esau, who for one meal gave up his birthright."* What does it mean to be *"falling away from the grace of God"*? It means that we have the grace already and that we must be diligent not to lose it, not to fall from the grace that we are already enjoying.

Verse 16 says that for one meal Esau gave up his **birthright**. The birthright in Christ, which includes the kingship in the coming kingdom, means a great deal to the believers. But we may sell our birthright for just a small enjoyment of the material things just as Esau sold his for the enjoyment of a morsel of meat. To lose the birthright in Christ is not to lose eternal life; it is to lose the right of life, that is, to lose the enjoyment of the coming kingdom as a prize.

Verses 28 and 29 say, *"Wherefore, receiving an unshakable kingdom, let us have grace, through which we may serve God well-pleasingly with godly fear and awe; for our God is also a consuming fire."* Since we are in the process of receiving such an unshakable kingdom, we must hold fast to grace and not fall from it. Verse 29 tells us that our God is a consuming fire. **Although our God is love, here He is a consuming fire**. This is a serious warning.

Today Christ is sitting in the heavens enjoying a Sabbath rest because He has accomplished everything to produce the church which is the satisfaction and rest to God. We must **be warned not to forsake the church life**. Here, in the church, we are at rest. Be encouraged to be in the church life, today's Sabbath. This Sabbath will usher us into the kingdom. The church life will feed us, edify us, build us up, and qualify us for the next Sabbath, which will be the kingdom age. The kingdom requires people who have matured. Although we have the seed of life within us and are growing, we need to mature. The church is the proper field, the proper farm, where we can grow into maturity. In the church we enjoy the benefits of today's growing Sabbath. In the church we shall also be brought into the harvest Sabbath.

The **church life is also a refuge**. Do not think that heaven is your refuge. Heaven is too far away to be a refuge for us who face a desperate situation on a stormy sea today. For us, the church life is a matter of life or death. Flee into the church life for refuge.