

Sovereign Grace Church

“Pressing On” outline

March 19, 2017

Hebrews 10: 32-39

The writer to the Hebrews has been extending every effort to encourage his people to continue on in following Christ in spite of oncoming persecutions and sufferings which themselves seem to result from following Him. It is true that folks become “Christians” for any number of different reasons. Some reasons issue in genuine commitment to Christ no matter what else may happen, while other reasons issue in a Christianity in name only! The parable of the Sower (Matt. 13) is useful in discerning the difference.

If we become Christians because it makes us more popular, then if we find ourselves becoming less popular we are tempted to re-think our decision. If we become Christians thinking it will make our lives easier....and then find our lives in increasing turmoil and frustration...we may begin to think that perhaps God doesn't exist after all or that some other religion or cult has a better way. Only those who become Christians desiring to be re-made into Christ-likeness will begin to understand that suffering and persecution are God's means of making this transformation actual in the Christian's life. At this point joy becomes a comprehensive virtue for the believer, experienced in spite of the circumstances of life and issues in a world mystified that such people can exist at all and drawn, often against their wills, to consider the possibility of God (John 17: 21)!

1. The Value of Remembering for the Believer 32-35

- Local History
Jms 1: 2-4; Ac. 5: 41

- Direct and Indirect Suffering
Ac 4: 34-35; Matt 6: 33

2. The Believer's Confidence in the Promise 36-37

- The Promise
II Cor. 5: 1

- **Receiving the Promise**
Eph 2: 8-10; Jn 15:5; 14:12; Lk 9: 23-24

3. The Believer's Confident Perseverance 38-39
Matt 7: 20,21; Gal 5; 22-24; II Pet 1: 5-7, 1—11

Questions for Friendly Conversation

1. Why did you become a Christian? Have your expectations had to be adjusted as you have journeyed with your Savior? In what ways? What do you know now that you did not know in the beginning and how has it made a difference in your Christian walk?
2. Have you ever questioned what God has allowed into your life as His disciple? How did you resolve it? Did you resolve it or just suppress it under the passage of time and mounting responsibilities? Is it wrong to question God? Why or why not?
3. What does it mean to be joyful in trials and tribulations? What is the difference between a stoic acceptance of suffering and a joyful reception of suffering as disciples of Christ? When is the last time you were joyful in the context of suffering. How was your joy expressed? How might such joy be expressed while waiting in the ER with a sick child and without any insurance?
4. How do we distinguish between our works arising from the flesh with our works arising from the Spirit? Will works arising from the Spirit be necessarily miraculous? Will they not have anything to do with our natural efforts? What is the difference? Have you ever tried to do a godly work in the arm of the flesh? How is it that so many Christians seem to be involved in pursuing Christ in the power of the flesh?