

Saved: God's Plan of Salvation, Teacher's Guide

Week 10: Faithful Unto Death: Continuing in the Faith

Revelation 2:10; Hebrews 10:19–39

Teaching Aim (Teacher Orientation)

This final lesson completes the plan of salvation by addressing perseverance, and the doctrine at stake is among the most pastorally sensitive of all. Two opposite errors must be avoided, and this passage equips you to avoid both. On one side stands “once saved, always saved,” the teaching that a true believer can never finally be lost and that perseverance is guaranteed regardless of ongoing faith and obedience. Hebrews 10 directly contradicts this: it warns genuine Christians (“we,” “brothers,” those who “received the knowledge of the truth”) that if they go on sinning deliberately and shrink back, they face judgment and destruction. On the other side stands an anxious, never-assured faith that lives in perpetual dread of losing salvation. Hebrews 10 contradicts this too: through the blood of Jesus we may draw near “in full assurance of faith,” with real confidence and boldness. The truth holds both together: full assurance for those who continue in faith, and a genuine possibility of falling away for those who abandon it. Salvation is secure in Christ and is preserved through a continuing, faithful, obedient trust.

Teach the warning passages with care and courage. Do not soften Hebrews 10:26–31 into something that cannot really happen; the writer plainly believes apostasy is possible, or the warning would be empty. At the same time, do not wield it as a club that drives sincere strugglers to despair. The sin in view is not the believer’s daily struggle with weakness and failure, for which the blood of Christ continually cleanses (1 John 1:7–9), but a deliberate, settled, willful turning away from Christ, a trampling of the Son of God and a spurning of His blood. Help students feel the seriousness without mistaking ordinary stumbling for apostasy. The proper response to the warning is not panic but perseverance: “do not throw away your confidence... you have need of endurance.”

Note how this lesson gathers the whole study. Perseverance is communal (do not neglect to meet together, stir one another up), word-and-hope centered (hold fast the confession), and active (endurance, doing the will of God). Christ who reigns now gives the crown of life at the end (Revelation 2:10); this is the consummation we await, not an earthly kingdom. Aim the lesson at steadfast, joyful endurance. Send students home both deeply assured in the blood of Christ and soberly resolved to remain faithful to the end, encouraging one another all the more as they see the Day drawing near. This is the fitting capstone of a study on how a person is saved and how a Christian lives faithfully afterward.

Question 1

Student Question:

The writer says we have “confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus” and may “draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith” (vv. 19–22). What is the ground of this assurance, and what does it teach us that a Christian can come before God boldly and with full confidence rather than in constant fear?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

Establish the ground of assurance in verses 19–22. Our confidence to enter God’s presence rests entirely on “the blood of Jesus” and the “new and living way” He opened as our great high priest. Assurance is not self-confidence or a feeling about ourselves; it is confidence in Christ’s finished sacrifice and present priesthood.

Stress the boldness this produces. We may “draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith,” our hearts sprinkled clean and our bodies washed (a likely allusion to baptism, Week 6). The Christian is not meant to cower before God but to come boldly, sure of welcome through Christ.

Correct false notions of assurance on both sides. This is not the presumption that says “I am eternally safe no matter how I live,” for the same chapter warns against shrinking back. Nor is it the anxiety that never dares to feel accepted. It is settled confidence grounded in Christ, held by a heart that keeps drawing near.

Apply pastorally. Many believers oscillate between presumption and dread. Anchor them where Hebrews does: not in the strength of their own performance or feelings, but in the blood and priesthood of Jesus, received and held by faith.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- Assurance grounded in the blood and priesthood of Jesus (vv. 19–22)
- Bold access to God, hearts sprinkled and bodies washed (allusion to baptism; Week 6)
- Assurance distinguished from both presumption and dread
- Confidence resting on Christ’s work, not our performance or feelings

Discussion Prompts

- What is the true ground of a Christian’s assurance before God?
- How is biblical assurance different from both presumption and dread?
- Why can a believer come to God boldly rather than in constant fear?

Question 2

Student Question:

Many believers live with a nagging uncertainty about where they stand with God, while others grow careless and presumptuous. Which way do you tend to lean, toward anxious doubt or

toward casual presumption, and how does the assurance grounded in Christ's blood speak to your particular tendency?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

This self-examining question asks students to locate their own tendency. Most people lean one way: toward anxious doubt that never feels secure, or toward casual presumption that takes grace for granted. Naming the lean is the first step to correcting it.

Speak to the anxious. To those who fear they can never be sure, point to the blood of Jesus and the full assurance it provides. Their security is not in the steadiness of their feelings but in the steadiness of Christ. Drawing near, not drawing back in fear, is the remedy.

Speak to the presumptuous. To those who have grown careless, the warnings of this very chapter are a gift, a wake-up call. Assurance was never meant to breed complacency but confident, grateful faithfulness. Help each student let the blood of Christ answer their particular tendency this week.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- Identifying one's lean: anxious doubt or casual presumption
- For the anxious: security in Christ's blood, not in steady feelings
- For the presumptuous: the warnings as a gift against complacency
- Letting Christ's blood answer one's particular tendency

Discussion Prompts

- Do you lean more toward anxious doubt or casual presumption?
- How does assurance in Christ's blood speak to your particular tendency?
- What would it look like to draw near this week rather than draw back or grow careless?

Question 3

Student Question:

The writer urges us to "hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering" and to keep "not neglecting to meet together... but encouraging one another" (vv. 23–25). Why does he tie holding fast to our faith so closely to gathering with other believers, and what does this teach us about how Christians actually persevere?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

Open verses 23–25 as a single movement. "Hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering" is immediately joined to "not neglecting to meet together" and "encouraging one another." The writer ties personal perseverance to corporate fellowship; we hold fast together.

Explain why the assembly matters for endurance. Faith is not designed to survive in isolation. We need the regular stirring up “to love and good works,” the mutual encouragement, the accountability, and the worship that the gathering provides, “all the more as you see the Day drawing near.” The Christian who forsakes the assembly cuts off a chief means God uses to keep him.

Reinforce the high view of the church the study has maintained. Neglecting to meet together is not a minor lapse but a step toward drifting away; the warnings that follow come precisely to those who were forsaking the assembly. Faithfulness and the fellowship of the body belong together.

Apply concretely. Perseverance is a team endeavor. Encourage students both to be present and to be active in stirring up others, not merely attending but engaging, watching out for the wavering, carrying one another toward the finish.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- Holding fast joined to not neglecting the assembly (vv. 23–25)
- Faith not designed to survive in isolation; the assembly as a means of endurance
- Mutual stirring up, encouragement, accountability, and worship
- Neglecting the assembly as a step toward drifting away
- Perseverance as a team endeavor: present and active in the body

Discussion Prompts

- Why does the writer tie holding fast to meeting together?
- How has the fellowship of the church helped you endure in the past?
- How can you move from merely attending to actively stirring others up?

Question 4

Student Question:

The command not to neglect meeting together is given precisely because some were drifting away from the assembly. What pulls at you when it comes to gathering faithfully with God’s people, and how might consistent fellowship be one of God’s key means of keeping you faithful to the end?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

This self-focused question presses the command not to neglect the assembly. The text assumes some were already drifting from gathering; the same pull operates today. Ask students to name honestly what competes with faithful fellowship in their lives.

Name the modern pulls without scolding: busyness, fatigue, entertainment, hurt feelings from past conflict, the illusion that we can be Christians privately. Each of these can quietly erode the habit that helps hold us fast.

Reframe the assembly as a means of grace and survival, not an obligation to endure. We gather not only to give but to be kept, encouraged, and stirred up. Encourage one concrete commitment to faithful, engaged participation this week.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- Honest naming of what competes with faithful fellowship
- Modern pulls: busyness, fatigue, past hurt, privatized faith
- The assembly as a means of grace and perseverance, not mere obligation
- A concrete commitment to engaged participation

Discussion Prompts

- What most pulls you away from gathering faithfully with God's people?
- How might consistent fellowship be one of God's means of keeping you faithful?
- What is one concrete commitment to engaged participation you can make this week?

Question 5

Student Question:

The writer gives a sobering warning: "if we go on sinning deliberately after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a fearful expectation of judgment" (vv. 26–27). What does this passage teach about the real possibility that a Christian can fall away, and why is it so serious to turn deliberately back to a life of sin after knowing Christ?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

This is one of the two doctrinal centers of the lesson, so handle verses 26–31 with both courage and care. The writer warns that "if we go on sinning deliberately after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins." The "we" is decisive: he includes himself and his Christian readers. This is a warning to believers, not outsiders.

Establish the genuine possibility of apostasy. The warning is real, not hypothetical. People who had "received the knowledge of the truth" can turn away and be lost. This is why the passage flatly contradicts "once saved, always saved." Other Scriptures agree (Hebrews 3:12; 6:4–6; Galatians 5:4; 2 Peter 2:20–22). A child of God who abandons the faith does not remain automatically safe.

Define the sin precisely so strugglers are not crushed. The phrase “go on sinning deliberately” describes a settled, willful course of rebellion, a turning back that “trampled underfoot the Son of God” and “spurned” His blood and grace. This is apostasy, the deliberate renunciation of Christ, not the believer’s daily battle with weakness, for which the blood of Christ continually cleanses the one who keeps walking in the light (1 John 1:7–9).

Explain why it is so grave. To turn deliberately from Christ after knowing Him is to reject the only sacrifice for sins there is; having spurned the cross, one has nowhere else to go. The seriousness is not arbitrary harshness but the simple logic of grace refused.

Keep the pastoral aim. The warning is meant to produce holy seriousness and perseverance, not paralyzing fear. Its very purpose is preventive: the writer warns those he loves precisely so that they will not fall away. A warning heeded is a warning that has done its work.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- The warning addressed to believers (“we,” those who received the truth)
- The genuine possibility of apostasy, contradicting “once saved, always saved” (Hebrews 3:12; 6:4–6; Galatians 5:4; 2 Peter 2:20–22)
- Defining the sin: deliberate, settled rebellion that spurns Christ, not daily weakness
- Ongoing cleansing for the one who walks in the light (1 John 1:7–9)
- Why rejecting the only sacrifice leaves no other refuge
- The warning as preventive, aimed at perseverance rather than panic

Discussion Prompts

- Who is being warned in these verses, and why does that matter?
- What kind of sin is in view, and how is it different from daily struggle?
- Why is deliberately turning back from Christ so grave?

Question 6

Student Question:

This warning is meant to be taken personally, not used to judge others. Where in your own life is there a deliberate, ongoing compromise you have been excusing rather than repenting of? What would it look like to take this warning seriously this week?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

This self-examining question applies the warning personally and inwardly. Stress that these verses are a mirror for ourselves, not a weapon against others. Ask students to search for any deliberate, ongoing compromise they have been excusing rather than repenting of.

Help distinguish struggle from settled compromise. The point is not to make a faithful believer doubt every stumble, but to expose the cherished sin we have quietly decided to keep, the area where we have stopped fighting and started justifying.

Point to the way back. The remedy for any compromise is not despair but repentance (Week 4) and a fresh drawing near through the blood of Christ. Encourage one honest act of turning this week, and where helpful, confession to a trusted believer who can help.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- The warning as a mirror for self, not a weapon against others
- Distinguishing daily struggle from cherished, justified compromise
- Repentance and drawing near as the way back (Week 4)
- Honest turning, with the help of the body where needed

Discussion Prompts

- Where have you been excusing a deliberate compromise rather than repenting of it?
- How is a cherished, justified sin different from an ordinary stumble?
- What would taking this warning seriously look like for you this week?

Question 7

Student Question:

After the warning, the writer pleads, “do not throw away your confidence, which has a great reward,” and reminds them, “you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God you may receive what is promised” (vv. 35–36). How do these verses keep the warning from leading to despair, and what role does endurance play in receiving the promise?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

Open verses 35–36, where the writer turns from warning to encouragement. “Do not throw away your confidence, which has a great reward.” The same boldness that opened the lesson (v. 19) is now something to be guarded and not discarded under pressure.

Show how this balances the warning. The point of verses 26–31 was never to leave believers in despair but to spur them to endure. Having sounded the alarm, the writer immediately steadies them: your confidence has a great reward, so hold on. Warning and encouragement serve the same goal, perseverance.

Explain the role of endurance. “You have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God you may receive what is promised.” The promise is received at the end, by those who keep doing God’s will. Endurance is not earning the reward; it is continuing in the faith until the reward is given. The runner does not buy the prize by finishing, but only finishers receive it.

Apply to the discouraged. To the weary Christian tempted to quit, these verses are pure gospel comfort: the reward is real, the finish line is near, and the God who promised is faithful. Endurance is hard, but it is not hopeless.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- “Do not throw away your confidence”: guarding the boldness of verse 19 (vv. 35–36)
- Warning and encouragement serving the same goal of perseverance
- Endurance as continuing in faith until the promise is received, not earning it
- Gospel comfort for the weary: the reward is real and God is faithful

Discussion Prompts

- How do these verses keep the warning from leading to despair?
- What is the role of endurance in receiving the promise?
- How is enduring to the end different from earning the reward?

Question 8

Student Question:

The writer points the discouraged believers back to “the former days” when they endured hardship for Christ (vv. 32–34). What hard seasons has Christ already brought you through, and how can remembering His faithfulness then strengthen your endurance now?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

This self-focused question draws on verses 32–34, where the writer urges the believers to “recall the former days” of suffering they had already endured. Memory of past faithfulness fuels present endurance.

Invite students to remember their own “former days,” the hard seasons Christ has already carried them through. Recalling how God proved faithful before strengthens trust that He will prove faithful again.

Apply to current trials. Endurance is sustained not by gritting our teeth but by remembering a faithful God and fixing our eyes on the promised reward. Encourage students to name a present hardship and to bring the memory of God’s past faithfulness to bear on it this week.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- Recalling “the former days” of endurance (vv. 32–34)
- Memory of past faithfulness fueling present endurance
- Endurance sustained by remembering a faithful God, not by gritted teeth
- Bringing past faithfulness to bear on a present trial

Discussion Prompts

- What hard seasons has Christ already brought you through?
- How does remembering His faithfulness then strengthen you now?
- What present trial most needs the memory of God's past faithfulness?

Question 9

Student Question:

Hebrews holds together two truths that people often pull apart: real, full assurance for those in Christ, and the genuine possibility of falling away for those who “shrink back” (vv. 38–39). How does this passage guard us against both the error of “once saved, always saved,” which treats perseverance as guaranteed, and the opposite error of an anxious faith that is never sure of anything? How is our salvation truly secure in Christ and yet preserved through a continuing, faithful, obedient trust that endures to the end?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

This is the heaviest doctrinal block and the doctrinal capstone of the entire study. The passage ends by holding two truths in deliberate tension (vv. 38–39): “my righteous one shall live by faith, and if he shrinks back, my soul has no pleasure in him. But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who have faith and preserve their souls.” Both the possibility of shrinking back to destruction and the confident expectation of preserving our souls stand side by side. Teach students to hold them together rather than collapsing one into the other.

Refute “once saved, always saved” clearly. This doctrine teaches that a genuine believer can never finally be lost, so that perseverance is guaranteed and warnings like this one cannot really apply to the saved. But Hebrews addresses the saved, warns that they can shrink back, and says such people are “destroyed.” If falling away were impossible for a true believer, the warning would be meaningless. Scripture consistently treats apostasy as a real danger for real Christians (Hebrews 3:12–14; Galatians 5:4; 2 Peter 2:20–22). Perseverance is commanded, not guaranteed.

Refute the opposite error just as clearly. Some, fearing they could fall, live in constant dread, never sure of their standing, scrutinizing every failure as possible apostasy. But the same passage offers “full assurance of faith” and confident access through the blood of Jesus, and ends, “we are not of those who shrink back... but of those who have faith and preserve their souls.” The believer is meant to live in confident hope, not anxious uncertainty.

Now state the synthesis the question asks for. Salvation is genuinely secure in Christ for all who continue in faith; it is not a fragile thing we lose through ordinary weakness or a single failure, for the blood of Christ keeps cleansing the one who keeps walking with Him. Yet that security is not unconditional in the Calvinistic sense; it is preserved through a continuing, faithful, obedient

trust. The condition is not sinless perfection but persevering faith, the faith that keeps drawing near, keeps repenting, keeps holding fast, and refuses to shrink back. We are kept by the power of God through faith (1 Peter 1:5), both truths together: God keeps us, and He keeps us through our continuing faith.

Avoid both the Calvinistic guarantee and the works-driven anxiety. We do not persevere by our own strength to earn a salvation we never had, nor are we carried passively regardless of whether we continue. The crown of life is promised to those who are “faithful unto death” (Revelation 2:10), a promise that is both a real assurance and a real summons.

Land the whole study here. The plan of salvation that began with our need and God’s grace reaches its goal in a faithful life completed. End with the crown: Christ Himself, who reigns now and who gives the crown of life at the finish, holds out both His blood for our assurance and His call to endure. The right response is neither presumption nor dread, but joyful, persevering faithfulness, drawing near and holding fast, all the way home.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- The deliberate tension of verses 38–39: shrinking back to destruction, or faith that preserves the soul
- Refuting “once saved, always saved”: the warning addresses the saved and assumes real danger (Hebrews 3:12–14; Galatians 5:4; 2 Peter 2:20–22)
- Refuting anxious, never-sure faith: full assurance through Christ’s blood (vv. 19–22, 39)
- The synthesis: salvation secure in Christ, preserved through continuing, faithful, obedient trust
- Kept by God’s power through faith, both truths together (1 Peter 1:5)
- The condition is persevering faith, not sinless perfection
- The crown of life as both real assurance and real summons (Revelation 2:10)

Discussion Prompts

- How does this passage guard against “once saved, always saved”?
- How does it guard against an anxious faith that is never sure?
- How is our salvation both secure in Christ and preserved through continuing faith?

Question 10

Student Question:

Look back over this final passage and over the whole journey of this study, from our need for salvation to faithfulness unto death. Name one specific way Jesus is calling you to keep holding fast this week. What is the next step in setting your face toward the crown of life He has promised to those who are faithful to the end?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

This capstone closes both the lesson and the entire study. Ask each student to name one specific way to keep holding fast this week, and to look back across the whole journey from need to faithfulness.

Discern where people are. Some need to recover assurance and stop living in dread; some need to heed the warning and turn from a compromise; some need encouragement to endure a hard season; and some, even now, may need to begin the journey by obeying the gospel for the first time. Hold all of these open warmly.

End at the finish line and the Person. The crown of life is real, and it is given by the Christ who reigns now and welcomes us by His blood. Let students leave with their eyes fixed on Jesus and on the finish, resolved to be faithful unto death, encouraging one another all the more as they see the Day drawing near.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- Naming one specific way to keep holding fast this week
- Looking back across the whole study, from need to faithfulness
- Discerning each student's next step, including first obedience to the gospel
- Eyes fixed on Christ and the crown, faithful unto death

Discussion Prompts

- What is one specific way Christ is calling you to hold fast this week?
- Looking back over this whole study, what truth most needs to take root in you?
- What is your next step in setting your face toward the crown of life?