



# **What Does the Bible Teach About Willful or Deliberate Sin?**

**Hebrews 10:26-31**



# Once Saved, Always Saved?

- **Some members of the church believe in “once saved, always saved.”**
  - **Do not believe that habitual, deliberate sins have any worse consequences than occasional sins of weakness, ignorance, or inadvertence.**
  - **Believe that because they are members of a local church of Christ, God will not let them to sin to the point of becoming reprobate.**

# What Does The Bible Teach?

- That those who remain faithful are secure
- It also teaches that a believer can become an unbeliever
  - Heb. 3:12-14 - “Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God; 13 but exhort one another daily, while it is called Today, lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. 14 For we have become partakers of Christ if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end”

# **The Possibility Of Apostasy In Hebrews**

- **Warning against drifting - Heb. 2:1-4**
- **Warning against departing - Heb. 3:12-14**
- **Warning against disobedience - Heb. 4:11**
- **Warning against dullness, leading to apostasy - Heb. 5:11 - 6:6**
- **Warning against willful sin - Heb. 10:26-31**

**Heb. 10:26-31 - “For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, 27 but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries. 28 Anyone who has rejected Moses’ law dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. 29 Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace? 30 For we know Him who said, Vengeance is Mine, I will repay, says the Lord. And again, The LORD will judge His people. 31 It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.”**

# What Does It Mean To Sin Willfully?

- **Other translations**
  - "If we deliberately keep on sinning..." (NIV)
  - "For if we willfully persist in sin..." (NRSV)
  - "For if we go on sinning willfully..." (NASB)
  - "For if we do evil on purpose" (BBE)
  - "For if we sin deliberately" (RSV)
- **Original text connotes repeated action**
  - Not an act of sin, but a state of sin

# **What Does It Mean To Sin Willfully?**

- **Christians have moments of weakness and occasionally sin ignorantly**
  - **1John 1:8-10 - “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 10 If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.”**

# What Does It Mean To Sin Willfully?

- It has always been the case that children of God can sin as to fall from grace, often never to rise again
  - Num. 15:30-31 - “But the person who does anything presumptuously (*with a high hand*), whether he is native-born or a stranger, that one brings reproach on the LORD, and he shall be cut off from among his people. 31 Because he has despised the word of the LORD, and has broken His commandment, that person shall be completely cut off; his guilt shall be upon him.”

# **What Are The Consequences Of Willful Sin?**

- **“There no longer remains a sacrifice for sin”**
  - Heb. 10:26 - **“For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins”**

# What Are The Consequences Of Willful Sin?

- Heb. 10:27 - “A certain fearful expectation of judgment”

# What Are The Consequences Of Willful Sin?

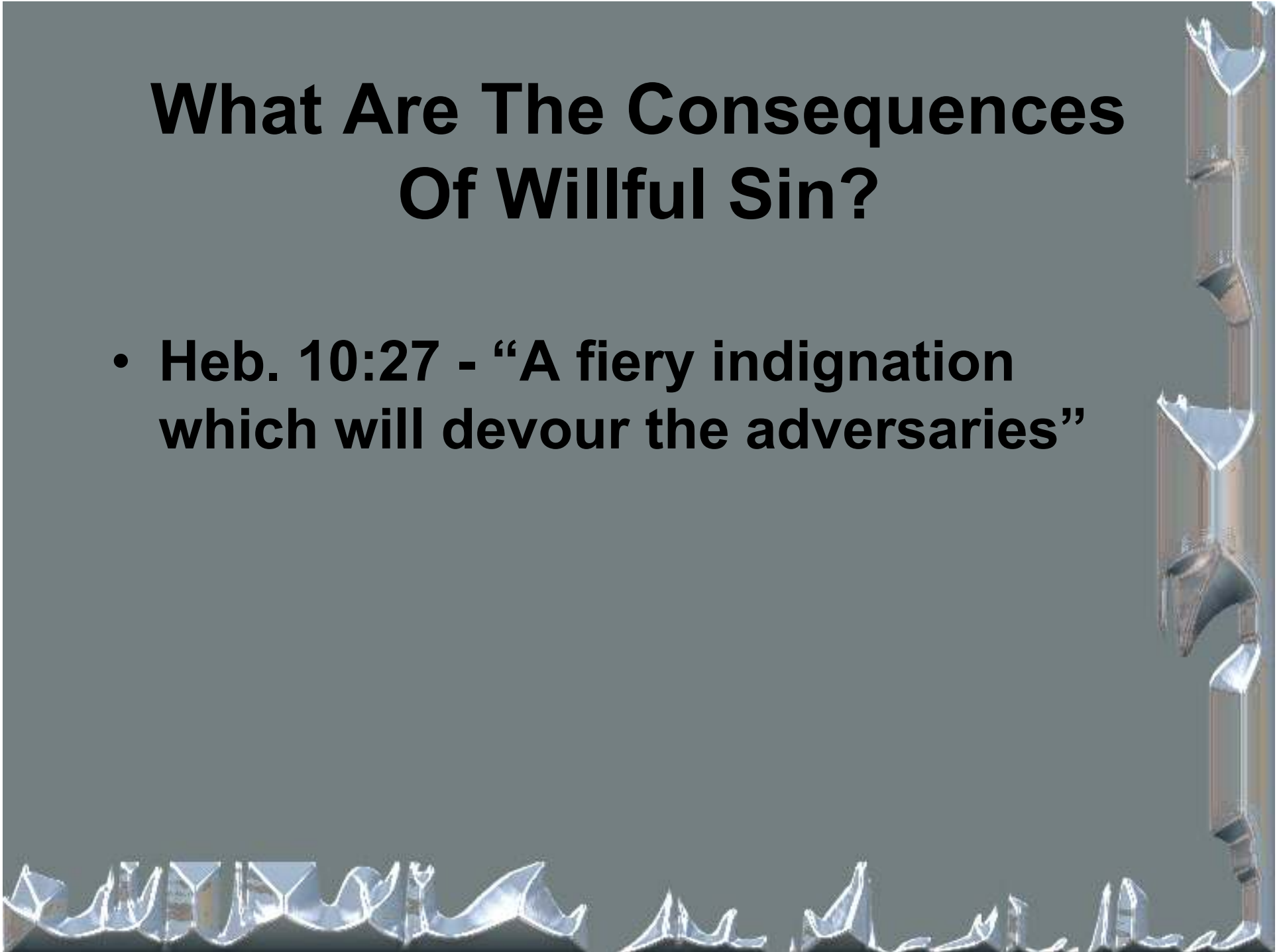
- **Judgment is certain**
  - Heb. 9:27 - “And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment”
  - Acts 17:30-31 - “Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent, 31 because He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead.”

# What Are The Consequences Of Willful Sin?

- Judgment is fearful
  - 2Cor. 5:10-11 - “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad. 11 Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men...”

# **What Are The Consequences Of Willful Sin?**

- **Heb. 10:27 - “A fiery indignation  
which will devour the adversaries”**



# What Are The Consequences Of Willful Sin?

- **Fire**
  - Rev. 21:8 - “But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.”
- **Indignation**
  - Rom. 2:5 - “But in accordance with your hardness and your impenitent heart you are treasuring up for yourself wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God”



# **What Are The Consequences Of Willful Sin?**

- **Devour, not annihilate as in cease to exist, but destroy as in devastate and make utterly desolate**
  - **Matt. 10:28 - “And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.”**

# **The Justification For Punishing Willful Sin**

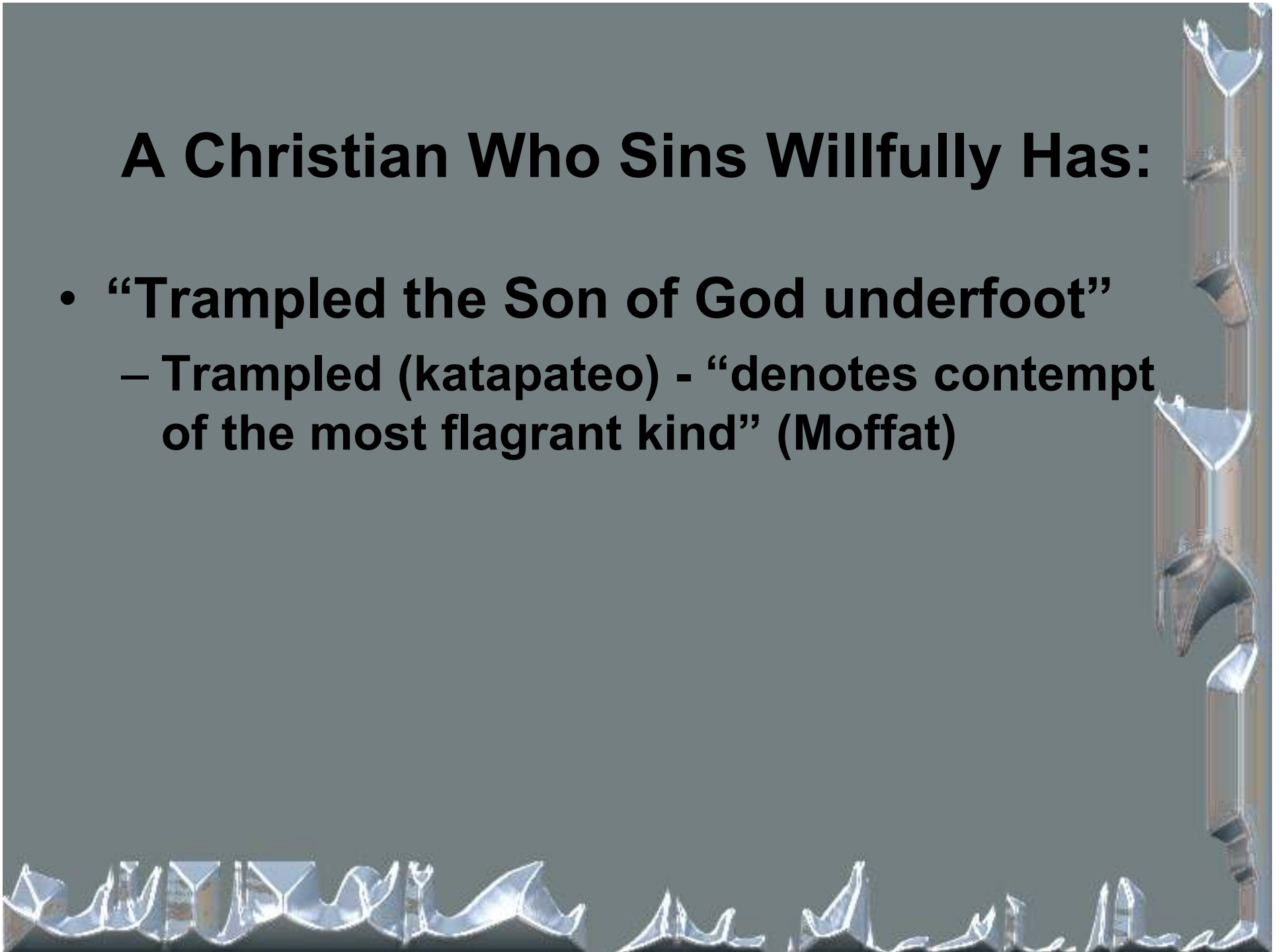
- **What was required under the Old Covenant?**
  - Heb. 10:28 - “Anyone who has rejected Moses' law dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses.”

# **The Justification For Punishing Willful Sin**

- **What is required under the New Covenant?**
  - **Heb. 10:29 - “Of how much worse punishment do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace?”**

# **A Christian Who Sins Willfully Has:**

- **“Trampled the Son of God underfoot”**
  - Trampled (katapateo) - “denotes contempt of the most flagrant kind” (Moffat)



# **A Christian Who Sins Willfully Has:**

- **“Counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing”**
  - **Heb. 9:11-12 - “But Christ came as High Priest of the good things to come, with the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation. 12 Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption.”**
  - **Heb. 13:20 - “Now may the God of peace who brought up our Lord Jesus from the dead, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant”**

## **A Christian Who Sins Willfully Has:**

- **“Insulted the Spirit of grace,” possibly a reference to the Holy Spirit**
  - **Through Whom the message of salvation was given**
  - **John 16:13-14 - “However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. 14 He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you.”**

# **A Christian Who Sins Willfully Has:**

- **“Insulted the Spirit of grace,” possibly a reference to the Holy Spirit**
  - **Through Whom our sanctification takes place**
  - **1Cor. 6:11 - “And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.”**

# **A Christian Who Sins Willfully Has:**

- **“To apostatize is to blasphemously insult the Holy Spirit, to wantonly treat the personal, gracious nature of His power. What greater crime can be imagined than to despise God’s Son, regard His sacrifice as no more than an ordinary death, do outrage against His gracious Spirit, and of this by one who once acknowledged Jesus as Lord?” (Neil Lightfoot, Commentary on Hebrews, 195)**

# **The Justification For Punishing Willful Sin**

- **“But, isn't God a God of love?”**
  - **1John 4:8 - “He who does not love does not know God, for God is love.”**

# **The Justification For Punishing Willful Sin**

- **He is also a God of justice**
  - Heb. 10:30 - “For we know Him who said, Vengeance is Mine, I will repay, says the Lord. And again, The LORD will judge His people.”
  - Rom. 11:22 - “Therefore consider the goodness and severity of God: on those who fell, severity; but toward you, goodness, if you continue in His goodness. Otherwise you also will be cut off.”

# The Justification For Punishing Willful Sin

- **“To who much is given, much is required”**
  - **Luke 12:47-48 - “And that servant who knew his master's will, and did not prepare himself or do according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. 48 But he who did not know, yet committed things deserving of stripes, shall be beaten with few. For everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required; and to whom much has been committed, of him they will ask the more.”**

# **The Justification For Punishing Willful Sin**

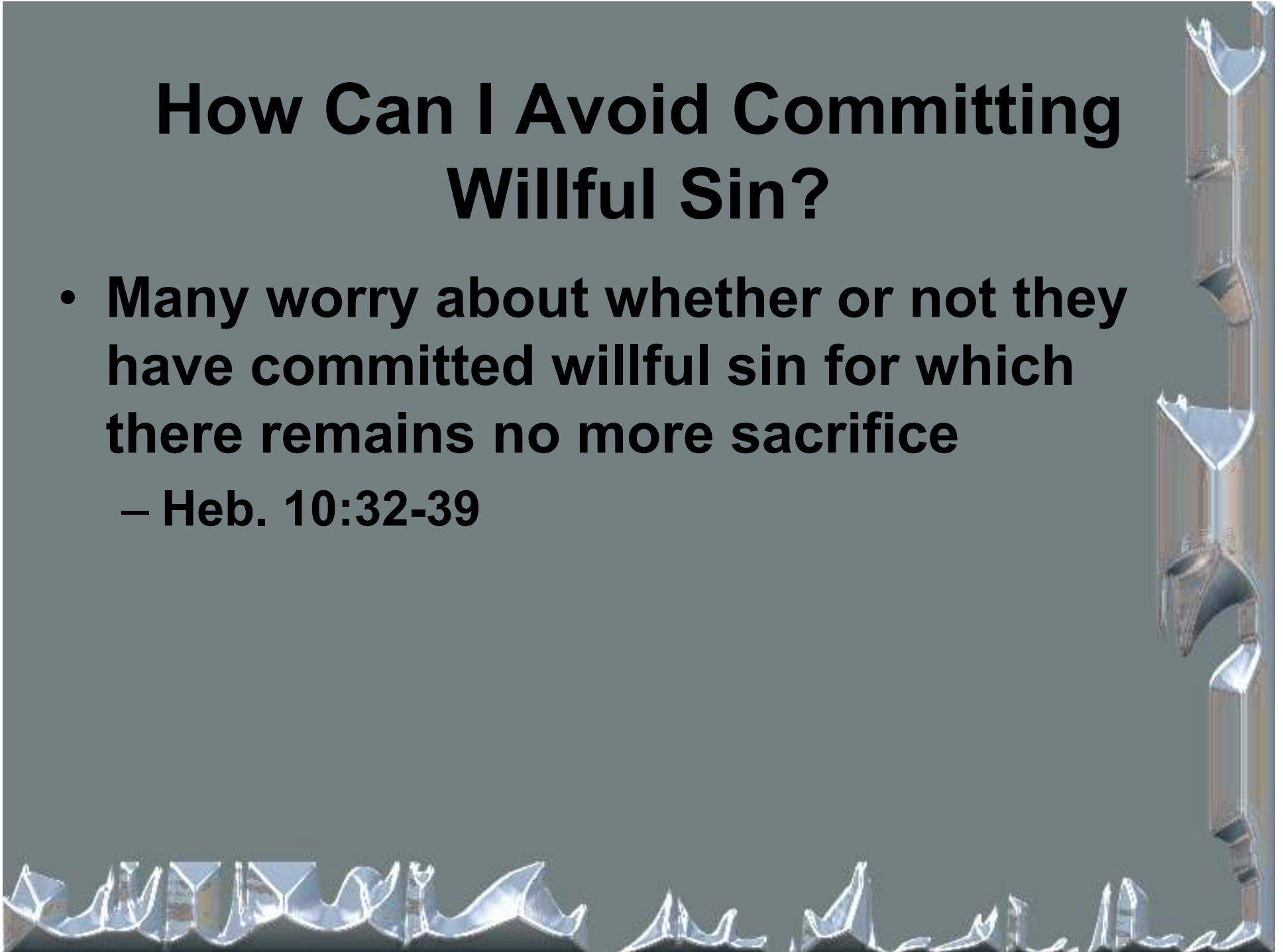
- **Those who despise His love set themselves up to be the recipients of His wrath**
  - **Rom. 2:4-6 - “Or do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance? 5 But in accordance with your hardness and your impenitent heart you are treasuring up for yourself wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, 6 who will render to each one according to his deeds.”**

# **The Justification For Punishing Willful Sin**

- **It truly is “a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God” - Heb. 10:31**
  - **Heb. 12:28-29 - “Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. 29 For our God is a consuming fire.”**

# How Can I Avoid Committing Willful Sin?

- Many worry about whether or not they have committed willful sin for which there remains no more sacrifice
  - Heb. 10:32-39



Heb. 10:32-39 - "But recall the former days in which, after you were illuminated, you endured a great struggle with sufferings: 33 partly while you were made a spectacle both by reproaches and tribulations, and partly while you became companions of those who were so treated; 34 for you had compassion on me in my chains, and joyfully accepted the plundering of your goods, knowing that you have a better and an enduring possession for yourselves in heaven. 35 Therefore do not cast away your confidence, which has great reward. 36 For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise: 37 For yet a little while, And He who is coming will come and will not tarry. 38 Now the just shall live by faith; But if anyone draws back, My soul has no pleasure in him. 39 But we are not of those who draw back to perdition, but of those who believe to the saving of the soul."

# How Can I Avoid Committing Willful Sin?

- Remember your early confidence
  - Heb. 3:6, 14 - “but Christ as a Son over His own house, whose house we are if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm to the end... 14 For we have become partakers of Christ if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end”

# How Can I Avoid Committing Willful Sin?

- Remember your early confidence
  - Rev. 2:4-5 - “Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love. 5 Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place--unless you repent.”

# How Can I Avoid Committing Willful Sin?

- Endurance is needed to receive the promise - Heb. 10:36
- Remember that the Lord is coming - Heb. 10:37
- Remember that the just lives by faith - Heb. 10:38
- Cultivate confidence - Heb. 10:39

# How Can I Avoid Committing Willful Sin?

- How much better to be upheld by the hand of God than to sin with a high hand!
- Psalm 37:23-24 - “The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD, And He delights in his way. 24 Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down; For the LORD upholds him with His hand.”