

I. Introduction and review.

II. Endure in the present by looking back to the past. v. 32-34

- A. Remember the good old days of your Christian walk. v. 32a**
1. You got off to a great start by God's grace. 6:4 II Co. 4:6
 2. Looking back to the past can help revive you in the present. Dt. 32:7f Rev. 2:4-5
 3. Such remembering requires conscious effort. Phil. 4:8-9 II Tim. 1:6
 4. After such a great beginning, don't quit now!
- B. You stood your ground, in a Christlike way, in the face of suffering. v. 32b-34b**
1. As soon as you were converted, you endured a great struggle. v. 32b 12:2
 2. You experienced public reproaches and tribulations. v. 33a I Pe. 2:21-23
 3. You chose to share the sufferings of others. v. 33b 2:14f 4:15 11:25 II Co. 1:3-4 Rom. 15:3 12:15
 4. You showed sympathy to the prisoners. 13:3,16 Mt. 25:33-40 II Co. 11:23f
 5. Your property was stolen because of your allegiance to Christ. II Cor. 8:9
 6. Your suffering is going to intensify. 12:4
- C. What struggles do we face today?**
1. Some new converts face rejection and scorn from family and friends. Luke 12:52
 2. The world remains hostile to the gospel
 3. Many preachers don't prepare Christians for suffering. Mark 8:34-35 Acts 14:22 II Tim. 3:12 John 16:33 Col. 1:24
 4. What will become of the church in North America when tribulation comes?
 - a. Many false professors will fall away. Mark 4:16-17
 - b. Enduring such trials strengthens your faith. Js. 1:2-3
- D. How were they able to joyfully accept the seizure of their property? Js. 1:2f Ro. 5:3**
1. Suffering for Christ's sake is a great privilege. Mt. 5:10-11 Acts 5:41
 2. They believed their *better* and lasting possession is in heaven. 11:16,35,40 13:14 Ps. 16:11 Neh. 8:10 I Pe. 1:4 Mt. 6:19-21 Ro. 8:18 II Co. 4:17

III. Endure by looking ahead to the future in faith. v. 35-39

- A. Confidently endure in light of the promised reward. v. 35-36**
1. After having been so courageous, don't throw away your boldness now. v. 35a 3:6
 2. Your reward will be great. v. 35b 6:10 10:28 2:2 11:6,26,39
 3. Continue to endure in doing God's will. v. 36a 10:7-9,23 12:1,3,7 Rev. 2:25 John 4:34 John 15:18f I Pe. 3:17
 4. Then you will receive what is promised. v. 37b 10:23 8:10f 12:2 11:9,13,33,39-40
 5. Anticipation of our glorious future helps us to endure in hope in the present. Mt. 24:42f I Jo. 2:28 3:2-3
 6. Persevering in confident hope requires conscious effort.
- B. Live by faith as you await the Coming One. v. 37-39**
1. Again our author proves his point by quoting the Old Testament. Hab. 2:3-4
 2. The Coming One will soon arrive. v. 37 Hab. 2:3 Isa. 26:20 II Pe. 3:8-9 Mt. 11:3

3. **The righteous one shall live by faith. v. 38a 10:22 11:1f Hab. 2:4b**
 - a. **Elsewhere this text is quoted in support of justification by faith. Rom. 1:16-17 Gal. 3:11 Gen. 15:6**
 - b. **True faith is not a one time event, but continues for a lifetime. Mt. 24:13**
 - c. **The very nature of faith is to believe in the midst of hardship. 11:1 II Co. 4:18**
 - d. **This quotation prepares us for chapter 11 which recounts the enduring faith of the saints of old. 11:1f**
4. **Those who shrink back into unbelief displease God and will suffer destruction. v. 38b-39a 10:25-31 11:6 Hab. 2:4a I Jo. 2:19**
5. **You have faith which preserves your soul. v. 39 6:12 10:32-34 I Pe. 1:5**

IV. Concluding applications.

- A. **Why do Christians lose their first love for Christ?**
- B. **How can struggling Christians regain their confidence?**
 1. **Look back: remember God's work in the past.**
 2. **Look forward in faith to all that God has promised.**
 3. **Remember Christ has run this race ahead of us and won the victory.**
- C. **Faith is the path to true and lasting joy. Ps. 16:11**

Discussion questions

1. **How does this passage relate to the previous section (10:26-31)?**
2. **What good does it do for Christians to look back upon their early days as believers?**
3. **What had the readers achieved early in their Christian lives?**
4. **How had they been Christlike?**
5. **What enabled them to joyfully accept having their possessions stolen?**
6. **How does looking ahead to the future help us to endure in the present?**
7. **How is our experience parallel to that of Christ? v. 36 10:7-9 12:2f**
8. **What was the original context of this famous quote from Habakkuk? v. 37-38**
9. **In what sense does the righteous one live by faith?**
10. **How does this passage prepare us for the next two chapters?**