

# Go Back? Never!

by Ian Paisley

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*Ian Paisley's sermon emphasizes the importance of making irrevocable decisions to follow Christ and reject the temptations of the world.*

**Duration:** 28:21

**Scripture:** Hebrews 11:13

**Topics:** "Faith And Victory", "Following God"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the concept of being more than a conqueror in the Lord's battle. He uses the story of David and Goliath as an example, highlighting how David not only defeated Goliath but also brought his ammunition back home. The speaker emphasizes the importance of making an irrevocable decision to follow God and refusing any opportunities or temptations to turn back. They also mention the exchange of servants between Abraham's and Laban's households as a symbol of continued communication and connection. The sermon concludes by referencing Philippians 2:5 and encouraging listeners to have the mind of Christ.

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## Transcript

Open your Bible at the 11th chapter of Hebrews. I'm reading 13, 14, 15 and 16 of that chapter. These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims of the earth.

For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country, and truly if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. But now they desire a better country, that is in heavenly, for God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He hath prepared for them a city. And I have taken as my subject today, left forever, returning never.

Left forever, and returning never. We have in this portion of scripture, the record and history of the great men and women of faith in Old Testament time. And we have recorded that if they had wanted to return to the city that they left, their father's house, and their father's country, they could have had opportunity to have gone back.

But they refused to return. It was an everlasting farewell to the old, and it was an everlasting embrace of the new. One of the most intricate parts of the mechanism of our personalities is the mind.

The mind is that mechanism of decision making, and driving on the individual to carry out what he has decided to do. When the mind of a person is spiritual, his life will be spiritual. When the mind of a person is carnal, his life will be carnal.

When the mind of the Christian is oriented towards true biblical Christianity, true biblical Christianity will govern his life. But when the mind is anti-Christian, and oriented to anti-Christianity, his will to govern his life by Christian principles will not take place. When the mind is sinful, then the life will be sinful.

When the mind is holy, the life will be holy. When the mind is governed by the mind of Christ, then Christ's mind shall dominate it and control it. In Philippians chapter 2 and verse 5, we read these words, Let this mind be in you that was also in Christ Jesus.

Scientists are constantly seeking on how to conquer mind control. It is reported that the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency spent millions and millions and millions of dollars on this investigation. But was unable to propose a plan whereby man's mind might be ordered and conquered and controlled.

The first thing I want you to look at is the first statement. Which it says here, verse 15, And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. But now they desire a better.

You can write over that verse, irrevocability. What they did could not be changed. It was a decision that cut off the old forever and brought in the new forever.

Having our minds filled with the truth cuts us off from the ugly, the sinful and the filthy. That's why we read again in Philippians that we should think upon the things that are true and honorable and pure and clean and holy. And if we think upon those things we will not go looking for the old things.

For the old things in a believer have passed away and all things have become new. So we want to vanish from our minds the past. We must dwell upon the present truths and the future.

It's a great thing when we shed the old life, the old ways, the old language, the old pleasures, the old practices, the old behaviors and the old companions. It's a great thing when we step into the liberty and freedom of the sons of God. When there is an irrevocable decision made that cannot and will not be gone back on.

And all opportunities to return are refused. And all bribes to return are refused. And all subtle temptations of the great enemy of our souls, Satan himself, are refused.

Look at Abraham's family. Socially the break was not entirely broken because the two families still, if you read Genesis carefully, communicated with another. They told about the births that took place in their families.

They recorded the family history. They opened the family diaries. The one to the other.

And then one of the servants from Laban's household was sent to be a servant in the household of Jacob. You see the servants were exchanged. The family history was exchanged.

The patriarchs who left returned. He was praying and I was telling the Lord that I was going to follow him all the way. And he said then suddenly the devil laid his hand on him.

And he said, now don't be so quick. You had good times with me. You'll have to give me part of your time.

And he said then, he said, when I prayed, I used to say, Lord, I want to walk with you. And then I would turn around and say, devil, please do not go away. I'll go out with you too.

No man can serve two masters. We're living in a day when Christians want to serve two masters. It can't be done.

It must be a clean break. And only the Christian that is broken completely with the world is in a state of absolute happiness and perfect peace with his God. For sin is a drag.

And sin is a chain. And sin is an imprisonment. And sin is a scourge.

And sin is a whip. I was reading an old hymn book this week. And I noticed a hymn by a Mr. Burnham.

Who was one of the early Calvinistic Methodist preachers. And he says, now shall my soul on Jesus cause to feel redeeming love. Hinder me not, I'll say to all.

While seeking joys above. Though numerous evils make me sigh. There's none shall e'er confound.

Hinder me not, shall be my cry. For I'm too keen and bound. If men combine my soul to Jesus.

Ne'er may I cease to say. Hinder me not, for mighty grace shall strength divine convey. If gilded toils allure my sight.

And court a short delay. Hinder me not, I'll still repeat. And still pursue.

If snares abound and foes defy. And all their strength unite. Hinder me not, shall be my cry.

Till crowned in realms of night. The irrevocable decision. But look again.

And you will find. That there's an emphasis on opportunity. And what does it say? And truly.

If they had been mindful of that country. From whence they came out. They might have had opportunity.

To have return. Irrevocability. Opportunity.

That's where the fight goes on. That's where the battle lines are drawn. Are we going to take the opportunity to return? The constant pressure of the world.

Is against you being a pilgrim. There was an old Puritan that said well. He said you can't be a pilgrim.

Until you become a stranger. And some people have never been pilgrims. Because they've never been strangers to the world.

But once you become a stranger to the world. You become a pilgrim. Satan is the great builder of bridges.

Across the great divide. And the man that goes to hell. Is unchanged.

He's still in the devil's bridge building business. And in hell the rich man said. I want Lazarus to come and build a bridge.

I want Lazarus to come and join me in hell. I want Lazarus to come. And dip the tip of his finger in water.

And cool my tongue. The old unregenerate heart of man. Whether in life or death.

Does the devil's work. And the devil's work is building bridges. God's work is sweeping away the bridges.

Destroying the path to return. God's ultimatum throughout the whole scriptures. To his people is separation.

Man's ultimatum to his fellows is amalgamation. And that's the difference between the ecumenical movement. And those that stand by the book of God.

The ecumenists are calling for amalgamation. God is calling for separation. There can be nothing to change that.

The days of union are very dangerous days. Because unions blur the vital differences. And this is a day when men want to blur the vital differences.

The lowest possible denominator is always low morally. Let me repeat that. The lowest possible denominator is always low morally.

The morally good must surrender in any union. And cease to operate separation. You can't be a separatist and be an amalgamation.

Can't be done. The moral code goes by the board when we come to these unions. Evil triumphs and the good people in compromise try to explain why they haven't compromised.

When all the time they wear the robes of compromise. And the attire of the hypocrite. Sin multiplies continually.

Ways in which you can make concessions. I hate to hear Christians trying to explain that worldliness is alright if it's done in a certain way. Worldliness is always wrong.

And to do it in a certain way is to add to it hypocrisy. We need to be aware of that as believers. God took his people and separated them.

And they made a league with the Philistines. And the first thing the Philistines did, they took away their power to sharpen their swords. And then they went farther and they took away their swords all together.

And that's the story of compromise in the church. They take away your right to sharpen your sword. And then they take away your sword all together.

And Israel became a prey to the uncircumcised Philistines. And that's why the young boy that went forward to meet Goliath, he had just stones and a sling. He didn't have a sword.

But he was a very capable young man. For after he sang the stone and it went through the air so fast that the giant didn't even see it coming. And it hit the forehead of the giant between the eyes.

And it sunk right through the skin and into the brain. And it gave, as Billy Sunday used to say, Goliath a headache that no aspiro could cure. He was out for the count and forever.

Then what did God's man do? He ran, he jumped on the Philistines. He pulled the Philistine's sword and he took his own sword, the Philistine's altar, and used it to cleave his head off. There was a reason for

doing that.

Because if you fight the Lord's battle, you will be more than a conqueror. More than a conqueror means you use all your ammunition. You win the battle, but you bring all your ammunition home with you.

And you still have it. You say, how does that happen? Well, he used one stone. That stone went into Goliath's head.

The Bible tells me he cut off Goliath's head and took the head home with him. And in the head was the stone. So he got the bullet back and he had four others still in his script.

That's more than a conqueror. I would rather be young David coming home than Goliath lying on his back in the field. If you walk in the way of compromise, the devil will behead you.

But if you walk in the way of separation, you'll behead the devil. So you have a choice to make. The opportunity.

But let's look again. And you will find something else. That these believers had a flame.

There was something happened. A flame was lit in their hearts. And they were not going to in any way allow that flame to be quenched.

Because it was kindled in their hearts. Look at that verse. But now they desire a better country.

What's your desire today? Is it a better country? Are you sick of the world? Are you sick of its sins? Its pleasures? Its follies? The present condition is so different from our service in the past and the service of the devil. The unbeliever is blinded by the devil when he walks in the world. But the believer has his eyes open.

And you come down the chapter and you come to a man called Moses. Look with me at verse 23 of the chapter. And verse 24.

And you'll find that Moses refused. That's the first thing a child of God does. He learns to refuse.

He learns to refuse the honor of the king's household. And then he learns to refuse the pleasures of sin for a season. And then he refuses the riches in Egypt.

There's the world, the flesh, and the devil. All refused. The Bible is a wonderful book.

It's only as you read it you can see its wonders. But could I draw your attention to something? It says in this verse, But now they desire a better country that is unheavenly. Truly if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to return.

But now they desire a better country that is unheavenly. The word that's used for that heavenly country is used by our Lord seven times in the gospel. And it is our own, our own country.

We have a country, the children of God. And every time the Lord spoke about the country, he spoke about his own country. We have a country that is our very own.

That's where our desire should be. Because that's where Jesus is. Set your affections on things above, not on things on earth, for ye are dead and your life is hid with Christ in God.

You look up the seven times in the gospels where you read about the country, and that the Lord uses that as he speaks. And that's his own country. His homeland.

Thank God we're all going home. We're in the road home. At times there may be a large mountain between us and the heavenly vision, but we still keep to the mountain track until we reach the top, for we have a desire to see the country that we're going to.

And the more we dwell, said Samuel Rutherford, in Emmanuel's land, the more we'll fall in love with Emmanuel's city and with the Emmanuel of the city. Do you dwell in the shadow of Emmanuel's land? Here we have a fire lit in the soul of this man of God. Notice also this peculiar description about these people.

God is not ashamed to be called their God. Is God ashamed of you? Is he? He said, there's a Christian. I'm ashamed of that person.

He brings dishonor to my name. He brings dishonor to my son. He brings dishonor to my word.

Here we have the great and fragmental truth of the fact that God is not ashamed to be called the God of His people. And then last of all, you will see, here we have eternity itself. For it said, he hath prepared for them a city.

Go to the book of Revelation, open it up, and what will you see? You will see the city of God. May the Lord help us as a people to have done with a little distance between us and the world. God put miles between us and the world and keep us on up the hill.

Every step farther from the world, every step closer to God. Nearer, still nearer. That should be the cry of the practice of the children of God.

May God bless His word to our hearts for Jesus' sake.

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