



JESUS

Up **C**lose and **P**ersonal

A Study of Hebrews | The Pastors' Bible Study 2013-2014

Hebrews 6:1-8 **November 6, 2013**

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Hebrews 6:1-8 NIV

1 Therefore let us move beyond the elementary teachings about Christ and be taken forward to maturity, not laying again the foundation of repentance from acts that lead to death, and of faith in God, 2 instruction about cleansing rites, the laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment. 3 And God permitting, we will do so.

4 It is impossible for those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, who have shared in the Holy Spirit, 5 who have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the coming age 6 and who have fallen away, to be brought back to repentance. To their loss they are crucifying the Son of God all over again and subjecting him to public disgrace. 7 Land that drinks in the rain often falling on it and that produces a crop useful to those for whom it is farmed receives the blessing of God. 8 But land that produces thorns and thistles is worthless and is in danger of being cursed. In the end it will be burned.

Reflection Questions:

1. The passage begins by challenging us to go on “to maturity.” Count the number of years that you have had faith. What are some of the ways that you have grown in Christian maturity? What might be some of the ways you haven’t “gone on to maturity?”
2. It’s been said that religion is what we do, but grace is what God does. Verses 1 and 2 list common first century Jewish religious practices and beliefs that could be practiced without belief in Jesus and in what Jesus did on the cross. In what ways is your religion focused upon what you do? How would your life be impacted if you thought more about what God has done and will do for you? List some of the specific ways God wants to bless you.
3. Verses 4 through 6 offer a stern warning. It talks about those who have “fallen away” and the impossibility of their return to repentance. Gee! These are not the folks who are believers and have merely sinned but rather those who have turned wholeheartedly away from Jesus. In other words, they are more like Judas than like Peter. The verses imply that folks can get so far away from God that there is no return. What do you think about this? Is it possible for a true believer to lose his or her faith?

4. Compare this stern warning with Romans 8:31-34 (NIV)

³¹ What, then, shall we say in response to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? ³² He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things? ³³ Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. ³⁴ Who then is the one who condemns? No one. Christ Jesus who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us. ³⁵ Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?

Think about verse 35 – Do you actually have the power to separate yourself from God?

5. Compare Verses 4-6 with what you remember about the parable of the Prodigal Son. (Luke 15)
6. Verses 4 through 8 can be very troubling. There is also in verse 7 a hopeful note. When the rain (the gospel) falls on land and the land produces a crop, there will be a blessing. In other words, whenever we see a crop, or fruit – in a field but also in our lives – we see evidence of the work of God. Think about the crop, or fruit, that is evident in your life. Don’t be shy! List some of the good things you do, the good intentions you have, the kindnesses you show. Can you see that God is at work? Give thanks!

Perseverance of the Saints

Ephesians 1:13-14 In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.

Philippians 1:6 And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.

John 10:27-30 Jesus says, "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; and I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. I and the Father are one."

John 6:37-47 We see Jesus stating that everyone that the Father gives to the Son will come to Him and He will raise all of them up at the last day.

John 5:24 Jesus says, "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life."

Westminster Confession CH 19/17

1. They whom God hath accepted in his Beloved, effectually called and sanctified by his Spirit, can neither totally nor finally fall away from the state of grace: but shall certainly persevere therein to the end, and be eternally saved.
2. This perseverance of the saints depends, not upon their own free will, but upon the immutability of the decree of election, flowing from the free and unchangeable love of God the Father; upon the efficacy of the merit and intercession of Jesus Christ; the abiding of the Spirit and of the seed of God within them; and the nature of the covenant of grace; from all which ariseth also the certainty and infallibility thereof.