

“Don’t Rest on Past Christian Experience”

Hebrews 6:4-8

March 17, 2024

Important Reminder: God’s elect are preserved by God unto the end:

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 5:24 - *Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment but has passed from death to life.*

John 6:40 - *For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in him should have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day.*

I. Some who fall away from the faith had received real (but non-saving) spiritual blessings. (Heb. 6:4-5)

- A. “Enlightened”/ “tasted the goodness of the word of God” – an initial excitement about the gospel.

Matthew 13:20–21 - ²⁰ *As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy,* ²¹ *yet he has no root in himself, but endures for a while, and when tribulation or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately he falls away.*

- B. “Tasting of the heavenly gift” – probably the Lord’s Supper.

- C. “Sharing in the Holy Spirit”/ “the powers of the age to come” – likely a reference to the miraculous gifts of the Spirit.

1. Wicked Saul once prophesied by the Spirit. (1 Sam. 10)
2. Judas performed miracles and cast out demons. (Mark 6)

II. Those who fall away from Christ after receiving such blessings are not brought back by God. (Heb. 6:6-8)

- A. The Lord never grants them repentance.
- B. Why not? Because of what their rejection of Christ means:

"...they are crucifying the Son of God all over again and subjecting him to public disgrace."
(NIV)

1. To reject Christ is to say that He foolishly died the death of a common criminal for no purpose.
2. This brings public shame upon the Lord.

C. Apostasy will result in fiery judgment.

III. How should we respond to this warning?

A. We must remember that past spiritual experiences are not in themselves a guarantee of our perseverance in the faith.

B. Instead, we must do what Hebrews has called us to do:

1. Avoid lazy-listening (Heb. 5:11-6:3).
2. Strive to enter God's eternal rest (Heb. 4:11).
3. Exhort one another to not be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin (Heb. 3:13).

C. Those who have grown up in the church need to remember this.

1. They have been graciously exposed to regular spiritual blessings over the course of their lives.
2. They dare not rest in those blessings and fail to strive to persevere.