

**Miracles that follow the plow :: Hebrews 6****Hebrews 6, on: 2016/9/27 14:16**

Can anyone explain Hebrews 6? Why couldn't God leave someone if His patience runs out? I'm in a really dark and despaired time. I feel like the Man in the iron cage from Pilgrim's Progress. I am starting to think God does leave a person after time. I wonder if this text in scripture has been misinterpreted for the sake of church.

Re: Hebrews 6 - posted by TMK (), on: 2016/9/27 14:32

The fact that you are even concerned about this leads me to believe that God has not left you nor have you left God.

God goes silent sometimes. You just have to plow ahead. Read the Word, try to pray- at least just tell Him how you are feeling. David did -- " my God my God, why have you forsaken me?"

Re: Hebrews 6 - posted by InTheLight (), on: 2016/9/27 21:37

Since you've been reading John Bunyan I would encourage you to read his account of his spiritual pilgrimage in *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners*. Bunyan agonized over passages in Hebrews 6 and 12 among others and the book is sometimes painful to read as he goes through the mental torture of conscience and assurance but at long last the light breaks through and though Bunyan suffered much the beautiful fragrance of Christ wafts from his life even to our generation.

In Christ,

Re: Hebrews 6 - posted by StirltUp (), on: 2016/9/28 0:35

No matter how you feel, hold fast the good confession, that Jesus is Saviour and Lord and coming again!

The "testing of our faith...produces patience"

Blessings,

Re: Hebrews 6 - posted by davidkeel (), on: 2016/9/28 6:05

Hi Reformer,

Maybe you are feeling cut off because the Lord has moved to the next major step in your life? And he's just waiting for you to follow on.

It has happened to me twice. Both were very frightening times in my life, and the first one was that I had to learn to rest. I was striving in my inner man. And not trusting in His grace.

Then the second occasion I felt isolated because I was being called to a life of greater obedience, and I didn't understand the Lord was leading me to the cross of laying down my life.

Maybe those two things will help. The two things aren't natural for the believer. We weren't born understanding that we can repent and neither are we understanding of the Rest of Faith. Inasmuch as to cease from our inner striving and to yield to the finished work of Christ.

Re: , on: 2016/10/1 6:42

Thanks for the comments.. I have had some major events that has impacted me greatly over the past 2 years. It's upset my belief and faith.

Re: Hebrews 6 - posted by savannah, on: 2016/10/1 8:40

reformer,

Did you forget this!...from your profile signature...

"It is not your hold of Christ that saves you, but his hold of you!" Charles Spurgeon

Also,

"I was talking to God this morning. I gave Him over 100 reasons why He shouldn't love me. But I wasn't able to convince Him."

"He said", "I have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore I have continued my faithfulness to you."

"Can anyone explain Hebrews 6?", you ask!

Hebrews chapter 6 Verses 4-12

(4) For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, (5) And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, (6) If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame. (7) For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for the man by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God: (8) But that which beareth thorns and briars is rejected, and is brought unto cursing; whose end is to be burned. (9) But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak. (10) For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labor of love, which ye have showed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister. (11) And we desire that everyone of you do show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end: (12) That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

In the opening of this paragraph, we have those memorable verses of scripture, which, for want of due attention to divine teaching, by the perversion of some, and the mistaken apprehension of others, have given rise, to much anxiety, in weak minds, through the slenderness of their faith. There can be no doubt, but that God the Holy Ghost is drawing the portrait of finished hypocrites; for there is not a single feature, in the whole of what is represented, of those falling away, which belongs to a child of God. The persons here described, under such a flaming profession, never were in grace; and therefore impossible to have fallen from grace. They fell from a profession only, and as such, it became impossible to renew them again to repentance. As the subject in itself is so highly important, and as a right apprehension of the Lord's words, is so truly interesting to every regenerated child of God, and, especially, the weak in faith, I shall hope the Reader's indulgence, if I enter upon the whole of it, very particularly. For my own part, I am very fully convinced, that the passage, hath not one reference whatever to the Church of God: that the Lord the Holy Ghost is speaking of hypocrites, and the unregenerate only; and that the whole subject, if duly considered, is calculated more to comfort, than to distress the Lord's people. May God the Spirit, the blessed Author of his holy word, be our Teacher in it, and guide both Writer and Reader of this Poor Man's Commentary, into all truth.

And here I beg the Reader, again to remark, what I have so often observed to him, in the course of this little work; that G

od the Holy Ghost is writing this whole Epistle to the Church; to them who are the heirs of salvation. This is a great point always to have in view, and to keep in remembrance, as we prosecute every part of this Epistle. See Heb 1: Hebrews 1: 2-3; Heb_1:9; Heb_1:14.

Let me next desire the Reader, to look back to the concluding verses of the preceding Chapter, where he expressly speaketh to the Church, as being in grace, though weak in the faith. The Lord tells them, that when for a time they ought to have been teachers, they were so weak in faith, and their progress in the divine life, had been so inconsiderable, that they need, like little children, to go over their first lessons again. See Hebrews 5:12 to the end. And hence, the Lord opens this Chapter, with bidding them to leave the first principles of doctrine, and go on to perfection, namely, to Christ himself, Hebrews 6:1. Now let the Reader pause, and ask himself, whether the very expressions, which the Lord the Holy Ghost here useth, towards the Church, do not very, fully prove, that they were in grace, though in a low and languishing condition? How could they be said, that for the time they ought to have been teachers, if they themselves had never learnt? How could even milk suit them, if they were dead in trespasses and sins? Mark these things as proofs, from the Lord the Spirit himself, that the persons to whom he wrote were considered by him as regenerate.

Thirdly. Let the Reader further observe in this paragraph that while the Lord is speaking of the impossibility to renew hypocrites, who made a flaming profession of godliness, but never had felt the power of it; the Lord at the same time is speaking to the Church, and calling them beloved, concerning whom he was persuaded better things, and things which accompany salvation; that they had ministered to the saints their labor of love, and that they were still ministering; and that God would not forget it! And hence, having before called upon them, to forget first principles, and go on to Christ; they would now shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end: and no longer be slothful, but followers of them, who through faith and patience inherit the promises. And in a following chapter, the Lord bids them, to call their former days to remembrance, in which, after they were illuminated, they endured a great fight of affliction. And therefore, as they knew in themselves, that they had in heaven a better, and an enduring substance, they should not cast away the confidence, which hath great recompence of reward, Hebrews 10:32-35.

Let the Reader ponder well, these features of character in the Church, to whom God the Holy Ghost sends this Epistle; and mark in them, the clear testimonies which they carry with them, of being in a state of regeneration. And when he hath duly considered this point, I will next request him to attend to the several outlines, which the same Almighty Lord hath drawn of those unregenerate, concerning whom he speaks in those verses. Let us look at them one by one.

And first. They are said to have been once enlightened. By which I apprehend is meant, an enlightening in head-knowledge. And it is astonishing to conceive to what lengths men, who have been accustomed to sit under the sound of the Gospel may go, in this way, without possessing an atom of saving grace. But the doctrine of Christ, in insisting on the new birth, throws to the ground all, and every pretension short of this, John 3:7. It is with the heart, man believeth unto righteousness, Romans 10:10. If head-knowledge would make wise unto salvation, the devil himself would be in a salvable state; for he told Christ, he knew him, Mark 1:24. I presume no one will venture to call this enlightening, a mark of regeneration.

Secondly. They are said to have tasted of the heavenly gift. Yes, Christ is the heavenly gift, in the Gospel sent down from heaven. And these hypocrites had so far tasted it, as to dislike it. Redemption by Christ's blood, and righteousness alone: no Pharisee will relish, but, like children, which nauseate medicine, though it tendeth to heal, yet spit it out of their mouth. Here again, we find no mark of real grace.

Thirdly. They are said to be made partakers of the Holy Ghost. This, in the first view, carries with it somewhat more plausible; but when looked into, is but seemingly so, for it hath no more of real saving grace, than the former. everyone may, in one sense, be said, to be made partakers of the Holy Ghost, who is brought under the preaching of the Gospel, and partakes in the ordinances and means of grace. They whose carcasses fell in the wilderness, as well as the faithful, whom the Lord brought into Canaan were all alike partakers of the Manna, and drank of the Rock, and had the carnal ordinances of the worldly sanctuary, Hebrews 9:1. But, none except the chosen seed, eyed Christ in all. Nay, further, some there have been in all ages of the Church, which may be said to have been made partakers of the Holy Ghost, in his outward gifts of working miracles; and who yet, were never partakers of the Holy Ghost, in his inward regenerating grace. The magicians in the court of Pharaoh, to a certain degree, were permitted to exercise power; and Judas in the college of Apostles, without all doubt, had the same faculty, in outward acts with them, Luke 9:1. But in the midst of these, there was no inward work of God the Spirit on either; and the new-birth is the only infallible character.

Fourthly. Those persons are said, to have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the world to come. Not drank into the spirit of those precious things; not relished them. The Holy Ghost dwells particularly on tasting, as if to shew their

aversion. They tasted of the good word of God, so as to manifest their more deadly hatred to it; and they heard enough of the powers of the world to come, as in their consciences to believe there is an hereafter, in which it will be well with the righteous, and ill with the wicked; but, like Balaam, though sufficiently convinced of those solemn truths, as now and then to send forth the wish to die the death of the righteous, yet never awakened by grace to live their life, Numbers 23:10.

Reader! pause over those portraits of character, for they are truly awful, and perhaps much more general than is imagined. But what hath the child of God to do with such things, in whose spirit the Holy Spirit heareth witness that he is born of God? They are indeed very awful monuments for the children of God to contemplate, as they pass on their pilgrimages. We behold in them to what an height of elevation nature may go in a way of resembling grace. And they ought to serve, as no doubt God the Holy Ghost intended them to serve, to make the regenerated the more awakened, to leave the first principles of the doctrines, and press on after Christ. But while such clear marks are discoverable between nature and grace, surely the children of God ought not to confound one with the other. To be led into the conclusion, that there may be a falling from grace, because men who never were in grace, have for a while taken up with a profession, and then dropped it, is forming conclusions from false premises. Nature, in her highest attainments, is but nature. Nothing can rise above its level. It is very possible, that by hearing sermons, attending the means of grace, and the like, the understanding may be much enlightened. The young man in the Gospel, who came to Christ, at first, seemed to look fair for heaven. Paul, the Apostle, while a Pharisee, thought himself not far from glory. But in both, at the time, there was not a single act of renewing grace wrought in their heart. The unregenerate mind is still carnal, and enmity against God. The tiger, though chained, is the tiger still. Nothing short of the new-birth is grace. Where this is, it is impossible to fall away, for the Scripture saith, that the highly beloved objects are made partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust, 2 Peter 1:3-4. Where this is not, the most flaming profession will go out in obscure darkness. They have the form, but not the power of godliness, 2 Timothy 3:5.

Before I dismiss this view of the subject, I would add one observation more, by way of confirming what hath been said, namely, that in all that is said of those hypocrites, there is not a single circumstance, even hinted at, of those precious fruits and effects being found in them, which arise from grace in the heart, and where a saving act of regeneration hath passed upon the soul. In this whole account of being enlightened, and having tasted of the heavenly gift, we read nothing of faith, or love, an adherence to Jesus, or affection to his people; not a word of an holy life and conversation, all which are the sure consequences of the new-birth. But, all that is said from beginning to end is no more than what may be said of mere professors only, who are like clouds without water, carried about with mere wind of doctrine; who, though they have a name to live, are virtually dead before God.

Hence, as is here said, if they fall away from, this profession, and openly deny it, and (as hath been seen in many instances,) after having put on a sanctity of appearance, and by restraints induced by the fear or praise of men, have for a while seemingly escaped the pollution which is in the world through lust, at length return, like a dog to his vomit, and as the sow that was washed, to her wallowing in the mire; they only manifest that all that was before seen of them, was but the efforts of nature, not grace. And how shall they be rendered again to the same profession? The thing is impossible. They may indeed, like Judas, repent themselves, and do as he did, hang themselves; but the Lord will not grant to them his grace of repentance, in the regeneration of the heart. And for this plain reason. They do in effect, by their denial of that faith they once owned in head, though felt it not in heart, crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame. For as, when the Gospel of Christ was preached, and made known to them, that is, when they were once enlightened with the head knowledge, that the Son of God had been crucified for his people; and their sense and understanding, though not their affections, were gained to the acknowledgment of those glorious truths, connected with Christ and his great salvation; they professed to receive them, and believe them; but now by their apostacy from the truth, as it is in Jesus, they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, either by denying his Godhead as the Son of God, or that his offering on the cross was not a sufficient sacrifice for the redemption of his people; that he hath not risen from the dead; salvation is not finished, and somewhat more is needed for justification before God in either, or all of these, or the like objections, this is to crucify the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame. And utterly impossible is it, in such cases, to renew such men to repentance. I beg the Reader to mark the expression, they crucify to themselves. Yes! in their apostacy and denial they fully prove Christ was never crucified for them; for they have no part, nor lot in the one all-sufficient sacrifice of Christ upon the cross; and therefore they insult the soul-travail and agonies which Christ sustained by the ir despising the efficacy of his blood. Such become hardened in iniquity, and their last end is worse than the first.

The figure of the earth drinking in the rain, is a beautiful similitude in a way of further illustration. For, as the rain falls alike on the earth, both where the pure herbs are, and where the thorns are; so the dew of the Gospel descends upon the whole visible Church, both real and nominal. But while the regenerated, under the genial influence, bring forth to the glory of God; the mere professor only sends forth nothing but the rank weeds and briars of the state of nature, unredeemed from the curse, and whose end is to be burned.

And the next verse, wherein the Apostle calls the Church beloved, and declares his persuasion of better things concerning the members of it, is so utterly opposed to what went before, as can hardly be reconciled, upon any other idea, than that the Holy Ghost intended the whole representation he hath here made of such flaming profession void of all vital godliness, but as a matter of comfort to the Lord's people under all their short comings and attainments. For, slender as their growth had been, yet they had truly been regenerated. Babes as they still were, yet this argued the new-birth. So that there is, and ever must be, an everlasting difference between the falling away of professors, who never were in grace, and those whom the Lord hath quickened. For while the child of God, when born of that incorruptible seed which liveth and abideth forever, (and must so live and abide forever, however dormant to our view, the spiritual seed sometimes appears, because it remaineth in him, 1 Peter 1:23; 1 John 3:9) hath a renewed nature, the Scriptures nowhere speak of mere professors, amidst all the high elevations of nature, as being born again. The stony ground hearers receive the word with great joy, but no fruit followed, because they had no root. And when those flashes of joy subsided, they soon died away. Hence the Prophet speaks, There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days, for the child (regenerated) shall die an hundred years old; but the sinner, being an hundred years old (yet unregenerated) shall be accursed, Isaiah 65:20.

Such, then, according to my view of this blessed Scripture, appears to be the doctrine contained in it. The Holy Ghost is writing to the Church, considered in a state of regeneration; not unsimilar to the same purport as when writing to the Corinthians; babes in Christ, but yet too much occupied in worldly things, and of consequence, making slow progress in spiritual attainments, 1 Corinthians 3:1-2. He tells them, in opening his Epistle, in confirmation of their new birth, and justification in Christ, that Christ had by himself purged their sins; and that they were heirs of salvation, Hebrews 1:3; Heb_1:14, that Christ had not taken the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham, on their account; and that, having himself suffered, being tempted; he knew how to succor them that were tempted, Hebrews 2:14; Heb_2:18, that they were partakers of Christ, as a rich blessing not to be lost, and therefore were to hold fast their confidence of hope firm to the end, Hebrews 3:14. And that having such an High Priest as the Son of God, passed into the heavens, they were to come boldly to the throne of grace, and obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need, Hebrews 4:14-16. These, and the like things, they had been assured of in the preceding chapters; and in this the Lord tells them, that now they ought to go on to perfection, because they might, according to the time they had been in grace, have been teachers; which is a plain proof that they had not only been taught of God, and consequently regenerated; but that they had been a long time in a state of conversion. So that as the Holy Ghost, by the Apostle, in the close of this account blessedly saith, when he called them also beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, (than of those Apostates,) and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak: that is though we thus speak of your slow progress in the divine life. And the Lord adds that God's faithfulness and love are engaged to them, for they had ministered and still did minister to the saints of God, as saints of God. An account of which we have, Hebrews 10:32 to end, and which is spoken as the effect of their early days conversion. I beg the Reader to turn to that Chapter, in proof. So that upon the whole, however low the waters of the sanctuary then ran to their view, for their comfort, yet they were in grace, and the Lord considered them as such, and charged them to be no longer slothful, but followers of them, who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

And now, my brother, in summing up the whole, I commend you to the grace of God, wherein (if in regeneration) you stand, that you may rejoice in hope of the glory of God. Painful and humbling as it is to a child of God, to feel such continual deadness of soul, such coldness of affection, the little growth in grace, yea, as it sometimes appears to you, rather growing imperfections, and under which you groan continually; nevertheless, these all differ from professing hypocrites. Such never groan, for they never felt the plague of their own heart, neither entered in by the door into the sheepfold, John 10:1. And, therefore, when at any time you behold such meteors in the professing Church, and see the blaze of their supposed gifts and talents, either as preachers or hearers, and then are tempted to draw conclusions unfavorable to yourself, from your long knowledge of the Lord, and your short comings; call to remembrance what God the Holy Ghost hath here taught, and wait and see the end of those men. Oh! how suddenly do they consume, perish, and come to a fearful end! But the salvation of the righteous is of the Lord; he is their strength in time of trouble. And the Lord shall help them and deliver them: he shall deliver them from the wicked, and save them, because they trust in him, Psalms 37:39-40.

By Robert Hawker