

# It is Impossible to Renew Them

by Anton Bosch

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*This sermon delves into Hebrews chapter 6, focusing on the impossibility of renewing those who have fallen away to repentance, as they crucify Christ afresh. The passage emphasizes the need for genuine repentance initiated by the Holy Spirit and the danger of rejecting God's grace. It warns against producing thorns and briars instead of good fruit, highlighting the consequences of being rejected and facing judgment.*

**Scripture:** Hebrews 6:4, Hebrews 6:7, John 6:44, Galatians 5:22, Hebrews 10:26, Galatians 6:6, Revelation 20:15, Genesis 6:3

**Topics:** "Genuine Repentance", "Consequences of Rejection"

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## Description

This sermon delves into Hebrews chapter 6, focusing on the impossibility of renewing those who have fallen away to repentance, as they crucify Christ afresh. The passage emphasizes the need for genuine repentance initiated by the Holy Spirit and the danger of rejecting God's grace. It warns against producing thorns and briars instead of good fruit, highlighting the consequences of being rejected and facing judgment.

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## Transcript

Hebrews chapter 6, and let's read verses 1 through 12. Hebrews chapter 6, reading verses 1 through 12. Therefore, leaving the discussion of the elementary principles of Christ, let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, of the doctrine of baptisms, of laying on of hands, of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.

And this we will do if God permits. For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened to have tasted the heavenly gift and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance, since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God and put Him to an open shame. For the earth which drinks in the rain that often comes upon it and bears herbs useful for those by whom it is cultivated, receives blessing from God.

But if it bears thorns and briars, it is rejected and near being cursed, whose end is to be burnt. But, beloved, we are confident of better things concerning you, yes, things that accompany salvation, though we speak in this manner. For God is not unjust to forget your work and labor of love which you have shown toward His name, in that you have ministered to the saints and do minister.

And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope until the end, that you do not become sluggish, but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises. And so we looked last week at verse 4 and 5. Verse 4 speaks about the fact that it is impossible for those, if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance. And then he gives us five things, five qualities, that define that these people were actually saved.

They were enlightened, they've tasted the heavenly gift, they've become partakers of the Holy Spirit, and verse 5, they've tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come. So they are definitely saved. But then it says, if they fall away.

So falling away simply means to fall away. And he says it's to renew them again to repentance, says that they're not where they used to be, they've fallen away, they now need to be renewed again. So the idea that they were either never saved, is not supported by the passage, or the idea that they may have been saved but didn't really fall away is also a contradiction of the verse, which is very specific.

So we're not going to go through all of that again, and for those who weren't here or watching online and didn't get that, it is online, it is on YouTube, and you can watch it there also on Facebook. So why is it impossible? Because he uses this very, very strong word, it is impossible. It's not like it is hard, but it is impossible, and the word impossible is used several times in the book of Hebrews concerning God, that there are certain things that are impossible with God, it's impossible for God to lie.

And so why is it impossible to bring them back? Well, the first thing is if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance. So we have to talk about the process of repentance, because clearly the idea of repenting means that they've fallen away, now they need to turn around, they need to come back. But how does repentance happen? Repentance does not happen on our own terms.

Repentance happens based on the work of the Holy Spirit within our lives. And so John chapter 6 verse 44, Jesus says, No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him, and I will raise him up on the last day. So here he's speaking about the people who are unsaved, and he says unbelievers cannot come to God unless, or unto Jesus, unless the Father draws them.

So the idea that you can just wake up one morning and say, well, now I'm going to become a Christian is not true. While we don't go to the extreme that the Calvinist teaches, that we have absolutely no responsibility in this process, we know we have to respond to God, but God has to initiate the work. It's not up to us, but God initiates the work, and he draws by his Spirit.

Now, if he does not draw, well, then there is no way back to God. Just think of it this way. In order to come to God, there needs to be a desire to come to God.

There needs to be a desire to turn away from the world and to turn to God. If there is no desire, you're not going to do it. If there was no desire in someone to be in the meeting tonight, well, then they're not here.

It's as simple as that. If you have no desire to go to bed tonight, well, you won't go to bed. I guess there are certain things that we do because we have a routine, but basically, you need to want to do something.

The thing is, then, if God doesn't give me the want to, if he doesn't give me the desire, if he does not draw me, then how am I going to go to him as an unbeliever? So, unbelievers are drawn by the Holy Spirit. They're drawn by the Father. In the same way, those who have fallen away, it says they have to be brought back to repentance.

Now, if God is not going to bring them back to repentance, there is no way back. That's the problem. Now, if we look at John 16, verse 8, when he comes, the Holy Spirit, he will convict the world of sin and of righteousness and of judgment.

So, in order to repent, there needs to be a drawing of the Father. There also needs to be a conviction, an awareness of our sin. If there is no awareness of our sin, then there is no need for repentance.

That's why it is hard to preach the gospel in a Western country where everyone believes that they are Christians, because they have no need to be saved, because we're Christian. We were born in America. I was brought up in the church.

I was baptized. I was maybe even confirmed. But of course, you may not be saved.

And so, the need to be saved is not there, because there is no awareness of sin. So, the Holy Spirit needs to convict. If the Holy Spirit does not convict, again, there is no repentance, because there's no need for me to repent.

So, God has to draw me. He has to convict me of my need so that I may come to Him. Now, the problem is that those in the Arminian camp—in other words, those who are not Calvinists—tend to come to the place where they believe that it's really up to me.

I can come back whenever I want to come back. I can repent on my terms. But that is simply not true.

I cannot repent and turn to God on my terms. It has to be on His terms. And way back in Genesis chapter 6, we have this warning before the flood, 120 years before the flood.

The Lord said, My spirit will not strive with man forever, for he indeed is flesh, yet his days shall be 120 years. So, that's referring to the amount of time that the human race had until the flood, and they would be wiped out, except for Noah, of course, and his family. But this statement is still true.

God's Spirit does not always strive with man. God strives—in other words, He deals with us, He draws us, He convicts us—up to a certain point. If we keep resisting the Spirit, the point comes, the time comes when God says, I'm no longer going to convict, I'm no longer going to draw, I've spoken.

And remember, this is true of Israel in a macro, in a bigger sense. In Isaiah chapter 6, the Lord says to Isaiah, Go and tell these people, hearing you will not hear, seeing you will not see, and you will not understand. Why is that? Because God had been pleading with Israel for many, many, many years, through the prophets, through the other prophets, through the good kings like David, and so on.

God had been pleading with Israel, and Israel constantly rejected God. And God comes to the point in Isaiah 6 where He says, they will no longer hear. And Jesus quotes that in the Gospels over and over.

Jesus quotes those verses from Isaiah 6. And remember when they asked Jesus, and they said, well, why do you speak to them in parables? Because the parables mean nothing. He says, because hearing they will not hear, and seeing they will not see. In other words, they cannot understand.

Even if I spoke plainly to them, Jesus is saying, they will still not understand, because God has placed a veil upon their hearts. Remember, that goes right back to Mount Sinai, when they covered the glory of God, as revealed in Moses. The book of Corinthians says God takes that veil, and He places it upon their hearts, so that even to today, and of course, when it says today, at the time when the New Testament was

written, even to today, they do not understand.

When they read the Scriptures, they can't see the truth. So, the principle that God speaks to a certain point, and then stops speaking, is well-established in Scripture. There are many, many, many Scriptures that we can support that with.

So, here's the thing. Here is someone who is saved. They reject God.

They fall away. And we've dealt with that whole mechanics in that process. I'm not going to get into that, otherwise we're going to run out of time again.

Now they're far from God. They have fallen—remember the line we had—they've fallen below the line. They are no longer saved.

Well, the first thing that is necessary for them to get saved again is repentance. But if the Spirit is not convicting them, if the Spirit is not drawing them, there is no way back. And this is one of the ways that we know that someone has fallen away, is that there is no conviction of sin.

There is no desire for the things of God. And so, many times people come to me and to other pastors—this is a question people always ask—is, did I commit the unpardonable sin? Am I so far gone that there is no way back? Well, the answer is that if you're worried about it, then the chances are that there's still hope. Because if you were beyond grace, there would be no concern.

You would not be worried about it. You would be dead, cold to the things of God. You would carry on and live your life in the world.

But the fact that people are concerned about it means that God is still drawing them. And so, there is still hope for them. Of course, one of the questions that came up during the week on the internet, and that's a question that is asked often, is, well, what about this situation? And I'm just digressing for a moment.

What about this situation? Here's this man. This is what happened to him. This is what he did.

Is there still hope for him? Well, I cannot say there is or there is not. It's not my call. That is God's call.

God alone knows whether there is hope for someone. And we may have loved ones. We may have children or family members that are in that situation.

At no stage can we really say there is no hope. And for that reason, we must continue to pray that God would draw them, that God would give them another chance. Those who used to sit in these pews and have gone back into the world, and some of them in the most terrible ways.

And we look at them and we say, well, there's no hope for this person. We must still pray, because God alone knows whether he has withdrawn his spirit from that individual, from that person or not. And so, this is the first problem.

If God is no longer drawing, if God is no longer convicting, well, then there is no way of repentance. Now, if we go back to the verse, he says, it is impossible to renew them if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance. And here's the second reason.

Since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God and put him to an open shame. So, even if they were being, they were drawn, which obviously is a contradiction, because God wouldn't draw someone if he was not able to still save them. But he is saying that they will not be, they are not drawn.

But now he is saying, even if they were drawn, there is no way back. And now we have to take a step back. And you remember that when we spoke at the beginning of Hebrews 6, a long time ago now, the principle or the basis on which we are born again, we dealt with this when we dealt with baptism.

So, if we go to Romans chapter 6, and in fact, let me turn there, because I think I only have two verses on the screen. I only have one verse on the screen. I want you to just look at the text a bit more.

So, Romans chapter 6, verse 3, do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? So, remember, this is not talking about a water baptism. This is talking about being placed in Christ. So, we are immersed into Christ, we're immersed into his death.

So, we were made partakers of his death. Therefore, we were buried with him through baptism into death, through immersion into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in unison life. For if we have been united together in the likeness of his death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of his resurrection, knowing this, that our old man was crucified with him, that the body of sin might be done away with, and that we should no longer be slaves of sin.

For he who has died has been freed from sin. Now, if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him. So, remember, the process of getting born again is that you can't have two lives, because I think this is a concept that many people in the evangelical world just don't understand.

So, the general idea is, and it's just because people haven't thought it through, but the general idea is that I have my life, my old life. Now I get born again. Now I have a spiritual life.

But in fact, what Paul is saying in Romans is, no, it doesn't work that way. The old man has to die. The old life dies with Christ, and the new man is raised with Christ.

And it's on that basis that he says in Corinthians, the old things are passed away. All things have become new. So, in order for me to be saved, I need to have died with Christ at Calvary.

Obviously, in God's thinking, because God is outside of time. And I'm raised a new creature, a new creation. This cannot happen on its own.

In other words, I can't just die and be raised to newness of life. It can only happen because I've been placed inside—remember the word baptized there—immersed. And so, when Jesus died, all of us were in Him when He died.

So, God places us in Him. And of course, we say, well, that's hard to understand. Well, it is hard to understand, because God is greater than just rational things, in a sense.

And I'm not saying it's irrational, but we're placed in Christ. And so, when He dies, we die. When Christ is raised in newness of life or raised on the third day, we are raised with Him.

That's what Paul is saying in Romans. So now, for me—not for me, but for someone who has fallen away, how do they get saved again? Because if they've fallen away, they're no longer saved. So, they have to be saved again.

How can they be saved again? The only way they can be saved is to die with Christ and to be raised with Christ. The problem is that bus is gone. Christ cannot die again.

And that's the point that he is making here. So, in order for me or for someone to get back—sorry, let me get back to verse 6. So, someone to come back to God, having fallen away, they need to be saved again. In order for them to be saved again, Christ has to die a second time, and that cannot happen.

That is impossible. And you remember that there's this picture of this very clearly in the Old Testament, as Moses is instructed to strike the rock, and water came out of the rock. And 1 Corinthians chapter 10 tells us that rock is Christ.

And so, Moses is told, hit the rock, water comes out. Then sometime later, God says to Moses, speak to the rock. But Moses is angry, because the people had provoked him.

And so, what does Moses do? He strikes the rock a second time. Now, remember, the rock is Christ. And it says specifically, it's not just a picture, but the rock is Christ.

So, when he hits the rock the first time, and living water comes forth, it's a picture of the cross, where Jesus was smitten for us. And out of his death comes forth living water, that we might be able to live. Now that he has been struck once, what does Moses do? He strikes him a second time.

And we say, well, that's just a small thing. No, because of what it represents, Moses, the greatest prophet of the Old Testament, according to the Jews, the greatest prophet. And in fact, they're probably—and I agree that he was the greatest prophet.

He gives us the basis of the Old Testament, the first five books. God communicates with him as a friend. He spends 40 days in the mountain, 40 days, 40 nights with God, comes down, another 40 days, 40 nights in the presence of God.

He radiates the glory of God. A man who had walked with God, and had experienced God in a way that nobody else had ever experienced God in the Old Testament. And yet God says, you won't get into the land, because he struck the rock a second time.

Not for any, what we would say, major sin. Not because he killed a man, or because he took another man's wife, or for any gross sin, but simply because he hit the rock the second time. And so, the fact that he hits the rock a second time, obviously is a very, very, very serious thing.

To keep a man who is so righteous, a man who is so much like God in every way, to keep him from the land for that one deed, indicates the seriousness of that deed. And obviously, what he was doing, symbolically, is he was crucifying Christ a second time. Symbolically, crucifying him a second time.

Now, let's apply that to—remember the line. So, once we cross the line, we're saved, and we have these up and down experiences. There are times that we backslide.

There are times we're far away from God. How do we get back to God? How do we get back? And even if we fall into grievous sin, how do we get back to God? Well, remember, to get across the line, Christ had to die, shed his blood. But now that I'm saved, he doesn't have to die for me again.

That's the crime of the Eucharist, that Christ dies over and over and over again. Every time the host is lifted up, Christ dies. Now, he doesn't have to again.

All I have to do is to confess my sins, and he is faithful and just to forgive us. So, he doesn't die every time we sin. We just have to speak to him, and the water that cleanses us comes forth and cleanses us.

And so, the initial washing needs his death. Subsequent cleansing doesn't need his death. We simply need to speak to him.

We need to ask for forgiveness, confess our sins, he cleanses us. And so, you can see how serious this whole process is of trying to crucify Christ a second time, even if it is symbolic. Because I know people will say, well, you know, if someone falls away, Jesus doesn't literally have to die again.

It's just symbolic. Well, it was symbolic for Moses, and Moses was kept from the land. Now, remember, we're not saying Moses wasn't saved.

We know Moses was saved. How do we know he was saved? Because Jesus appears on the Mount of Transfiguration with Moses. So, Moses is saved, but he still cannot enter into the land.

And of course, this was a big thing for him. Remember, the land is a picture of heaven, but that was Moses' whole calling. Moses had lived his entire life, 40 years in Egypt serving Pharaoh, 40 years in the wilderness being trained by God, then another 40 years leading the people of Israel, 120 years.

His whole life is for one purpose, and that is to get Israel into the land. And he can't fulfill his calling because of the seriousness of this. Now, if we go to Hebrews chapter 10, you'll find the same thing again, and I'm not going to go into this in too much detail because we'll eventually get to Hebrews 10.

But notice what he says. If we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins. Now, I don't believe he's speaking here about sinning in the sense of thinking a wrong thought or doing something wrong.

Clearly, what he is speaking about here is what he was speaking about in Hebrews 6, and that is sinning in the sense that I've rejected God, rejected the cross, and I've gone back to the world. The next verse tells us. But a certain fearful expectation... Now, let's go to Hebrews 10, because again, the few verses I have on the screen is not sufficient to get the context.

Let's go back to Hebrews 10 and verse 26. And remember the little word for, if we sin willfully after we've received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful expectation of judgment and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries. So, we'll deal with this when we get here, but when he says, if we sin willfully, in other words, if we make a conscious decision, remember I made that point, a conscious decision to turn against Christ, to turn away from Him, there is no sacrifice for sins.

Now, what sacrifice do I need to be saved? The sacrifice of Jesus. But he's saying, if I've rejected that, there's no more sacrifice. Why? Because Christ cannot be crucified again.

So, you see, he's making the same point. Verse 28, anyone who rejected Moses' law dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. Of how much worse punishment do you suppose will he be thought worthy who has noticed these words, who has trampled the Son of God underfoot? In other words, said Jesus is nothing.

The same way as you would walk on a piece of dirt, you've counted Jesus as dirt, trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing. In other words, said the blood is nothing and insulted the Spirit of grace. What does the Spirit do? Spirit draws, the Spirit convicts, but I insult the Spirit by rejecting him.

Verse 30, for we know him who said, vengeance is mine, I will replace the Lord. And again, the Lord will judge his people. We often quote that verse, vengeance is mine, concerning people who've done wrong to us.

But notice the context in which he is using it here. It's against those who were saved and willfully step on the Son of God and count the blood as nothing and insult the Spirit of grace. Those three things.

And so there is no way back. Even if they want to come back, which I don't believe they will want to come back, there is no way back. So again, verse 6, before we move on, if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance, since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God and put him to an open shame.

All right, now verse 7. Here is another aspect of the problem. And the two verses, verses 7 and 8, are two sides of the coin. The first is in verse 7, the earth, which drinks in the rain that often comes upon it and bears herbs useful for those by whom it is cultivated, receives blessing from God.

Now clearly, he's not speaking about literal soil, about the literal ground. He is speaking about people, because he's just dealt with the fact, he says, if you fall away, it's impossible to come back. Because the earth, so what is the earth? The earth is us.

Remember, Jesus speaks about, and this is in direct connection to the parable of the sower and the soils. The sower goes and he sows the seed. Some seed falls on good ground, some falls on the roadway, some falls on thorny ground, some falls in stony ground.

What is the ground in the parable of the sower? The human heart. The seed is the same, it's the word of God. If it falls in good soil, it produces a crop.

If it falls in bad soil, it does not produce a crop. So the earth is the human heart, which drinks in the rain that often comes upon it. Where does the rain come from? It comes from heaven.

The rain is a picture of God's spirit and God's blessings. So here's a piece of land and the rain falls on it. Somebody is cultivating that piece of land, digging it and planting things, and it produces fruit.

It receives blessing from God. So here's an individual then who receives God's blessing in his life, the rain from heaven, and he produces fruit. Over and over, Jesus speaks about the problem of fruit and fruitlessness and the parable of the sower.

So he produces herbs, fruit, useful for those by whom it is cultivated. Who are those who cultivate the soil? The leaders of the church, apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers. They're working the soil.

Paul said, I have planted another waters, another reaps. And he says, we are workers together with God. So those who are cultivating the soil are the leaders.

As I said, apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers. They are working the land. Now, who receives the harvest? The workers receive the harvest.

So the pastors, the teachers, the elders receive the harvest. And we're not talking about money here. We're talking about the fruit of the spirit.

Love, joy, peace, seeing growth. Paul says, I love nothing more than to see my children prosper, speaking about his spiritual children. So here's a responsibility upon us to produce fruit.

That is a blessing to those who are working the soil of our hearts. Because this is not God, because otherwise he would say, and there's herbs useful for the Lord. But he says, those who cultivate it.

So God gives the rain. And remember, Paul says, one plants, another sows, but God gives the increase. Another waters, but God gives the increase.

God makes it happen. And so God is the one who sends the rain. If you go to Galatians chapter 6, now it's interesting that Galatians 6, this verse follows on Galatians 5. And in Galatians 5, he speaks about two kinds of fruit, the fruit of the spirit, love, joy, peace, goodness, kindness, and so on, and the fruit of the, or the deeds of the flesh.

All those terrible things, those terrible sins. And in the same context, and it would be good for you to go home and to read Galatians 5 and Galatians 6 in the context of what we've said tonight. And you'll see that those two chapters are a parallel to everything that we're dealing with this evening.

And so in chapter 6, verse 6, he then says, let him who has taught the word share in all good things with him who teaches. So the soil that is cultivated produces herbs to bless the ones who are cultivating the soil. Here, Paul is saying exactly the same thing, let him who has taught the word share in all good things with him who teaches.

And this, as I've said, is not money. This is, maybe money is a small part of it, but that's not really what it's about. This is about spiritual blessings, spiritual blessings.

All right, so now, if we go back to Hebrews 6, verse 7, so the earth which drinks in the rain that often comes upon it, so God is faithful, God often gives the rain, and bears herbs useful for those by whom it is cultivated, receives blessing from God. Why do some Christians grow so much faster than others? Because of this principle. Remember, to him who has, more will be given.

To him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away. And so, what is the blessing from God? More rain, more sunshine, which results in more fruit. And so, the more fruit we produce, the more God helps us to produce more fruit.

And that's why some Christians grow exponentially, while others never get anywhere. Now, here's the flip side of the coin in verse 8. But if it bears thorns and briars, it is rejected and near to being cursed, whose end is to be burnt. Remember that part of the curse in the Old Testament, when Adam sinned, was that the earth would produce thorns and briars.

Thorns and briars is the product of sin. The seed of God's Word produces good fruit. God's Word does not produce tares, false seed, false wheat, and God's Word does not produce thorns and briars.

God's Word produces the fruit of the Spirit, Galatians 5. Now, remember what he said in the previous verse. This is the same, the soil is in the same place. It's receiving rain from God, same rain.

But instead of producing herbs, fruit, it's producing thorns and briars. And if you go and look at that list of the deeds of the flesh in Galatians 5, there are things that repulse. Fruit draws.

This time of the year when I drive around this area, there are lots of orange trees, and lots of people don't seem to do anything with them, and they fall down. But I'm attracted to those trees, because there's fruit. But we are not attracted to thorn trees.

On the contrary, what do the thorn trees do? They push us away. And so, what he's saying is that either my life produces that which draws the fruit of the Spirit, or that which repulses the thorns and the briars. Envy, hate, division, strife, bitterness, wrath, all these things push people away.

I know the world thrives on those things, and somebody prayed or spoke on that earlier in the meeting. The world is filled with hate and anger and it seems to be what the world runs on these days. And unfortunately, many Christians are brought into that mindset.

But folks, the question is simply, what is my life producing? What he doesn't deal with here is that there's a possibility of producing nothing, because we see that in the Gospels very clearly. There's a possibility that I may be producing good fruit, but there's also a possibility that I'm producing thorns and thistles and briars, weeds, things that have no value other than to push people away. And unfortunately, many people are being pushed away from the Gospel today, because the church is producing thorns and briars.

Now, here's the thing. If it does not produce good fruit that produces thorns and briars, it is rejected. It's a very, very strong word.

Rejected by who? Rejected by God. It is rejected by God and is near being cursed. Remember Adam and Eve.

God says, cursed is the ground for your sake. God doesn't curse Adam. He curses the ground.

And so, the ground is cursed, because it does not naturally produce fruit trees and wheat and maize. It naturally produces weeds. Well, here in Southern California, rocks.

But you cannot buy a piece of land, doesn't matter whether it's in California or in Florida or wherever in the world, and just say, well, there's a piece of land. Now, next year I'm going to come back and there's going to be maize and wheat and oranges and peaches and apples. In fact, on the contrary, you can have a perfectly good piece of land and you can plow it and get rid of all the weeds, and you just leave it alone.

You come back the next year, there's going to be nothing but thorns and briars, nothing but weeds. And so, the question is, what is my life producing? Is it producing thorns and briars? And so, it is near being cursed. And so, the fact that soil naturally produces weeds is a sign of the curse.

But now he's saying it's cursed to the extent that it cannot be it cannot be saved. There are pieces of land, sometimes, the land on which the house is built, I think seriously is cursed, not in a spiritual sense. But nothing will grow in it.

Not even California natives will grow in it. It is dead. It is good for nothing.

Believe me, I've tried for 13 years to grow all sorts of things, put thousands of dollars of plants in, but nothing will grow, or just about nothing. What do you do with a piece of land like that? Just have to throw it away. Maybe if you burn it, you can burn the weeds and maybe turn it around.

But of course, he's now not speaking about a piece of land, he's talking about people, Christians. Who are producing thorns and briars instead of fruit, and they are rejected, and there's end, whose end is to be burnt. And of course, you don't need to be a Bible expositor to understand what that refers to.

It simply refers to hell. So, remember the point then is that what he is saying is that it's impossible for those who are saved if they fall away to bring them back to repentance. And then he uses this illustration to show the state of heart of someone who is beyond salvation.

Now, the sad thing is there are many Christians who are still saved who tend to be producing bad fruit. And of course, we need to repent of that. But someone who has gone beyond the pale, someone who has gone beyond salvation, all their lives will produce is wickedness, thorns, briars, weeds.

And that is simply evidence of the fact that they are rejected. Evidence of the fact that they are no longer saved. Because remember, the fruit is what proves the tree.

And when you get to the book of Revelation, remember, the books are opened. And if your name is not found in the book of life, then he looks and he says, adulterous, drunkards, liars. What are those things? They are evidence of the fact that these people are not born again.

Now, that's a whole other story and we run out of time. So, it is impossible. There is no way back.

And of course, the whole point of the book of Hebrews is there are these people who came out of Judaism and who served the Lord, and are now saying, no, we want to go back. And it's one warning after the other, saying, don't go there. Because this is not like buying a car.

And you say, well, I made a mistake, so I'll trade it in, I'll buy another one. You get one shot at this. That's really the point he's making.

Now, he'll go on and we'll see this next week. He says, I'm confident of better things of you. In other words, he says, while I'm afraid that this is where you're at, he says, I know that you're better than this.

And he then appeals to the better side of their nature to come back. Father, we thank you for your word. Lord, these warnings are serious and they are uncomfortable.

Lord, and it's for that reason that many try and change them into what they don't say and what they don't mean. Help us, Lord, to take your word at face value, to believe it as it is. And Lord, to take these warnings seriously.

Lord, while we look at ourselves and we say, well, I will never get there, we know that there are many who are far from you, who've been rejected and are near being cursed, and whose end is to be burnt today, who also said we will never go there. And yet they did. And so, Lord, help us to stay close to you.

Help us to stay as far away from the world and the flesh and the things that would draw us away from Christ. Help us, Lord, to be in the place where we ought to be, that we might be safe, that we may find that shelter in that rock, which is higher than us. And so, Lord, I pray that you'd help us to understand.

I pray, Lord, for those who may be here, those who may be watching online, who may be concerned and fearful. I pray, Lord, that we would not be afraid when we have no reason to be afraid. But Lord, if we are sensing your spirit speaking to us and warning us that we're getting close to the edge, Lord, that we may turn away from that edge, Lord, that we may stand in a place where we are safe and we are secure in the

Lord Jesus.

Lord, I remember even this week as that small group of young people fell down that cliff at Palos Verdes because they got too close to the edge. They thought they were safe and they went over and died. Lord, I pray that you'd help us to stay away, not to play with our salvation, not to mess with the spirit of grace, but Lord, to cherish every moment that we have in your presence.

And Lord, that we may walk worthy of the salvation that you've saved us with. And so, Lord, we pray that this may be real in Jesus' name. I pray that you'd go with us and keep us, protect us, bring us together again safely on Sunday, we pray in Jesus' name.

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