

# Hebrews 5;13-16 Missionary Conf.

by J.M. Davies

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*The sermon emphasizes the necessity for Christians to grow in spiritual maturity and move beyond basic teachings to understand deeper truths of faith.*

**Duration:** 48:27

**Scripture:** Galatians 4:8-10, Hebrews 5:4-6, Hebrews 5:11-12, Hebrews 6

**Topics:** "Conference"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker divides the portion of scripture into seven sections. The first section, verses 11 and 12, contains a sharp rebuke for the listeners who are described as dull of hearing. The speaker draws a parallel between the spiritual condition of the Galatian Christians and the people mentioned in the verses. The Galatians had been delivered from idolatry but were now falling into legalism. The speaker emphasizes that the position of believers is not just about personal growth, but it is a position of grace that God has brought them into through the redemptive work of Jesus Christ. The sermon also includes an exhortation to leave behind the basic teachings of Christ and strive for maturity.

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## Transcript

Nice to be back after many years. I was back after 1919, though. Back here in 1935, 36, and also in 1949.

I want you to turn with me, please, to the epistle to the Hebrews, chapter 5. We'll begin with verse 11. If the Lord helps, I would like to continue with you and consider the whole of this portion, which is somewhat of a diversion, somewhat of a parenthesis, coming in between verse 10 of chapter 5 and the first verse of chapter 7. We're all accustomed to detours when we drive through the country. Well, this is the longest detour that you have in the epistle.

There are several of them. The first is in chapter 2, verses 1 to 4, and then a fairly long one in chapter 3, verse 6 to chapter 4, verse 13, and then this one from verse 11 of chapter 5 to the end of chapter 6. He mentions Melchizedek in chapter 5, verse 10, called of God and high priest after the order of Melchizedek. But before he goes on to speak of Melchizedek, he has a great many other things to say by way of this diversion, this parenthesis, and he comes back to talk about Melchizedek in chapter 7, verse 1. And the whole of chapter 7, he's taken up with the discussion and teaching relative to the Melchizedek priesthood of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Now, in order to get the background of what we have got here or something similar to it, keep your finger there and turn to the epistle to the Galatians for a moment. The epistle to the Galatians, chapter 4, verse 1. Now I say that the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all, but is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father. Even so, we, that is referring specially to the Jews, to Israelites, when we were children were under bondage under the elements of the world.

But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his son made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the spirit of his son into your hearts, crying, Abba, father. Therefore thou art no more a servant, but a son.

And if a son, then an heir of God through Christ. Verse 8. How be it then, when ye knew not God, ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods? Or are no gods, as Deuteronomy puts it. But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire not again to be in bondage? For these were not Jews, these were Gentiles.

And they were not becoming again, coming again into that bondage, but they were putting themselves for the first time, having been delivered from idolatry, which he speaks of in verse 8. You did service to them who are no gods. But now you've been brought to a knowledge of God. And now you're going to put yourself again into bondage unto the weak and beggarly elements.

You observe days, and months, and times, and years. I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labor in vain. Now look at Hebrews chapter 5. This portion that we are set out to consider, I find it easy to divide it, easy to consider it, if we divide it into seven sections.

Verses 11 and 12, they bring before us a very sharp rebuke, of whom we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, hard to be explained, seeing ye are dull of hearing. For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again, which be the first principles of the oracles of God, and are become such as of need of milk, and not of strong meat. Now it's because of those last words that I've read with you that portion in Galatians chapter 4. Because of the similarity between the spiritual condition of the Galatian Christians, and the spiritual condition of the people referred to in these verses.

The people referred to in the epistle to the Galatians had been Gentiles, they had been delivered from slavery to idolatry, but now they were putting themselves under the bondage of legalism, observing days and months and years. They were putting themselves back into the spiritual condition that the Jews were under when they were under the law. Into that spiritual condition of immaturity, of childhood.

The heir, as long as he's a child, differs nothing from a servant, even though he be lord of all. Now he says here, rebuking the people to whom he's addressing the letter, and we want to be clear of our pronouns in our study of this section. We'll not be able to get at the meaning of this difficult portion, unless we are careful to distinguish between those that are referred to in the various pronouns.

I'm sorry if that sounds as if we're having a little grammar lesson, but after all, we have to remember even such things as grammar sometimes in the reading of the word of God. You'll notice the apostle says, of whom we have many things to say and to use. Now there, clearly, the we refers to those who are associated in the writing of the letter.

We have many things to say. It's the editorial we, if you like. Now when you come into the us of verse 6, chapter 6, verse 1, let us go on to perfection, there he links with himself those who are addressed as the you of verse 11.

The writers and the recipients of the letter are both included in that. We'll find them together again in verse 18 of chapter 6. Look at chapter 6 and verse 18. That by two immutable things in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before.

Now the we there is definitely qualified and explained by the words, we who have fled for refuge. It's not we the writer, but we who have fled for refuge. That includes the readers and includes the writers.

And they're the ones that are specially drawn, referred to in verse 1 of chapter 6. Let us go on unto perfection. Now verses 11 and 12 then are a very sharp rebuke. Here were people who should have been teachers of the word of God.

But instead they were still in the first grade. They were still having to learn their alphabets when they should have been teaching others. Now it's very sad when Christians make no progress.

One of the saddest things that I think experiences I have is after many years of wait, they come back and find Christians who have made very little if any progress at all. And in fact if they've made no progress, they've re-progressed. Life is never static.

It never stays the same. We must either go forward or go back. And there are a large number in the assemblies today who should long ago have been teachers of the word of God.

But they've made no progress. They haven't gone on with the reading and the study of the scriptures. And the apostle rebukes those to whom he is writing.

And they, of course, are Christians. Undoubtedly, those referred to in this portion as ye and you and the us, they are Christians. He tells us in verse 9, for instance, of chapter 6, We are persuaded better things of you, things that accompany salvation.

He's persuaded that the people who are the recipients of the letter are real believers. They are possessed of things which really accompany salvation. Now because I'm drawing attention to these pronouns, I must refer in that connection to the different one in verse 4. For it is impossible for those.

Now here we have a different group altogether. Here is a company that is very different to the you of verse 9. Very different to the us of verse 1. Here is a company that stands apart. They are spoken of as those, not an individual, but a company of people.

Let us be clear with regard to that for the moment. But here is the rebuke. The rebuke given to those to whom he specially sends the letter that they have not made progress.

And he said, I can't teach you because... He said, I'd like to teach you about Melchizedek. You know, it's not so easy to teach about Melchizedek. You know, an afternoon meeting, especially if you've had more than one piece of pie, may not be the best time to speak on a subject like this.

People get dull of hearing in more ways than one. They get dull of hearing because it gets a little warm, and they begin to agree with everything the preacher says. You know, I don't expect any of you to be

doing that this afternoon, but I'm warning you beforehand as to the possibility, because of the warm weather and maybe the very good dinner the friends provided.

But when people get spiritually dull of hearing, it's very hard to teach the Scriptures to them. People come along and say, brother, that's too deep. That's too deep.

We want just a simple gospel. Now, you hear that very often. And what you've been trying to give is fairly simple.

And yet they say, brother, that's very deep. Very deep. Well, I hope it won't be muddy anyhow.

I hope if the water is deep, it will be clear. Because it's easy to mistake a muddy river for being deep when after all it's very shallow. Now, here the apostle warns them, he said, I've not been able to teach you about Melchizedek.

And I suppose very few of us could be asked a question about Melchizedek today that would be satisfactorily answered. What's the difference between the Melchizedek priesthood and the Aaronic priesthood? Very interesting subject, that in itself. But then he comes to verses 13 and 14.

Here we have an analogy between nature and grace. For everyone that uses milk, you have become, he says, I didn't read that in verse 12, you have become such as of need of milk and not of strong meat. Here it's not the child in first grade, still there.

But here is somebody who should have grown to maturity and still a babe. Still wanting nothing but milk. Well, a normal babe, of course, he thrives on milk.

They are the normal babes of Peter. As newborn babes desire the sincere milk of the world. It's lovely to have a young Christian really drinking in the milk of the world.

But in the Corinthian epistle you have got the retarded children. I have not spoken unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. They were not newborn babes, they were retarded children.

They weren't making any progress there because of their Corinthian carnality and their sectarian strength. But here are babes, too. You have become such as of need of milk.

You have become that. They had such a lot of difficulties with their stomachs as it were, and their digestive organs, that now they are back on a milk diet. Like some people when they get a little old, well, they have got to get a milk diet.

Can't take anything unless they take some Alka-Seltzer or something afterwards. Now, here is a group there. They have become such as of need of milk.

There was a time when they could have taken something else, but they have gone back. They have gone back. They have become babes.

Now, that's the condition of those in the Galatian epistle. They had been delivered from slavery to idolatry. They had become Christians, but now they were slipping back into bondage to legality again.

They had become, they were putting themselves back under the yoke of bondage to the law again. They are not similar to what we have got here. Only these were not Gentile Christians.

These were Jewish Christians who were putting themselves back under the ceremonialisms of the law. They were dispensational babes, if you like. They were not coming on into the full maturity of the Christian position today.

For everyone, he says in verse 13, that he uses milk, is unskillful in the word of righteousness. Now, that title, word of righteousness, might well be taken as a title for the epistle to the Romans. An exposition of the word of righteousness.

For no Christian who still adheres to a lot of ceremonialisms, he is unskillful in the gospel. There are many preachers in the country connected with denominations who are still babes spiritually. They don't have the temple, and they don't have the Levite priesthood, but they have all the ceremonialisms that goes along with Judaism.

And Christianity today, or Christendom, is honeycombed with a Judaized Christianity. A Judaized form of Christianity today has been superimposed upon the people of God. And the message of Hebrews and the message of Galatians is intended to take us away from that which is Judaizing, Judaistic in its character.

And that's what I want to urge upon our souls this afternoon, God helping me. For he says in verse 14, solid meat belongs to those who are of full age, who have attained a majority, who are the sons of Galatians 4. Christ has come and redeemed us from the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. This is not merely an experimental reaching and growth into maturity, but here is the position into which God in grace has brought us by the redemptive work of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now in verses 1 to 3 of chapter 6, you've got a strong exhortation. And the exhortation is very important. Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, what are these? Are we exhorted to leave the teaching of Christ as found in the Gospels? Do we have in the epistles something that is in advance of the teaching of the Gospels? Surely that would be very erroneous to suggest that is the teaching here.

No, we are never told to advance from the teaching given by the Lord Jesus in the Gospels into something deeper and higher in the epistles. There are things in the epistles which the Lord didn't teach. That's because they were so dull of hearing, He tells us in John 16, and the Holy Spirit has revealed them to us, especially in the Pauline epistles regarding the church.

But God never tells us to leave the teaching of Christ onto something else. How are we to understand this? There's a verse in chapter 11 which might help us. We are told that Moses esteemed the reproaches of Christ greater riches than all the treasures of Egypt.

Now what were the riches of Christ that Moses esteemed as greater than all the wealth of Egypt? Surely they were not the reproaches of the Christ of the Gospels. Could they be? They were not the reproaches of the Christ of history. For He lived 2,000 years before Christ came.

Moses could never bear the cross and follow the Lord Jesus historically. And therefore we understand the term Christ in Hebrews 11 to refer to Him as the Messiah of prophecy. Moses esteemed the riches or the reproaches of the Messiah of prophecy, who was to come through Israel as far greater riches than all the treasures of Egypt and His throne of power and glory.

He saw that fellowship with the people of God, despised though they were, meant fellowship with the one who was destined to sway the scepter of universal authority and dominion. The Christ of prophecy that we have there, and that's what we have here, therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of the Messiah, were found in the foundations laid in Old Testament Scripture. And this foundation is given to us in verses 1 and 2. Repentance from dead works, faith toward God.

You find that in the Old Testament. Paul didn't teach that. Paul taught more than that.

He preached repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, which was something the Jew didn't want. This was something Paul taught in advance of what we have got here. The Old Testament, Abraham turned away from the dead works of idolatry and put his faith in the one and the true and the living God.

That's Old Testament conversion. But that's not enough in New Testament days. The Mohammedan was turned away from idolatry and believed in one God.

But that's not conversion. In Old Testament days, to turn aside from idolatry and put faith in the one and the true God, well, that was the Apostle life, when he came and became an Israelite. Along with that, we have the doctrine of baptisms, the plural.

No reference to water baptism. The word is used, as we shall see presently in chapter 9, the washings, the divers' washings in the Old Testament. It's not the washings themselves, but the doctrine connected with these washings, the teaching connected with these ablutions.

The priests are to be bathed. The priests are to wash their hands. They are to wash their feet.

It's the teaching concerning these that we have here. And the laying on of hands. Now, if you read some of the commentaries on this, you will find that they'll put baptisms to be infant sprinkling, and the laying on of hands to be confirmation.

Ellicott and other commentators will give you that explanation of this. But the word for baptism is different to what we have got here, and this has nothing to do with water baptism. It has to do with ablutions, with washings, the washings that pertain to Judaism.

They're all found in the Old Testament. The next two, the resurrection of the dead and of eternal judgment. Well, Job, the oldest book of the Old Testament, tells us about the resurrection of the dead.

I know that my Redeemer liveth, and I'm waiting for the day when in my flesh I shall see God. David knew about the resurrection of the dead. Eternal judgment is not something that's peculiar to the New Testament.

That's taught clearly in the Old Testament. The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God. But when we come into the New Testament, we've got much more than this foundation.

We've got not only the resurrection of the dead, we've got the resurrection of the just, and the resurrection of the unjust. We've got the first resurrection, and the resurrection of the rest of the dead. We've got the resurrection into life, and the resurrection into damnation.

What we've got here is the mere skeleton of Old Testament teaching regarding these things. They are the foundation laid in Old Testament Scripture. We have not only eternal judgment in the New Testament, that

is amplified in the great white throne, the judgment of the nations, the judgment seat of Christ, these are amplified in the New Testament.

What we have got here is what we have in verse 1, the foundation. The foundation laid in the Old Testament regarding these great matters. Now, we have friends in India, and they are coming into this country, you'll find a reference to them in the letters of interest of the last month, who maintain that this baptism is not infant baptism, of course, but it's the baptizing of believers, and when believers are baptized, then some two or three brethren should lay hands on them, and kind of an official rite of ceremony, acknowledging now that they are members of the body of Christ.

And they try to base it on this. Well, there was a dear Irish brother, known to some of us here, who used to say, wonderful things in the Bible I see. Some things put there by you, and some by me.

Well, this is one of those wonderful things put in there, because if you put water baptism in there, and you try to put laying on the hands in there, you can get it out. Whatever you put into the bag, you can get out of it, of course. But this is not in the Scripture as it is taught here.

Then what's the meaning of this word, therefore let us go on to perfection. Is it an exhortation merely to go on from the first grade to becoming teachers? Is it an exhortation to go on from babyhood to maturity? Is it an exhortation merely to go on from laying the foundation and go on to build the superstructure? Now very often, that is all the meaning that is taken out of this word of exhortation. Therefore let us go on.

It's not really let us go on, let us be carried on. Let us be born along. I take it that one of the illustrations that seems to me to fit into it is like this.

In the wilderness, Israel parked in many places. Wherever the Shekinah glory stopped, there they camped. And they may stay there a few days, they may stay there a month, may have stayed in some places longer.

But the moment the cloud lifted, they went on. And the trumpet said, let's go on. Blew an alarm to go on.

Don't stay in this site where the camp has been pitched now for a long time. We think it's one of the best sites we've ever had. We ought to stay here a little longer.

No, no. The cloud has moved and has gone ahead. Now in the Old Testament days, the cloud was there in connection with Judaism.

The cloud was over Jerusalem. The cloud was over the temple. The cloud was over the sacrifices.

But now in New Testament days, the cloud has gone on. Not into some reformed character of that, but on into something totally different. And the Spirit of God would tell us, abandon that site.

God has abandoned it, let us abandon it. Let us get on into true New Testament ground. Let's get on to perfection.

Now turn back, turn on with me please, to chapter 7 and verse 11. If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood. In other words, there can be no perfection under the priesthood, under the Levitical or the Aaronic priesthood.

If you are going to find perfection, says the Apostle, you are not going to find it there. Look at chapter 8 and verse 8 or verse 7. For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should there be no place sought for the second. For finding fault, not with the people, but with the covenant.

Finding fault. As Darby translates it there, I think, Finding fault. God says to them, Behold the days come, saith the Lord when I will make a new covenant.

You are not going to get perfection then in the old covenant. You are not going to cling to that old covenant. You are not going to get perfection there.

Chapter 7 verse 8, 19 says, For the Lord made nothing perfect. You can't get perfection under that law. Now in chapter 9 and verse 9, speaking of the tabernacle, we read, Which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices that could not make him that did the service perfect as pertaining to the conscience.

Now here's no perfection in connection with the tabernacle. Chapter 9 has to do with the tabernacle. The comparison between the place where our Lord Jesus ministered and where the priests of the old economy ministered.

Look at verse 1, For verily the first covenant had also ordinances of divine service and of worldly sanctuary, for there was a tabernacle made. But now verse 11, But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come by a greater and a more perfect tabernacle. Here is another tabernacle.

Which he says in verse 10, or verse 9 rather, Which the tabernacle in the wilderness was a figure for the time then present. Now turn on to chapter 10 and verse 1, For the Lord having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offer year by year, continually make it come as thereunto perfect. And that's the day of atonement.

That's the annual sacrifices. There was no perfection in the annual sacrifices of the day of atonement. Look at verse 14, or rather verse 10, verse 11 rather, And every priest standeth daily, ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sin.

Now here are the daily sacrifices. The burnt offering, and its associated meal offering, the peace offering, the sin offering, and the trespass offering. Here are all those sacrifices.

And those daily sacrifices, ministered by the same priests, day after day, they can never take away sin. Now it's in the light of these, that we understand that word in Hebrews chapter 6 verse 1, Therefore let us go on, leaving the principles, the elementary principles of the doctrine of the Messiah, and found in the Old Testament, let us be carried on to perfection. In other words, let's get on to that which is true of true Christianity, and let's say goodbye to everything of Judaism.

Let's get on to where there is a perfect priest. Let's have done with an earthly priesthood. With a special priesthood ordained by men.

And let's forsake that, and cling entirely and only, to the one high priest of the sanctuary that God has provided for His people, the Lord Jesus, the priest after the order of Melchizedek. Not only so, but let's get on away from the old covenant, that which the Apostle says, if that had not been faultless, there would have been no second. Away from that second covenant, on into the new covenant, with its perfect terms.

I will never remember their sins anymore. Let's get on to the perfect tabernacle, to heavenly self, a heavenly worship. And let's apprehend the perfect sacrifice, of which He speaks in chapter 10 and verse 14.

For by one offering, hath He perfected forever them that are sanctified. You see, the Apostle in the Epistle, wants to wean the Christians away from all that was true of Judaism in the past. Not Judaism as it had deteriorated in the days of the Lord, but Judaism as it was delivered to Moses by God in the early days.

That's why the reference is not to the temple, the reference is to the tabernacle. The reference is to things just as God handed them to Israel in the wilderness itself. He contrasts Christianity with Judaism as it came fresh from God's hands.

And here were Christians who were constantly wanting to go back into the ceremonialisms of the law. They didn't want to say goodbye to the priests with His robes, the priests with His priestly ministry. They didn't want to say goodbye to the old covenant with an emphasis upon what they could do.

They didn't want to say goodbye to an earthly sanctuary. They didn't want to say goodbye to mere animal sacrifices. The Apostle says, let us go on, let us be born along into the perfection there is in the new covenant in Christ, where there is a perfect priest, who was instituted a perfect covenant, who ministers today in a perfect tabernacle in heaven itself, and was offered a perfect sacrifice, who has brought in eternal perfection to all who trust Him, and He has made us perfect forever in God's presence.

This is the perfection to which he urges the Christians to move on to. Abandon the old. Forsake the old.

Let go of the old. Forget the limiting of priesthood, and put your affections upon the Melchizedek high priesthood of the Lord. Forget the old covenant.

Get on to the new covenant and all its blessings provided for us in Christ. Forget about earthly sanctuaries. And be satisfied with the fact that we have a priest in heaven, the late Alexander Marshall, who was a very able gospeler and a constant witness for the Lord.

Thought one Monday morning when he was travelling in Bangor, Northern Ireland, he would speak to a sister, to a woman. He didn't know what she was at the time, of course. He thought he'd speak to her about her soul.

And he said to her, Where did you worship yesterday? She says, Within the veil. And he said he got a very sharp rebuke from the sister's answer. He thought he was just going to lead on to a question and discussion with regard to her Christian experience.

But he learnt that day that here was somebody who learnt that the place for worship is within the veil where the high priest is. That's the place. Now that's what the apostle teaches us here in the Epistles to the Hebrews.

Let us go on, let us be born along into this place where we have perfection in Christ. A perfect high priest, with a perfect covenant, in a perfect place of worship, who has brought about a perfection of standing for the believer in the presence of God. Then he goes on to speak about this group in verses four through six.

Here is the terrible penalty. We're not going to take time today to draw attention to these three verses. Following them, we have in verses seven and eight, the illustration regarding the land and the briars and

the farms, etc.

Verses nine to twelve, we have the things that accompany salvation. And then in verses thirteen to the end, we have the strong consolation. Now who are these people here in verses four to six? Are they Christians? Some people say they are.

And of course the Arminian who says that a man can be saved and lost again. He thinks this is a marvellous place. These are scriptures that prove his contention right down to the hill.

Here is a man who has tasted all of these things and he has gone away from God and it is impossible to renew him to repentance. He is lost, hopelessly lost. And you people who believe in eternal security, you are all wrong.

You are going in the teeth of this very plain scripture. They say that a person can be saved and he can be lost again. That a Christian can so sin that he can get beyond the possibility of repentance.

It would be very sad, wouldn't it? We must not water down the word impossible. It is four times used in the epistle to the Hebrews. It is impossible to renew them to repentance.

It is impossible, he says in the same chapter, for God to lie. It is impossible to please God without faith. It is impossible for animal sacrifices to remove sin.

Here is something that is absolutely impossible. And here is a group of people concerning which God says it is impossible to renew them to repentance. I don't think we can water those words down to mean anything less than just what it says.

They are a group of people concerning whom God says it is impossible to renew them to repentance. Now if he is a believer, then we must go against a lot of verses where, for in the New Testament, God makes provision whereby a believer can be restored. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

If restoration and forgiveness for Christians was an impossibility, then none of us would be here this afternoon. I suppose you are about the oldest Christian here, brother, one who has been on the way longer than any of us. But none of us.

I have been preaching now for over 45 years. I wouldn't be here today if this referred to true believers. None of us.

If any man sinned, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. Not only have we clear teachings that a Christian may sin and may be restored, thank God, we have clear evidences of it, illustrations of it in the Word of God. Peter denied his Lord in a very sad way.

In a very sad way. But Peter wept bitterly. And the Lord had a meeting with Peter.

And what transpired between them, we don't know. God has drawn a veil over that meeting between the Lord and Peter. It has never been recorded.

Oh, yes, Peter failed. He failed before Pentecost, and he failed after Pentecost. He failed before the world.

He failed before the church. And he failed before the world. And before the Lord.

Peter is very fond of that word, never. Never. Never is he.

When the Lord says he is going to go to the cross, never, never, never is he. Says, you go behind me, Satan. Couldn't get much further than that.

You are never going to wash my feet. If I don't wash you, you are going to have no part with me. Well, then wash my head too.

For all men for safety, never will I. Poor Peter. And the Lord after resurrection said, Peter, rise, kill and eat. Never.

Never. There is only once that he ever used that word right, and that is in the second epistle. If these things be in you and abound, you shall never fall.

He learned to use it the right way in the end. But if restoration was an impossibility, well, then Peter never could have been restored. Never.

To say nothing of David. The sad record of David. Is restoration possible? Thank God it is.

In forty-five years of service of God, one has come into contact with Christians, many who have been far away. And in whose lives, the years, the locusts have eaten many, many, many, many long years. We have seen them restored.

Thank God there is restoration for a child of God that gets away. Forgiveness is possible. That is one of the great differences between, incidentally, between the Melchizedek priesthood and the Aaronic priesthood.

The Aaronic priesthood made provision for restoration. But the Melchizedek priesthood made provision to keep from falling. Marvelous it was for Aaron and his sons to restore a man when he brought his trespass offering.

But before Abram had the opportunity of falling into the trap laid by the king of Sodom, Melchizedek slips in with bread and wine and has a talk with him, has fellowship with him. And in the warmth of that fellowship, he learns something about God. And then he meets the king of Sodom and he says, I have lifted up my hands unto the Lord, the Possessor of heaven and earth.

I want nothing of your vanities. Marvelous to be restored, but far greater to be preserved. Marvelous that God has made provision whereby we may be restored, but far greater that God has made provision whereby we may be preserved from falling, kept from falling, and presented spotless and faultless before his throne with exceeding joy.

No then, it is impossible to think of this as the experience of one who was a true Christian and has sinned and can never be restored. There are too many problems facing us if we accept that explanation of this verse. But more of that later in the will of God.

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