

Hebrews 6

by Pat Kenney

Pat Kenney's sermon on Hebrews 6 emphasizes the call to spiritual maturity and the assurance of salvation for believers.

Duration: 1:06:43

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, Hebrews 6:4-6

Topics: "Hebrews"

Description

In this video, the speaker begins by asking the audience to pray for a woman named Erica who is in the army and does not know the Lord yet. He also requests prayers for his wife, Joyce, who is going through chemotherapy. The speaker then directs the audience to Hebrews chapter 6, emphasizing that although there are challenging verses in this chapter, they should not discourage Christians. He addresses the misconception that sinning after salvation leads to losing one's salvation, using the verses in chapter 6 to encourage believers. The speaker expresses gratitude for the prayers of the saints and acknowledges that it is their prayers that sustain and bring peace and joy in difficult times.

Transcript

All right, would you open up your Bibles to Hebrews chapter 6. And while you're doing that, I would like to ask you to keep in prayer Brother Brett, who helps us with our video ministry, his sister Erica is in the army and was just dispatched to Kandahar, the US base in Afghanistan. She doesn't know the Lord yet. They did get her to go see the Passion of the Christ.

So God is working on her heart and we just want to pray for her. So maybe you can just jot down, Erica in the army needs Jesus. And we'll be lifting her up.

Brett, bless you man. And thank you for continuing to pray for my wife. And Joyce is hanging in there.

This is now her good week coming up. She gets one good week out of three. She has chemo and then she gets a chemo at the hospital and then an oral chemo she's got to take for 14 days and then she's got a seven day gap.

So today's the first day of the seven day gap. She's so glad to have this day and I'm so glad that she's glad to have this day. And thank you for your continued prayer.

We are so blessed and encouraged by so many of you. And we know it's the prayers of the saints that are really sustaining us through this and still giving us his peace and his joy in the midst of it. So thanks, don't stop.

It's good. So Hebrews. Look at Hebrews chapter 6. This is an interesting chapter.

Any of you read chapter 6 before? A few of you have. There are some challenging verses in this chapter. But not ones that should stumble us.

They should, as all of the word of God should, encourage us. And so there are verses that the enemy has used in this chapter to discourage Christians. I've had people say to me that since they have sinned after they got saved that they've now lost their salvation and that there's no way that they can ever get back.

And they quote verses here in chapter 6. I don't believe the Holy Spirit ever intended the word to be used that way. So we want to look at this. And whenever you get a couple of verses that would be a little confusing.

There's a rule of hermeneutics that says that you should always interpret the obscure with the obvious. And the obvious is very clear throughout the scriptures of what the Lord has done for us. That it's a finished work.

That we are safe in Him and secure in Him. And His throne is always open for us to come to. And I'd like to read a few of those just to get started before we jump in.

John 10 verse 27. My sheep hear my voice. My sheep hear my voice.

And I know them and they follow me. And I give them eternal life. And they shall never perish.

Neither shall anyone snatch them out of my hand. My Father who has given them to me is greater than all. And no one is able to snatch them out of my Father's hand.

I am my Father and I am one. Yeah, thank you Lord. John 6 verse 39 says.

This is the will of the Father who sent me. That of all He has given me I should lose nothing. But should raise it up at the last day.

And this is the will of Him who sent me. That everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him. May have everlasting life.

And I will raise Him up at the last day. 1 Corinthians 6 verse 17. But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit with Him.

In Romans 8 verse 28. And we know that all things work together for good. To those who love God.

To those who are the called. According to His purpose for whom He foreknew. Past tense.

He also predestined. Past tense. To be conformed to the image of His Son.

Present and future. That He might be the firstborn among many brethren. And of course I love Philippians 1 verse 6. And these are just a few.

But being confident of this very thing. That He who has begun a good work in you. Will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ.

Thank you Lord. Folks. God is for you.

God is for you. And He wants you to trust Him. To see you through this life.

And on into the next. And He's able to handle it. He's able to hold us.

As I prepared for this particular section. Some of my favorite authors. I've called upon.

To help me with it. Warren Wiersbe. Great book on being confident.

David Guzik's commentary. In the Blue Letter Bible series. Very, very helpful.

Pastor Chuck. Certainly. And God Almighty in His Holy Word.

That give us so much. As we go through. So.

I'm going to borrow from them. And share some of my own thoughts. As well as we consider these verses.

The end of chapter 5 and chapter 6. Kind of go together. The prime focus. Of the last part of chapter 5. And chapter 6. Together.

Is moving on. To maturity in the faith. The subject matter.

Is maturing in your faith. As pilgrims here. We must be progressing.

In our walks with the Lord. If you're born again. You ought to be growing.

Not staying stagnant. Not slipping back. But moving ahead.

And growing daily. In your love. And in your walk with Jesus.

Amen. I think that's a no-brainer. Of course we should be growing.

Our study is going to begin in chapter 5. The latter part of it. With warnings about the marks of spiritual immaturity. And then in the first 12 verses of chapter 6. We'll look at the call to spiritual maturity.

And then finally in the last part of chapter 6. The basis for spiritual maturity. Which is very assuring. First the marks of spiritual immaturity.

And let's pick it up in verse 11 of chapter 5. Where we read. Of whom we have much to say. And hard to explain.

Since you have become dull of hearing. He's going to talk about Melchizedek. As pointing to the high priesthood.

The priesthood of the Messiah. The priesthood of Jesus. Which is a better priesthood.

Than the Aaron. The Aaronic priesthood. That ministered to the children of Israel.

And he says. We're going to talk a lot more about that. But it's going to be hard for you.

Because you've become dull of hearing. For by this time you ought to be teachers. You need someone to teach you again.

The first principles of the oracles of God. And you've come to need milk. Not solid food.

For everyone who partakes only of milk. Is unskilled in the word of righteousness. For he is a babe.

But solid food belongs to those. Who are of full age. That is.

Those who by reason of use. Have their senses exercised. To discern both good and evil.

So there's four things here. That can be signs of spiritual immaturity. And warnings to us.

That we're not progressing. And the first one is in verse 11. Where we read about a dullness towards the word.

Which speaks of. That state where we're unable to listen to the word. Unable to receive it.

And to act upon it. Where you know the word is just kind of boring. If the word of God is boring for you.

Be warned. Be warned. There's a dullness of heart.

When we hear the word of God. We need to have a willingness to act upon it. This is God's word.

It's not somebody's opinion. It's God's word to us. It's God's revelation to us.

That not only reveals who God is. But it reveals who we are as well. And what we need to do about who we are.

And we need to deal with ourselves. The way God commands us to deal with ourselves. Because he made us.

So dullness towards the word. And a second thing is. That we see at the end of verse.

The beginning of verse 12. He says by this time you ought to be teaching. You guys ought to be teachers.

So the second thing is an inability to share spiritual truth with others. They've been saved long enough to be helping others grow. But instead they're wrapped up in themselves.

Are you sharing the things you're learning in the Lord with others? I hope so. And if not. I pray that you would ask the Lord to stir that up in you.

Because God wants to use you to bless somebody else. He's blessing you. Not so that you can just go.

That was good. But to use it to help someone else. God gives you something good.

Hey the next day at work. Talk to three or four people. You know what the Lord showed me.

And they don't even have to be Christians for you to do that. Just be full of joy that God's speaking to you. And be able to share it with others.

When you've got the tight lip. When you don't talk to anybody about the Lord. You don't even think about talking to anybody about the Lord.

That's an indication of spiritual immaturity. You could have a Bible degree. You could know Greek and Hebrew.

You could understand theology. But if you're not sharing the love of Christ. And the burden and the compassion that Christ has for others.

You're really immature. Third thing we point out. That they were on a baby food diet.

They were having milk instead of solid food. The solid food or meat of the word. Refers to what Jesus Christ is now doing in heaven.

As our high priest. We begin the Christian life on the basis of his finished work here. And then we grow in the Christian life on the basis.

Of what he's going to complete in us. That continuing on. To this point in unfinished work.

Till we get to heaven. But he's in heaven. Interceding for us on our behalf.

He has already given to us. All the things that pertain to life and godliness. Giving us all that we need to grow up.

Hebrews 13 20. Speaks of that. It says.

Now may the God of peace. Who brought up our Lord Jesus from the dead. That great shepherd of the sheep.

Through the blood of the everlasting covenant. Make you complete in every good work. To do his will.

Working in you. What is well pleasing in his sight. Through Jesus Christ to whom be glory.

Forever and ever. And how many of you can say. I am a work in progress.

Because you are. And there is a completing. That the Lord is going to do in you.

Not in the sense that. I don't know if I am really saved. Until I get to heaven.

You can know you are really saved. Right now. But from that point.

There is a maturing. There is a growing up. There is a deepening in your trust.

And in your faith. And in your love. And in your confidence.

In the Lord. Where he changes you. He brings you out of darkness.

Into his marvelous light. And now he says. Now walk in the light.

You are not of darkness anymore. Walk in the light. And how many of us have learned.

That is a discipline. That is something we need to yield to. Because the Lord will show us.

As we go along on our walks. Where we are compromising. And he will deal with us.

And he will show us in his word. And sometimes he will show us. Through a brother or sister.

Or through circumstances. Where we have gotten our eyes off of him. And onto other gods.

Other things. And how many of you know. He is a good dad.

And very able to get our attention. And bring us back. Not because he wants to hurt us.

But because he wants to see us grow. And there is a theme of that. We will get more in verses 8 and 9 of chapter 6. Where he talks about the pruning.

Talks about the purging. The chastising work. That God can do.

Our God is a consuming fire. And he is very good at burning up stuff. That shouldn't be there.

Attitudes that aren't right. Amen. We just have to let him do it.

And so he urges us. And urges them to. Go on to maturity.

Go on to maturity. Where you can be able to eat the meat of the word. And walk in the rest that God has for you.

How important that is as we go through our walks. Not to try to reinvent salvation every time we blow it. But to rest completely in the finished work of Christ.

Not on my works. My abilities. But on what he has already done.

And live my life on the basis of that. Eating the meat. And so as we get into chapter 6. Let's move on to maturity.

Warren Wiersbe writes. No chapter in the Bible has disturbed people more than Hebrews 6. It's unfortunate that even sincere believers have fallen out over the doctrine of falling away. Scholars have offered several interpretations of the passages before us.

One is that it describes the sin of apostasy. Which means Christians can lose their salvation. Number two.

Others think it deals with people who were almost saved. But then backed away from trusting Christ. A third understanding is that it describes a sin.

Possible only to Jews living while the Jewish temple was still standing. And fourthly that it presents a hypothetical case. Or illustration that could not really happen.

Wiersbe writes. While I respect the views of others. I must reject those ideas just listed.

I feel that Hebrews 6. Like the rest of the book. Was written to believers. But this chapter does not describe a sin.

That results in a believer losing salvation. If we keep the total context of the book in mind. And if we pay close attention to the words used.

We're going to discover that the main lessons of the chapter. Are ones of repentance. And assurance.

That's the focus. So let's get into it. 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. The appeal here.
Let us go on. Is literally. Let us be born.
Or carried. Carried on. It's the same word translated in the first chapter.
Verse 3. Of upholding. In other words. The writer is not talking about self-effort.
He's appealing to the readers. And to us. To yield themselves.
To the power of God. The same power that upholds. The whole universe.
Hey. How can we fall. When God is holding us.
When God. Who upholds the whole universe. Is upholding us.
Instead of going ahead. However. These believing Jews were tempted to lay again.
A foundation. That is described in verses 2 and 3. And he talks about the doctrine of baptisms. And the
laying on of hands.
And of resurrection of the dead. And eternal judgment. And this will do.
If God permits. Now. Many people regard this.
As a biblical list. Of important foundations. For the Christian life.
And Bible studies. Series have been taught. Developing each one of these topics.
Out of the thought. That this is a good list. Of basic doctrine.
David Guzik writes. That isn't the writer's point here at all. To understand this list.
You've got to ask a basic question. What is distinctively Christian. About this list.
Where is the specific mention of Jesus. Or salvation by grace alone. Which.
As far as I understand is the foundation. Of our faith. Can you believe or practice these things.
And not. Be a follower of Jesus Christ. Believing him.
To be the Messiah. When we consider. The rudiments.
One by one it's remarkable. How little in the list is. Distinctive of Christianity.
For practically every item. Could have its place in a fairly. Orthodox Jewish community.
Each of them. Indeed acquires a new significance. In a Christian contents.
Certainly. But the impression we get is that. Existing Jewish beliefs and practices.
Were used as a foundation. On which to build. Christian truth.

So the six terms in this foundation. Do not refer to the Christian faith. As such.

But rather to the basic doctrines of Judaism. Facing the fires of persecution. These Hebrew Christians were tempted.

To fall by the wayside. By forsaking their confession of Christ. They had already slipped back into a babyhood.

Which we read in the previous. Verses in chapter five. And now they were prone to go back to Judaism.

Thus laying again the foundation. That had prepared the way for Christ. And the full light of Christianity.

They'd repented from dead works. Referring to works under the law. They'd shown faith toward God.

They believed the doctrine of washings. Not baptism. But the Levitical washings.

Laying on of hands refers to the day of atonement. In Leviticus 16. And every true Jew held to a future resurrection.

And judgment. If they did not move forward. In their faith in Jesus.

They would be moving backward. Which meant forsaking the substance of Christianity. For the shadows of Judaism.

You can't build on the shadow. You can only build on the substance. Because Christianity did grow out of Judaism.

It was a more subtle temptation for a Jewish Christian. To slip back into Judaism. Than it was for a formerly pagan Christian.

To go back to his pagan ways. These Jewish Christians did not want to abandon religion. But they did want to make it less distinctively Christian.

Therefore they went back to this sort of common ground. To avoid persecution. Living in this comfortable common ground.

You would not stick out so much. That was a real problem for early believers. I mean you get saved today.

And maybe your family doesn't really understand it. But in those days all the people that got saved early on were Jews. And as the way began to grow.

If you got born again. If you got saved. Your family would disown you.

They'd have a funeral service for you. They'd figure you're dead. You'd lose your job.

You'd lose any status you had in the community. And all of that before physical persecution actually started coming down. Where you could be arrested and thrown into prison.

For claiming Christ as the Messiah. So it would be a little easier road to not really be a Jesus freak. Not to really speak out boldly.

A lot harder for a Jew getting saved back then. Now there are many places in the world here today. If you're a Muslim.

And you accept Christ as your Savior. You could have your head chopped off. Or you could be hung in the square.

Or have someone break into your house and shoot you. It's very, very nasty. Evangelistic efforts to Muslim communities around the world is very dangerous.

Very dangerous. And there are other places in the world as well. Where if you convert to Christianity.

You take your life in your hands. It may be tough here. With all the materialism we have.

But we are blessed to have a freedom. Freedom to, like a bunch of the people are, meeting in a public park. Open arms ministry.

Meeting over at Grape Day Park. Saturday mornings and preaching the gospel. Cool.

Thank you Lord. Keep those doors open Father. If you would.

Let's not take them for granted. But in those days it was a little different. And a Jew and a Christian together could say.

Let's repent. Let's have faith. Let's perform ceremonial washings.

And so on. But this was a subtle denial of Jesus. And the writer of Hebrews is nailing that.

And this is, I think, entirely characteristic of those who feel discouraged. And wish to give up. There is always the temptation to still be religious.

But not so fanatical about Jesus. How many of you know you can do that? I can go to church. I can go to church.

And I can do the rituals. And so forth. But I can kind of hide behind the ritual.

And not really be living my life for Jesus Christ. Out there in the marketplace. Where we're called to live.

So that's a little background to that. Of what they're dealing with. And then he says in verse 4. For it's impossible for those who were once enlightened.

And 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 open shame. Now note from the beginning here.

That the issue is repentance. Not salvation. For it's impossible to renew them unto repentance.

Verses 4 and verse 6. If this passage is talking about salvation. Then it is teaching that a believer who loses salvation. Cannot regain it.

I don't see a lot of hope in that. If the theme of Hebrews is our confident hope. Where's the hope in that? Because we've all blown it.

Amen? I mean I'm not saying it's cool for us to blow it. But we've all slipped. We've all failed.

We've all had our low times. And if it was impossible for us to ever get back. What kind of faith is that? But I don't see that here.

Because if it was that way. It would mean that salvation depends to a degree. In fact to a very large degree on our own works.

I have got to keep my nose clean. Because if I don't. I lose it.

I didn't get saved by keeping my nose clean. I got saved by calling on the name of the Lord. I got saved by confessing that I was a sinner.

And I was desperate without a savior. And that wasn't clean up your act Pat. And then maybe I'll forgive you.

It was I'll forgive you and fill you with my spirit. And you know what? Your act will get cleaned up. But it's the work of God.

If it was left to me to clean it up. I'd be in misery. And maybe not any of you here tonight.

Maybe one or two. Maybe some of you watching. You know what? There's a lot of Christians.

That are really miserable. Because they try so hard to be a Christian. And they fail so much.

And they never go on to maturity. And I might suggest that one of the reasons. Is they're not trusting.

That Jesus loves them. And has forgiven them. And wants to work in their life.

And they go oh no. But I do this and I do that. And there's no way God can forgive me.

Well you got an ego trip then. Because you're just wrapped up in yourself. That's not what the word of God says.

Call upon me and I'll answer you. The Lord says. Show you great and mighty things.

You don't even know of. I find great encouragement here. To not lose heart.

To not give up. Because the Lord's not giving up on me. The Lord's holding on to us.

Two key words. Well we were talking about. Our own works.

And if we take that position. That he's talking about salvation. In verses four, five and six.

Rather than repentance. Then it means. That it depends on our own works.

And we can never. Once we lose it. We can't get it back.

But. But. This is important.

The subject of the chapter. Is not salvation. But repentance.

The believers attitude. Towards the word of God. Verses four and five.

Describe real Christians. Verse nine indicates. That the writer believed.

These who were right. And two were truly saved. You know you look down there.

Verse nine. But beloved we are confident. Of better things concerning you.

Yes things that accompany salvation. Though we speak in this manner. Talking to Christians.

We don't have almost saved people here. But real believers. The two key words.

In verse six. Are fall away. And crucify.

Fall away. Is not the Greek word. Apostasia.

In which we get our English word. Apostasy. And often times.

These verses have been. Commented on by commentators. As verses that speak of.

Apostasy. But it's a different word in the Greek. It's parapipto.

Or parapipto. There we go. Which means to fall beside.

To turn aside. Or to wander. It's similar to the word.

For trespass. As found in Galatians 6.1. Where it says. If a man be overtaken.

In a fault or a trespass. Let you who are strong. You know hold him up.

That doesn't speak of. Kick him out. You that are strong.

Give him the boot. You know forget it. He's not acceptable anymore.

Because how many of us wander. We have. Or have been through wandering times.

And God in his mercy has. Drawn us back. So verse 6. Describes believers.

Who have experienced. The spiritual blessings of God. But who fall.

By the side. Or trespass. Because of unbelief.

And having done this. They are in danger. Of divine chastening.

Which we'll see more of. In chapter 12. What does that.

What happens when you're not walking in faith. You're not really serving the Lord. Because you just love him.

And trust him. What happens when you. Do religious things.

Just to be accepted by others. Or you know to gain status. Or whatever.

Well the scripture talks about that. And says you know. If you do that for man's.

Man taking notice. Well you've received your reward. Forget your reward up there.

And he's not talking about salvation. He's talking about. Those rewards that are awaiting us.

When we stand before the mercy seat of Christ. Where we'll be rewarded for those things. That were done here.

Trusting him. Out of love for him. In faith of him.

When that was what motivated us. And anything that we did. That was motivated by selfishness.

You know. That's going to be burned up. That's what he talks about in 1st Corinthians 9. Which results in the loss of reward.

And divine disapproval. But not the loss of salvation. And the phrase.

Seeing that they crucify. Again for themselves. The son of God.

Should be translated. While they are crucifying. Literal.

In the Greek. While they are crucifying. In other words.

Hebrews 6. 4 to 6. Does not teach. That sinning saints. Cannot be brought to repentance.

But that they cannot be brought to repentance. While they continue to sin. And put Christ to shame.

You know. If you're just giving yourself over to sin. That's all you're doing.

You're not calling on the Lord. Then there's not going to be any magical. Zing.

And there you go. You're okay. Believers who continue in sin.

Show that they really don't have a repentant heart. Man. If you don't have a repentant heart over your sin.

You're never going to grow. You're never going to grow. God wants to take you beyond.

The basics of being forgiven. And on into spiritual maturity. Where he can use you.

It's not just a matter of getting your fire insurance. It's being equipped and filled by the Holy Spirit. To be used for him.

Remember there's a great difference between falling. And falling away. Falling away isn't just falling into some sin.

It is actually departing from Jesus himself. For a righteous man may fall seven times and rise again. Proverbs 24 says.

But the wicked shall fall by calamity. The difference is between a Peter. And a Judas.

If you depart from Jesus. Where else are you going to go for hope? There isn't any other hope. Besides Jesus.

So the message to these Christians. Who felt like giving up was clear. If you don't continue on with Jesus. Don't suppose you'll find salvation. By just going on with the old basics. That are common to Judaism. If you aren't saved in Jesus. You aren't saved. Amen.

How many of you know. You don't get saved by going to Calvary Chapel. You don't get saved by going to First Baptist.

You don't get saved by being a Catholic. You get saved by putting your trust and faith in Jesus Christ. And then if you're a Catholic or a Baptist.

Or you go to Calvary Chapel. You're going to be in heaven. Because you're trusting in Jesus Christ as your Savior.

The one who died for you. It's not what you did for him. It's what he did for you.

That's the beginning point. But apart from Jesus. How can anybody be saved? They can't.

If one falls like this. Does it mean they can't repent? That God prohibits their repentance. Remember first that.

Repentance itself is a gift from God. No one genuinely repents without God's enabling. It's true.

Second, if one does repent. That in itself is evidence that they have not truly fallen away. They may have fallen.

But they didn't fall away. We may have tripped. But we didn't deny.

It's not like we're going. Forget Jesus. I don't need Jesus.

I don't want Jesus. I don't care about Jesus. I think if you're at all concerned.

About whether you have sinned. So much that you might not be saved. There is good news for you.

The Lord loves you so much. You wouldn't be concerned if you'd fallen away. You would not even be worried about it.

Wouldn't cause you to blink your eye. The idea is not that if you fall away. You can't come back to Jesus ever.

But that if you turn your back on Jesus. Don't expect to find salvation anywhere else. Especially in the foundations of Judaism.

Apart from the fullness of Jesus. And as one old commentator Meyer wrote a long time ago. He said this passage has nothing to do.

With those who fear lest it condemns them. Like I said. The presence of that anxiety.

Like the cry which betrayed the real mother. In the days of Solomon. Establishes beyond a doubt.

That you are not one that has fallen away. Beyond the possibility of renewal to repentance. So if this verse bothers you.

With thoughts such as. Oh no. Since I've sinned.

Have I lost my salvation. Don't fret. You couldn't even think that.

If you had. Oh I may have lost my salvation. If that bothers you.

You didn't. If it bothers you. If it aches in your heart.

Then oh. But I just want to know the Lord. But Hebrews 6 says I can't.

Well you're misapplying. And taking out of context. The message of the book of Hebrews.

Because the message of the book of Hebrews is hang in there. Press on. You've got a confident hope.

Your confidence is in Jesus Christ. Hold on to him. He'll see you through.

So what it really does is it exhorts us. It exhorts you. It exhorts me.

To not look for peace and satisfaction and safety. Anywhere else but in Jesus. So if you've been kind of drifting.

Or getting dull. Or doubting a little bit. You know what.

You're not going to find salvation. You're not going to find eternal hope. You're not going to find forgiveness and cleansing anywhere else.

You're only going to find that in Jesus Christ. So don't. Don't be fooled by cheap substitutes.

Don't get faked out. Don't let the pressure. Of the society around you.

Cause you to lessen your hunger for Jesus. And your faith in him. Now in verse 7. 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's rejected and near to being cursed. Whose end is to be burned.

The illustration of the field here. Relates this truth to the image of the testing fires of God. A truth that we see in 1st Corinthians 3. As well as in Hebrews 12.

And I'll read some of those verses. From 1st Corinthians 3.10. Where it speaks of according to the grace of God. Which was given me as a wise master builder.

I've laid the foundation and another builds on it. But let each one take heed how he builds on it. For no other foundation can anyone lay.

Than that which is laid which is Jesus Christ. If anyone builds on this foundation. With gold, silver, precious stones.

Wood, hay or straw. Each one's work will become clear. For the day will declare it.

Because it will be revealed by fire. And the fire will test each one's work. Of what sort it is.

This is that section I was referring to earlier. If anyone's work which he has built on it endures. He'll receive a reward.

If anyone's work is burned. He'll suffer loss. But he himself will be saved.

Yet so as through fire. And then in Hebrews 12.28. It says. Therefore since we are receiving a kingdom.

Which cannot be shaken. Let us have grace. By which we may serve God acceptably.

With reverence and godly fear. For our God is a consuming fire. That's the nature of our God.

He's going to burn up stuff. That number one. Is going to harm us.

Number two is going to distract us. Number three is going to. Take away.

Take us away from giving glory to him. The chastisement. What the chastisement of the Lord.

I mean I've heard believers. And I've experienced it myself. Where I feel the fire.

You know. God's fire. You know.

Not to destroy me. But to burn out the dross. You know.

To get out the weeds. The stuff that isn't going to be helpful. For my ministry.

My walk with him. God has his ways. Of dealing with us.

And we're told here. God's a consuming fire. So don't mock him.

Don't think it's no big deal. God saved us. To bear fruit.

Our lives. Will one day be tested. What we do that is not approved.

Will be burned. On that day of judgment. I think there's a slow burn going on right now.

And I'm thankful for it. I'm thankful for it. I might be able to fake you out.

But I can't fake him out. And he's very faithful. Very faithful.

To make his ways known. In my life. You know if you're a Christian.

There's just stuff you can't get away with. Because your dad's watching you. Your dad's watching you.

And maybe everybody else gets away with it. But you try to do it. You'll get busted.

I almost guarantee it. If you have a love for God. You want to serve him.

But you're messing around. Sinful things you shouldn't be. You're going to get exposed.

You're going to get exposed. You can't hide that stuff. So I'll give you a clue right now.

Right now. Turn it over to him. Confess your sin.

Acknowledge that it's not pleasing the Lord. Confess it to the Lord. Confess it to a brother.

Brothers to a brother. Sister to a sister. This is in my life.

I don't want this in my life. I think that should be normal Christianity. Don't you? That's almost daily conversation amongst believers.

It should be. But if you put on airs like you don't have any problems. You've got this Christianity thing nailed.

Then you can expect chastisement. You can expect God to be working to expose that fallacy. And he'll do it.

Again, not because he hates you. He's a loving dad. There's that same passage that deals with hey if.

It's a child whom a father hates who never gets chastised. But if you love your kids, you're going to punish them when they need it. You're going to discipline them.

You're going to be watching out over them. You know when the kids are little and they think they're getting away with stuff. And you wonder man is my kid that dumb? You know that he thinks he can get away with that.

But they think they're really scamming you. They're so convinced. Weren't we when we were kids? And it baffled us.

How did you find out? You know. And they'd say I see all or something like that. And get you real paranoid.

But God does see all doesn't he? Our dad, our heavenly dad does see all. So I think this is what he's speaking of here in verses 7 and 8. The chastising fire of God. Not to destroy us.

But to purge out the things that aren't bringing forth fruit. You know the dead branches. And note that it's that which is bad fruit.

Or rotten fruit. It's not the field that's burned. But the fruit.

As 1 Corinthians 3.15 says. The believer is saved yet so by fire. So I think the whole message of this difficult passage is this.

That Christians can go backward in their spiritual lives. And bring shame to Christ. And while they're living in sin.

They can't be brought to repentance. And they're in danger of divine chastening. And if they persist their lives will bear no lasting fruit.

And they'll suffer loss at the judgment seat of Christ. The picture presented also reminds us that growth and bearing fruit. Is important to keep from falling.

It's important. You know when we're really bearing fruit. We're abiding in Jesus.

John 15. And when we're abiding in Jesus. He says we're in no danger of falling away.

So stay close to Jesus. Just stay close to him. Didn't he say apart from me you can't do anything.

That in itself should be enough of a reason. I'm not so much the fear of falling away. But just he's done it all for you.

Why trust anything else? Why be seduced by anything else? Give your life fully to him. Tonight say Lord use me. Work mightily in my life.

Pour out your spirit upon me. Fill me to overflowing. Lord I want to bear good fruit.

I want to bear good fruit for you. I want to walk close to you. Because you know how the fruit needs to grow.

I want to listen to your instruction. I want to be watered by your word. Bring forth good fruit in the Lord.

It's a good prayer to pray. Ask the Lord for that. Then he says but beloved.

We are confident of better things concerning you. Yes things that accompany salvation. Though we speak in this manner.

The writer kind of admits he's being a little more harsh than he needs to be. However it would be wrong to take Hebrews 6, 9. To mean that the warnings in the previous verses were not serious. Or very important.

If anything verse 9 is a verse of encouragement. It's not negating what he's already said. But he's saying now listen up.

These Christians are in danger of falling away. Not so much out of a calculated rebellion. As because of a depressing discouragement.

And they need to be warned. But they also need to be encouraged. And when someone is really depressed.

They need to be warned. Gently. But then they need to be encouraged.

Lift it up. Depression is real. You know I've caught myself in it at times.

And I'm sure you have as well. You know. And if somebody came to me and said you're depressed.

You're going to hell. I'd go thank you very much. That really helped.

Thanks I needed that. But what would they say? What will help? I've often tried to be gentle with folks that are suffering depression. And say you know.

You know right now. You're just so consumed. With all these heavy things around you.

And you're so wrapped up. With how it's affecting you. And you're afraid.

You know you're freaked out. And you start thinking about some of these things. And it just.

There's a gnawing that happens in your stomach. And you start hyperventilating. And then you just want to crawl in a hole.

Partly to hide. Partly to protect yourself. And then I try to take it a little step further.

And say so do you see what's happening here? As hard as all these things are. You've taken a wrong turn. Where your focus is really on yourself.

And there's a better way. Turn your eyes upon Jesus. And all these things that are so vivid.

And so pulling down. And so consuming. Will begin to fade away.

As you hold on to Jesus. And as you trust him. I'm convinced that much of depression.

Is fed by us looking inward. Rather than looking upward. And if I look inward.

That's a mess. I don't have a lot of help. If I'm just looking inward.

Okay pick yourself up by the bootstraps. I don't even have any bootstraps to pick myself up from. When you're depressed you feel so helpless.

But I find no matter what state we're in. We still have his word. And we can call upon him.

And even in the calling upon him in desperation. God I don't know what else to do. I turn to you Lord.

That's a good first step. It's a great first step. Then follow up on it.

Follow up on it and recall once again. What Jesus did for you. And that you didn't do anything to deserve it.

So if you've been beating yourself up. Well you got to stop beating yourself up. Because that's not what got you saved in the first place.

It's what Jesus did for you. Oh yeah I forgot that. It's Jesus.

Then you dig out some of the old songs. Start humming them. Singing them.

Remembering what the Lord has done. And the promises in God's word. Bring them back.

Bring them back. I'll never leave you. I'll never forsake you.

Man I need that right now Lord. I know as Joyce and I have been dealing with her cancer. And going through this season.

I can't tell you how many times God's word has been there. Just to speak to us. And I'll tell you.

Sometimes when you're down and you see the promises. Oh you're out of promises. Promise, promise, promise.

But I know I'm being childish when I do that. Because his promises are sure. And that's what the last part of this section.

Really, really deals with. And I believe it's a very powerful section. It's an encouraging section.

And I think it's a solid passage on eternal security. As solid a passage on eternal security. As we're going to find anywhere in the scriptures.

For God is not unjust. Verse 10. To forget your work and labor of love.

Which you have shown towards 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 don't become sluggish. But imitate those who through faith and patience. Inherit the promises.

Don't be discouraged into giving up on Jesus. God hasn't forgotten about you. And he points first of all in that passage to their own lives.

And he reminds them in verses 10 to 12. That they had given every evidence of being true Christians. We find faith.

And hope. And love described in these three verses. And these traits are the characteristics of true believers.

But he cautions them in verse 12. Again, not to be dull of hearing or slothful. God is... Same word back in the end of chapter 5. God has given his promises.

God has given them. They need only exercise faith and patience. To receive the blessing that God has.

And that's great encouragement. When we're discouraged. We often think God has forgotten all we have done for him and for his people.

But God would cease to be God. He would be unjust if he forgot such things. Hey, God sees.

And God remembers. Thank you, Lord. How many lose sight of the fact that God sees their service? How many serve for the applause and the attention of man.

And are discouraged because it doesn't come. Don't let discouragement make you sluggish. It's that sluggish attitude that really makes us feel like giving up.

First we lose the desire to press on. And then we lose the desire to go on. But you don't have to give up.

And you don't have to give in to discouragement. You can encourage yourself in the word. David did that.

David encouraged himself in the Lord his God. First Samuel 36. David was greatly distressed for the people spoke of stoning him.

Now that would make me depressed. You know if I got an email from Mark and saying the church wants to stone you. You haven't been showing up much.

That would be distressing. And it says there the soul of all the people was grieved. Every man for his sons and his daughters.

But David strengthened himself in the Lord his God. He strengthened himself in the Lord. And we can do that too.

We can encourage ourselves in the Lord. We can say soul you can talk to yourself. That doesn't mean you're wacko.

Soul delight yourself in the Lord. Sometimes it's kind of like we need to do that to ourselves. Like hey get it together.

Psalms 27. The Lord is my light and my salvation. Whom shall I fear when I'm afraid.

The Lord is my light. The Lord is the strength of my life of whom shall I be afraid. That's encouraging my soul.

When the wicked came against me to eat up my flesh. My enemies and foes they stumbled and fell. Though an army may encamp against me.

David said my heart shall not fear. Though war should rise against me in this I will be confident. One thing I have desired of the Lord.

That I will see that I may dwell in the house of the Lord. All the days of my life to behold the beauty of the Lord. To inquire in his temple for in the time of trouble.

He shall hide me in his pavilion. In the secret place of his tabernacle. He shall hide me and he shall set me high upon a rock.

A rock that can't be moved. He's the rock of our salvation. One paraphrase of Psalm 42.5 says.

Why am I so sad? Why am I so troubled? I will put my hope in God. And once again I will praise him my Savior and my God. That's encouraging your soul.

And there's thousands of other verses and promises like that. God's promises are true and trustworthy. He'll see us through times of discouragement.

And even use those times to help mature. To help us mature in our faith. It's true.

And we've got to hang in there and press on through. And not drift or doubt or become dull of hearing. Press on.

And you've heard it says. The Christian walk is a marathon not a sprint. You can't run at a sprinter's pace.

And expect the last 26 miles in a marathon. You've got to pace yourself through. And there's an enduring that we do.

That God wants to work into us. That quality of endurance. We've got to be patient.

You know if you want to be perfectly mature today. You know I thought that when I was a young believer. You know.

I thought well you know you're God. And you know can't you just press the change. You'll make me mature.

You know I let it happen. Come on you're God. I used to think being filled with the Holy Spirit meant.

Now I got it. I'm rocking now. You know.

Got the victory. And then I was six months old in the Lord. I was a year old in the Lord.

And I told my pastor that. He needed to consider me to be an elder in his church. What an idiot.

Not him me. I didn't have a clue. He said it's a good thing though.

He quoted the scripture. It's a good thing to desire the office of a bishop. But you need a little more patience.

You know. It's going to take a little while. It's all right.

God's going to work with you. I thought he was. He just didn't have any faith.

He didn't see a good thing when he had it. Boy I have some things to learn. And I'm still learning.

And I don't care how old you are in the Lord. You never stop learning folks. I always ask the Lord to give you a teachable spirit.

You know. I always ask him to give you a heart soft to his word. And to exhortation.

And to rebuke. You know. Because he loves you.

And sometimes he'll deal with you directly through the word. Sometimes he'll deal with you through preaching. Sometimes he'll deal with you through the words of a good friend.

That says what are you doing. But let him do it. So wrapping it up.

To illustrate he uses Abraham as an example of patient faith. He says for when God made a promise to Abraham. Because he could swear by no one greater.

Yeah. He swore by himself. And surely.

What did he swear? What was his oath? He said surely blessing I will bless you. And multiplying I'll multiply you. And so after he had patiently endured.

He obtained the promise. During this time of patient endurance. Many Christians get attacked.

They wonder if they too will obtain the promise. They often wonder will God really come through. But he came through for Abraham.

Abraham wasn't no saint. He blew it a bunch. Read Genesis.

You can find a lot of areas where he failed. But God's promise to him. Was God's promise.

And God saw it through. And he trusted in God's promise. And he walked in God's promise.

Verse 16. For men indeed swear by the greater. And an oath for confirmation is for them an end of all dispute.

Thus God determining to show more abundantly to the heirs of promise. The immutability of his counsel. He confirmed it by an oath.

That by two immutable things. In which it is impossible for God to lie. We might have strong consolation.

Who have fled for refuge. To lay hold of the hope set before us. The two immutable unchanging things are God's promise.

And his oath. It's impossible for God to lie in either of those two things. God came through for Abraham.

Even sealing his promise with an oath. In fact because he could swear by no one greater. He swore by himself.

And this oath showed that God's promises. Like his character. Are unchanging.

Abraham didn't receive the promise blessing. Because of his own goodness or obedience. But because of the faithfulness of God.

Don't forget that. Abraham experienced many trials and testings. As did the original readers of the book of Hebrews.

As do you and I. God saw him through. Saw them through. He'll see you through as well.

He'll give you and I strong consolation. Who have fled for refuge. To lay hold of the hope set before us.

Don't be discouraged. God has a refuge of hope. Ready for you and I. And it says in verse 19.

This hope we have. As an anchor of the soul. Both sure and steadfast.

And which enters the presence behind the veil. This hope will see us into the very presence of God. Hope is the opposite of the discouragement.

These Jewish Christians have been battling against. And we've got that anchor. And I like what Warren said.

He said this spiritual anchor is different from material anchors on ships. For one thing we are anchored upward to heaven. Not downward.

We're anchored not to stand still. But to move ahead. Our anchor is sure.

Meaning it cannot break. And it is steadfast. Meaning it cannot slip.

No earthly anchor can give that kind of security. And so here we have it. Last verse is where the forerunner has entered for us.

Jesus has entered into the holy of holies in heaven for us. And become our high priest forever. According to the order of Melchizedek.

Which in chapter 7 we'll get into more of. So there's the two immutable things that give us assurance. God's promises.

For God cannot lie. And God's oath. God cannot change.

The unchanging word of God. And the unchanging person of God. Are all we need to assure us that we are saved and kept for eternity.

We have that hope to anchor our souls. And who is that hope? That's right. It's not what is that hope.

It's who is that hope. It's Christ himself. And how can we drift spiritually.

When in Christ we are anchored to heaven itself. We have assurance that fast anchor. And we have a forerunner who has opened the way for us.

And we'll see to it that we one day shall join him in glory. So, instead of frightening saints into thinking they are lost. This wonderful chapter warns against unbelief.

And an unrepentant heart. But also assures us that we are anchored in eternity. Are you anchored tonight? Are you anchored in Jesus? If not, I've got good news for you tonight.

You don't have to drift anymore. You don't have to drift anymore. You can call on the name of the Lord tonight.

You can open up your heart to Jesus tonight. You can confess your sin to him tonight. And an anchor will be dropped from heaven.

And will hook on to you. And you won't stay the same. You won't stay the same.

Because he will begin to move you not downward. Not stationary. But onward to maturity.

Let the Lord have. Let the Lord pull you. Let the Lord carry you.

Let the Lord just be number one. Jesus, number one in my life. Nothing else can give me that confident hope.

No one else can anchor me like you, Jesus. Amen. Thank you, Father.

Lord, we do thank you for this time tonight. And please now bless our reflection on these verses, Lord. Lord, we know that there's a lot of temptation out there.

A lot of things calling for our attention. A lot of belief systems masquerading as solutions to the dilemma of our troubled hearts. But we know only you, Jesus.

Only you can bring me life. We sang that tonight, Lord. Only you can truly fill my empty heart.

Only you can satisfy. Only you can anchor us. With a hope and a faith that is steadfast and sure in you.

And so, Lord, we ask you to do that work in us this week. And use us for your glory as we serve you and as we serve one another. In Jesus' name, amen.

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