

You'd Better Believe It!

Chapter 2 New Testament Audio Lesson #74



Objective: To understand the warnings and exhortations of Hebrews.



We have much to say about this, but it is hard to explain because you are slow to learn. In fact, though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God's word all over again. You need milk, not solid food! ...Therefore let us leave the elementary teachings about Christ and go on to maturity.
—Hebrews 5:11-12, 6:1

It is impossible for those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, who have shared in the Holy Spirit, who have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the coming age, if they fall away, to be brought back to repentance, because to their loss they are crucifying the Son of God all over again and subjecting him to public disgrace.
—Hebrews 6:4-6

As we said in the last lesson, the book of Hebrews has three key words: Better, believe, and beware. *Beware* is a key word because the author gives many warnings to his readers. He warns against apostasy, which means to lose or depart from your faith. In Hebrews, apostasy includes the person who has the right theology but never applies it to his life. Apostasy can harden us to the deceitfulness of sin and cause us to drift away from the faith.

The book also cautions against an evil heart of unbelief. Just as the Israelites did not enter into physical rest in Canaan because of unbelief, the author warns those who have not entered into salvation rest because of unbelief. He exhorts them to believe in Jesus Christ so they will enter into that spiritual rest. And he exhorts his readers to not be spiritually immature but to become mature believers who come to the Word on their own, with the teaching and guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Hebrews 6:4-6 is perhaps the most difficult passage in the book. Some believe that you can lose your salvation. Others believe that once you are saved, you are always saved. If you believe in election, as Paul taught us in the book of Romans, then you believe that you cannot lose your salvation. This passage could therefore be describing a person who is not yet saved but who is being wooed by the Holy Spirit. Such a person comes to the point of partaking of Jesus, but not all the way to belief. Hebrews exhorts such people to believe — to commit to Christ and be assured of their salvation.



Choose the best answer.

1. True or False: The Israelites did not enter the Promised Land because the people in the land prevented them from doing so.
2. True or False: Immature believers have not entered into salvation rest.
3. True or False: Mature believers need spiritual milk.
4. True or False: We should prepare our hearts before we go to church.

Choose all answers that apply.

5. What do we need in order to study the Bible?
 - a. A seminary education
 - b. A pastor or teacher
 - c. The Holy Spirit
 - d. Study guides
6. What are some of the characteristics of an apostate person?
 - a. Excited about the things of the Lord
 - b. Devotion to Jesus Christ
 - c. Unbelief
 - d. Drifting from the faith
7. What sort of person is described in Hebrews 6:4-6?
 - a. Lives for Jesus every day of his life
 - b. Has tasted the Word of God
 - c. Has never heard of Jesus at all
 - d. Has shared in the Holy Spirit

8. Why would the author have written this difficult passage in Hebrews 6?
 - a. To confuse his readers
 - b. To discourage apostates
 - c. To strip away any false assurance of faith
 - d. He was confused himself.

9. What makes it possible for believers to go to God with confidence?
 - a. The goodness in our hearts
 - b. Our works
 - c. Our sincere faith
 - d. Jesus' blood poured out for us

10. What should we keep in mind about our church life?
 - a. Draw near to God before church
 - b. Go to church every Sunday
 - c. Display spiritual gifts for all to see
 - d. Do not work on the Sabbath

11. How are we supposed to treat fellow believers?
 - a. Point out their sin constantly
 - b. Talk about them critically
 - c. Encourage them
 - d. Have fellowship with them



In Hebrews 5:11, the author wants to tell the readers much more, but he says that they are “slow to learn.” Are you drinking spiritual milk or eating spiritual food? What are some ways you can move on toward spiritual maturity?

Do you think it is possible to lose your salvation? Why or why not? What does the whole counsel of God's Word say? See especially Hebrews 7:25, 9:11-14, 26-28, 10:12-14, John 17:11, Ephesians 2:1-10, 1 Peter 1:5, Romans 5:1-8, 8:31-39, 1 Corinthians 5:1-5 and Jude 24 to name a few.



Thank God for the gift of salvation. Ask Him to give you assurance of your salvation or to give you the courage you need to believe in and follow Jesus Christ and be saved. Ask Him to help you move toward spiritual maturity. Ask God to give you wisdom as you learn more about Him. Thank God that, because of Jesus' sacrifice, you can now draw near to God with confidence.



Going Deeper

1. Relate and apply the lament of this author as he began chapter 5, regarding the lack of spiritual depth on the part of those to whom he was writing, to Paul's lament when he wrote the third chapter of his first letter to the Corinthians. _____

2. What is the difference between the "milk" of the Word and the "meat" of the Word? _____

3. Based upon your study of the difficult passage (6: 4-6), state why you believe this author is not teaching that it is possible for a believer to lose their salvation. _____

4. Give several reasons why you believe he is not teaching that, if a believer becomes a prodigal, it is impossible to renew them to repentance. _____

5. Explain how the way he describes the spiritual status of these people is what we might call a "spiritual miscarriage." _____

6. As you interpret, summarize and apply this difficult passage of Scripture personally, in what ways does it challenge and inspire you to move on to deeper growth in your spiritual journey of faith? _____

7. How does this same passage inspire and challenge you to exhort and challenge those you pastor to move on in their spiritual growth? _____
