

# Hebrews

Chapter 6:3-20

Warning against spiritual defection

Encouragement to perseverance

## A review of last week

- Reasons the Hebrews may have a hard time understanding Jesus “Melchizedekian” priesthood
  - Had *begun to* be “poor listeners”
  - Had *begun to* need milk not solid food – needed instructions in the elementary principles of the actual words of God

# A review of last week

- Reasons the Hebrews may have a hard time understanding Jesus “Melchizedekian” priesthood
  - Had not left the elementary teaching about the Christ:
    - Not laying a foundation again of:
      - Repentance from dead works, faith toward God, instructions about washings, laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, eternal judgement

“And this we shall do”

- We shall...
  - Press on to maturity (6:1)
  - Proceed to the discussion of the priesthood of Jesus
- If God Permits
  - The writer understands God’s needed involvement
  - God may not allow some to see maturity if they are unwilling to listen and learn.

# Warning against spiritual defection

- “For”
  - Whether or not the reader can proceed to maturity will depend on their response.
- “it is impossible”
  - Nothing man nor God do will be able to change the outcome of the one who does not repent.
  - “unless you repent, you will all likewise perish.”  
(Luke 13:3,5)

# Warning against spiritual defection

- 7 experiences of a person who can't be restored
  - 5 Past tense
    - Those who have once been enlightened
    - Those who have tasted the heavenly gift
    - Those who have been made partakers of the Holy Spirit
    - Those who have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come
    - Those who have then fallen away - *parapipto*

# Warning against spiritual defection

- 7 experiences of a person who can't be restored
  - 2 Present Tense
    - Since they again crucify to themselves the Son of God
    - and put Him to shame

# Warning against spiritual defection

- Illustration of fertile ground vs infertile ground
  - Think of tenant farmers – fertile ground produces plentiful crops for the farmer and the owner – both profit from the growth.
    - Spiritual application – God blesses those who make proper use of the blessings bestowed by God – if they do not apostatize.
  - If the ground produces thorns and thistles, which benefit neither farmer nor owner the land is useless
    - Spiritual application – the land is worthless and shall be burned – not just cleansing but utter destruction

# Encouragement to persevere

- God's Faithfulness

- There is still hope for these Hebrew readers
- The writer has been harsh in his warning for good reason – the reader needs to understand what is at stake!
- God is ALWAYS faithful and just – He will not forget what you have done for the kingdom
- Diligence – a strenuous endeavor, zeal in work
- Assurance of hope – the ultimate reward as promised

# Encouragement to persevere

- The example of faithful Abraham
  - Abraham as an example of those who are inheriting the promise
    - The God who made a promise to Abraham, **which He kept**, is the same God who has made a promise to the reader and us.
    - His word is absolutely true.
    - Abraham was not part of the Law – The writer is drawing the reader out of the Law
    - God rarely makes an oath – we must pay attention!

# Encouragement to persevere

- God is greater than men
  - Men swear by someone greater than themselves
    - When men swear they take an oath to a superior power who is able to punish them
  - When God took an oath, He appealed to Himself and pledged to do all that was necessary to give the covenant ETERNAL validity.
  - Two unchangeable things – God's oath and God's promise – God cannot lie.

# Encouragement to persevere

- We who have taken refuge...
  - The writer brings to mind the Hebrew understanding of the city of refuge
- An Anchor...
  - The writer now shifts to an anchor cast out in the storm to prevent destruction
    - Sure and reliable –
    - Not an anchor cast into a sandy bottom but in heaven itself – in Jesus - the fulfilment of God's promise.

# Encouragement to persevere

- A forerunner...
  - The writer shifts again to the image of Jesus as a forerunner. He makes it possible, as the great High Priest, for us to enter to “Holy of Holies” – something a Levitical priest could never do.
  - He is our high priest of the order of Melchizedek
    - Belonging to a different priesthood, Jesus has entered the heavenly reality of the Holy of Holies which was just a shadow.

This brings us full circle...

- The writer ends chapter 6 bringing us back to the point where he digressed to warn the reader of becoming poor listeners (5:10)
- Having been warned, the reader can now fully embrace Jesus' priesthood according to the order of Melchizedek.

Next week

- The Messiah's priestly office after the order of Melchizedek
- Hebrews 7:1-28