

Title: Those Who Fall Away

Text" Hebrews 6:4-8

Would you open your Bibles to Hebrews chapter 6. We have been studying this portion of Hebrews that teaches the cause for immaturity in the life of a believer. People who are lazy in the application of the principles of God's Word remain as babies in the faith. They never grow up spiritually. Thus they desire only milk instead of the meat of the Gospel.

And Paul, says, that one reason for this condition of immaturity is that people are dull of hearing. But solid food is for the mature who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good from evil.

Then in chapter 6 verses 1 thru 3 Paul encourages the believer to go on to maturity. He encourages us to leave the elementary doctrines of the faith and to press on to maturity.

Now, we come to this very difficult passage to understand. And this passage must be understood in light of all that is taught in the preceding verses concerning immaturity and maturity.

What is the meaning of Verses 4 thru 8? We are looking at these verse as to the CHARACTERISTICS OF THOSE WHO FALL AWAY. The Characteristics of those who fall away.

Hebrews chapter 6 beginning at Vs 4.....There are notes in your bulletin and I hope you will use them as we study God's Word together.

(Read 6:4-8)

Shall we ask the Lord to guide our understanding?

The biggest problem people have concerning this text is: IF YOU ARE A CHRISTIAN, IS IT TELLING US THAT WE CAN LOSE OUR SALVATION?

Some folks say that this text teaches that you can lose your salvation. Others, say that it is talking about, only, professing christians. That is, it is not talking about true believers, just those who say they are christians. And the fact that they fell away proves that they were never saved.

Others, say, that it is talking about back sliders. Now, back sliding is a term used in the O.T. And I believe we have sort-off made <sup>it</sup> into a major doctrine ~~in~~ Christianity. BACK SLIDING IS THE CONDITION OF ONE WHO IS JUST COPING OUT ON HIS CHRISTIAN RESPONSIBILITIES. IT REFERS TO ONE WHO DOESN'T REALLY WANT TO LIVE FOR THE LORD. IT REFERS TO A CARNAL CHRISTIAN.

But, I don't like that word at all because it miss leads people into a ~~s~~sense of false security.

Now, ~~o~~thers believe that this text is not talking about Christians at all. It is just talking about Jews. So, they are the only ones who have this problem. I am sure that makes the Jews feel comfortable.....

O.K., are the people under discussion saved , or <sup>are</sup> ~~our~~ they not saved? In answering this question there are four basic things that I ~~j~~would like you to keep in mind. Four basic concepts which will help you understand these verses in light of the total ~~message~~ message of this portion of scripture. Remember, now, we are talking about the CAUSES OF IMMATURITY AND THE CHALLENGE TO MATURITY...O.K. four basic concepts.....

Number one, would you notice, please, the change in pronounces in these verses. For example in Vs 12 <sup>of chapter 5</sup> he says "YOU"....Paul emphases "YOU"...

In Vs 1 of chapter 6 , Paul says "US"...."LET US PRESS ON TO MATURITY."

In Vs 3 of chapter 6 , he uses the pronoun "WE"...

But, in Vs 4 Paul changes to the pronoun "THOSE"....NOT..."WE" "YOU" OR "US"....But he changes to the pronoun "THOSE"...

In Vs 6 , it is the ~~f~~pronoun "THEY" AND "THOSE"..Not, "YOU" AND "WE"....

Then, in Vs 9 , I notice that he changes back again to "WE"..."WE ARE CONVINCED OF BETTER THINGS CONCERNING "YOU"...AND THAT ACCOMPANY SALVATION, THOUGH "WE" ARE SPEAKING IN THIS WAY."

So, notice that there is a definite change in pronounces in Vs 4-8... And notice in the change of pronounces that Paul is referring to a group of people called "THEY".....~~or~~ "Those"

The second thing that I want you to see and remember is that in Vs 4,  
verse 5 and verse 6, there are five participles. Five participles...And each  
participle must be considered. This is just simple grammar. But so many  
people when they teach this passage they take one or two of those participles  
and they apply it to a believer and then they take another participle and  
apply it to an unbeliever...YOU CANNOT DO THAT. THERE ARE FIVE PARTICIPLES  
AND THEY ALL MUST BE TREATED THE SAME. THEY ARE EQUAL....I will list them  
for you in a moment.

The third thing I want you to notice is that in Vs 6 it starts out with  
the word "IF"....That is, if you are reading KJ, Vs 6 starts out with the  
word "IF".....And dear friends, it should not be there. You should remove  
the word "IF" because it is not in the Greek text. It is just an interpretation.  
It is the fifth of the participles. It is to be counted equal with the  
participles of Verse 4 and 5. It is not another statement....LIKE: "IF YOU  
DO THIS, THEN IT IS IMPOSSIBLE.".....Do you understand?

So many people have read that "IF" in there and they have said: "THERE,  
YOU SEE".....And the problem is the word "IF". I am sorry about that, but  
it is not in the original Greek Text. So, you cannot translate: "IF THEY  
FALL AWAY". It is simply the participle phrase "FALLEN AWAY."

Then the fourth thing that I want you to remember. And all of this is  
just introduction. Please remember that all of these participles are in  
the AROSIT TENSE. You will forgive me for being so technical. But, it is  
very important (anyway, some of you want the meat of the Gospel, so I am  
giving it to you).....

The AROSIT TENSE in Greek means "that something happened at a moment of  
time...once and for all....BANG...IT HAPPENED....

For example, it says in Vs 6 "it is impossible for those who had been  
once enlightened". And the issue is "ONCE FOR ALL." Some people have  
read into that. So, it was a moment of time and they have not continued on  
in Christ. Therefore, it proves they have only tasted, they have only touched,  
~~they have only~~ but they never really got a whole of it.

Now, I know some people believe that because I use to. But, I don't believe that anymore. I think it is impossible because all of God's statements about salvation always uses this Arosit tense. You are saved and you know it. It is once and for alllll.

So, what is the answer to the question? Is this concerning christians or isn't it?

I would like to study these verses by looking, first of all, at the implications as they relate to salvation. And I emphasize the word "IMPLICATION".....Something is implied. Are the people under discussion saved or are they not saved? The implications as they relate to salvation. And all these implications are warped up in these five participles.....

Number one: ENLIGHTENED!....Paul is simply describing, whoever this group of people called "THEY" are...He is describing them, first of all, as those who are "ENLIGHTENED". It is in the passive voice meaning that someone enlightened "THEM". And it is referring to salvation because in chapter 10:32 it says "but remember the former days, when, after being enlightened, you endured a great conflict of sufferings." So, Paul is giving comfort, here, to believers. And he says they were enlightened. It is referring to salvation.

Participle number two In Vs 4 it says they "TASTED OF THE HEAVENLY GIFT." People say that if they really were saved they would have eaten it and not just tasted it. I tend to disagree with that position. WHY?. It is not consistent with Scripture. Would you look back at chapter 2:9...The same word is used in Vs 2 of chapter 2 about Jesus...(READ 2:9)

I ask you. Did Jesus die or didn't He?....Of course He did....Then what does it mean to tast death? It means to "experience it"...

So, what does it mean in chapter 6 to tast the heavenly gift? It means to experience it....RIGHT...And these people are believers according to the second participle. What is the heavenly gift? Christ said to the Samaritan woman in John chapter 4 that HE was the heavenly gift.....

Number threee the third participle, vs 4, is: "THEY WERE MADE 4 PARTAKERS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT." Now, if you will look back to chapter 3 verse 1 and chapter 3 verse 14 you will find the same word "PARTAKERS".....

~~So they are... -5 They are... the Holy Spirit~~

(4) The Fourth participle is found in Vs 5 : "they have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come." "Tasted" - same word again as is found in Vs 4..They have accurately experienced God's Word and POWERS. The word "Powers" is usually translated "Miracles." In chapter 2 verse 4: "God also bearing witness with them, both by signs and wonders and by various miracles." That is the word translated "POWERS" in chapter 6.

Now why am I pointing this out? How did this early people know that what the Apostles were teaching was the truth? They did not have the Bible. How did they know? Answer: The spoken words of the Apostles were confirmed by Signs - Wonders - and Miracles. <sup>in</sup> ~~Others words~~ they would not have accepted it. The Jews require a sign says I Cor 1:22.

They did taste and experience the miracles of the truth of God's Word. They experienced it in their life time. **THEY WERE ACTURALLY BELIEVERS.**

(5) Number 6 is in Vs 6: "~~a~~ having fallen away." I have already told you that "if" is not in the Greek text. It is an interpretation. It simply reads "having fallen away."

At this point people ask: "How could they be believers if they have fallen away?" I will answer that in a moment. But there is no question as to what is being said. The same word is used in the Greek O.T. in Ezekiel chapter 18 Vs 24. It is speaking about Israel's total rejection and total aposacy. It is used in Heb 10:26-27 again referring to Apostacy, which results in terrifying consequences..

~~How could they... I said. And some of you I am sure...~~

O.K. - those are the implications as to salvation. And the text says they all refer to believers; and these believers have fallen away..**THAT IS WHAT THE TEXT SAYS...** SECONDLY

**3. THE IMPOSSIBILITY INVOLVED.**

(1) First, The renewing - which reveals they were christians.

① Vs 4 says(in the KJV) "It is impossible" -- then the sentence is broken up with all those participles -- and it is continued down in Vs 6. It reads then "It is impossible (Vs 6) to renew them again to repentance."

By the way the word "again" means that they once had it. 2 Cor 5:17 says any man be in Christ he is a new creature." The word "new" means "to make new again." They were new once. But the text is saying: "2 all these things are true about believers and they fall away, it is impossible to renew them again." They cannot be saved again. Which means they were lost. Right -- ~~in between~~ --- Follow the text -- that is what it says-----

(2) Number 2 -- as to the reason why it is impossible, TO RENEW THEM .

Vs 6 says "seeing they again crucify to themselves the Son of God."

Now, in the KJV it used the word "Afresh". It is simple the Greek word translated in later versions as "again". This is saying that it is ~~impossible~~ impossible to renew ~~them~~ <sup>them again</sup> ~~again~~ because they are crucifying Jesus. PERIOD.

AND "they are putting Him(Jesus) to open shame." The whole point is that they are crucifying Christ and rejecting his atonement. Atonement is the reason why Christ died on the Cross. The Jews said it was a public shame for someone to hang on a tree. The rejection of the atonement of Christ. AND THAT IS WHY YOU CANNOT RENEW THEM AGIN. IT IS TALKING ABOUT BELIEVERS WHO LOSE THERE SALVATION AND YOU CANNOT MAKE THEM CHRISTIANS AGAIN...

NOW WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THAT??? STAY WITH ME --- DON'T LEAVE.

Let's look at the illustration in Vs 7-8 in order to see the answer.

(C)

READ VS 7-8

Three things about this illustration

(1) One, what is <sup>the</sup> cause behind all the productivity as to THORNS or meat to be eaten? (ANSWER-- The rain....You see, the Lord rains upon the just as well as the unjust..So they have received the rain..The symbol, then, is -- The ~~soil~~ soil represents "people." The rain" is like "the Word of God."

(2) Noctice, the contrast. There ~~are~~ two kinds of soils. ~~That~~ which leads to blessings -- and that which leads to cursing. .. And Paul, likens all people into two camps: those who are going to be blessed--that is, saved to eternal salvation. And those who are going to be cursed--that is, ~~those~~ to eternal damnation..

(3) The consequences, are also stated. They are going to be rejected and there end is ~~burning~~ burning.. It doesn't take a whole lot of imagination to know what that means, does it?

The Bible says that who ever ~~was~~ <sup>is</sup> was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

SO, knowing all of this -- let us come back and ask: WHAT IS ~~THE ANSWER~~ HE SAVING?

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I believe the answer is not that these are professing believer who never really got saved. Because that is not what the text is teaching. So, why run away from it...The Bible teaches they were saved...

I don't believe they were saved people who are now lost, either. You say, wait a minute, you just said that....STAY WITH ME

I don't believe they are saved people who have ~~back~~ <sup>Back</sup>slided...because the consequence are very severe...WHAT IS THE ANSWER...

IT IS SIMPLE AN ILLUSTRATION, A HYPOTHETICAL CASE, to illustrate the danger of apostasy and the rejection of the Christian message...

They never could experience this. ~~It~~ It never really could happen. The whole issue is; that is what God thinks about it.

I know it couldn't happen because Vs 9 says, changing the pronoun, "But, beloved, we are convinced of better things concerning you," WHAT KIND OF THINGS????? Things that accompany salvation. He is not even talking about them...SO, WHO ARE THE "THEY"...? A HYPOTHETICAL ILLUSTRATION WHY?

What is the ~~warning~~ <sup>Warning</sup>, here? IT IS TO SHOW THE DANGER OF REJECTION AND APOSTASY.

8

If you are here today, and you have heard the christian message, the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, THE BIBLE IS WARNING YOU OF WHAT GOD THINKS OF YOU TURNING YOUR BACK ON JESUS CHRIST. IT IS AS SEVERE AS THIS ILLUSTRATION

Even if you could get saved -- Even if you could then fall away -- GOD WOULD NEVER CAUSE REPENTANCE AGAIN..

You may not like that. But, this whole point is illustrated over and over again through out the Book of Hebrews. THE SERIOUSNESS OF REJECTING THE GOSPEL MESSAGE OF JESUS CHRIST.

HOW DOES THAT APPLY TO BELIEVERS? This whole discussion began in chapter 5 verse 11 about believers who have now turned away from the Bible and are now dull of hearing and aren't responding to the depth concerning Jesus Christ. And the point is: -- That even believers ought to know by this hypothetical illustration WHAT GOD THINK ABOUT HIS WORD.

The Psalmist says that God has exalted his Word above his name...All the way through the Bible , it says one message to those of us who hear the Word. WE ARE ACCOUNTABLE FOR WHAT WE HEAR...And God does not think very much of those who reject and do not respond to His WORD..HIS WILL..HIS LOVE FOR YOUR LIFE..

And if you are here this morrowing without assurance of your relationship to christ, but you have heard the gospel message that all of your sin was paid for by Jesus, that you can live eternal with God, by believe in Christ. Believeing that he died for you and paid for your sins, that he rose again from the dead. AND YET, you walk out of here and reject that message...you are lost....and -- you -- will -- see -- the -- warth -- of God.

And this passage is a great warning passage - Warning us of what God thinks about those who reject Him.

Don't fall under the condemnation of God's judgement. Let this be your day of decision. "For as many as received Him, to them He gave the right ro become children of God, even to those who believe in His name.

ACCEPT JESUS TODAY.

SHALL WE CLOSE WITH A WORD OFPRAYER