

Can't Lose – Hebrews 5:11-6:12 (Part 2)

Heb 6; I'm particularly thankful on this Memorial Day weekend, that I can say that to you without fear of reprisal – “open your Bibles”

It's one of many freedoms won and preserved by the men and women in our Armed Forces over the years, and some of them gave their *lives* to ensure it

- That said, this is the last passage in our series on Blessed Assurance, with only one more message to go after this; And we found last week . . .
That there's something here for everyone; Starting with those who are immature

There's . . .

1. Instruction for the Immature – Grow up (5:11-6:3)

Be someone who has *their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil* (5:14); IOW apply what you know, and then learn more

Which you'll never do if you don't first admit your immaturity, and learn the basics
And I gave you 5 steps for that:

1. **Come to church every week**
2. **Attend Harvest Essentials**
3. **Serve in a ministry**
4. **Join a Discipleship Group**
5. **Sign up for Frameworks**

5 steps to grow into maturity (**Summary**)

And then 2nd, we found that there's . . .

2. Warning for the rebellious – There's no way back (v4-6, 8)

[4] *For it is impossible* [v4], *in the case of those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, and have shared in the Holy Spirit, [5] and have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the age to come, [6] and then have fallen away, [it's impossible] to restore them again to repentance, since they are crucifying once again the Son of God to their own harm and holding him up to contempt.*

It's a warning for those *familiar* with the things of God, but don't *know* God, to stay the course; Don't fall away

Don't reject Jesus and his people in a willful, sustained, and rebellious manner

B/c if you do, there's no way back; It's *impossible* it says

For 3 reasons:

(A) **Their rebellion is public**

(B) **Their rejection is final**

(C) **Their heart is hard** – numb to the ill-effects of sin & blind to the glorious alternatives
And their end is condemnation and hell; It's a warning; That was Part 1 (**Summary**)

- Now, having *established* that (**Part 2**), some would argue that the people described here are genuinely saved, and *lose* their salvation
They haven't just experienced some of the *blessings* of salvation, they're in *actually in* Christ; And then somehow separate from him
No longer forgiven, no longer justified, and no longer saved

And I want to give you 6 reasons, from the Scriptures, why that's not true

6 Reasons You Can't Lose Your Salvation

1. It's not supported by the words of the text

And there are 3 in particular; 3 words that don't imply a *genuine* salvation, and therefore don't support the conclusion that you can *lose* your salvation

1. *Enlightened* – found in v4; They *have once been enlightened*

It comes from the Greek word *photizo*, and refers to being exposed to, and made aware of, the truth; IOW they were informed and *understood* the gospel . . .

But weren't necessarily *transformed* by it; That's not implied

So the word *enlightened* does not support the conclusion that you can *lose* your salvation, b/c it doesn't support the premise that you ever had it

2. *Tasted* – found in v4 and 5; Where it says they *have tasted the heavenly gift* . . .

And *have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the age to come*

They've tasted it; Implying a temporary savoring, and sampling; Like you stick your foot in the pool to test the temperature

Or sample food at a restaurant counter; It's a temporary thing, and a partial thing

The best example of which, is found in **Mt 27:34** when Christ tasted the wine and gall on the cross; *They offered him wine to drink, mixed with gall* [a bitter herb that deadens pain]; *but when he tasted it* [same word], *he would not drink it*

It was a sampling, not a full ingestion; Temporary, not permanent; So too in Heb 6****

3. *Shared* – there at the end of v4; They *have shared in the Holy Spirit*

And the Greek word here is *metochous*, which means “a participation or association with”; And it has a wide *range* of meanings

Sometimes implying a *surface* level cooperation, and sometimes a close *identification*;
Like when Jesus shared in our humanity (Heb 2:14); He identified with us

But it doesn't *have* to mean that, and here I don't think it does – b/c of the other words, and the reasons to follow

They experienced a *degree* of cooperation with the Holy Spirit, but not a full identification and communing with him

So the words of the text don't support the conclusion that you can *lose* your salvation, b/c the people to whom they refer were never saved

2. It's not supported by the testimony of Jesus

Like in **Mt 7:21-23**

[21] *“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. [22] On that day many will say to me, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?’ [23] And then will I declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.’*

Despite the fact that they *tasted* the heavenly gift – prophesying in Jesus' *name* . . .

And experienced the goodness of God's word – casting out *demons* . . .

And shared in the power of God – doing *mighty works* . . .

Despite all that, Jesus says – *I never knew you*

Not, “I don't know you any *more*”, or “I knew you once, but not now” . . .

But I never knew you; You were *never* saved; *Never* written in the Book of Life*****

So the testimony of Jesus himself does not support the conclusion that you can lose your salvation; Rather, it supports the conclusion that you were never saved in the 1st place

3. It's not consistent with the whole of Scripture

One of the foundational principles of good Bible interpretation is to use the clearest passages to interpret the less clear

And in the case of *this* text, which is less clear – we have *many* other texts that very clearly indicate you can't lose your salvation

Like **Jn 10:27-28** – *My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish*; That's a pretty airtight promise

Eph 1:13-14 – *In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, [14] who is the guarantee of our inheritance [our gift of eternal life] until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory. You can't lose*

Phil 1:6 – *I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ. He's sure*

So the people described here in Hebrews 6 *can't* be genuinely saved . . . *****
B/c to *lose* their salvation would be inconsistent with the rest of Scripture

4. It's contrary to God's nature

That what he says and does, is final; That what's his, he keeps

Ecd 3:14-15 – *Whatever God does endures forever; nothing can be added to it, nor anything taken from it. God has done it*

That's his nature – what he does, endures; Especially the saving of our souls*****

Not only that, but it's in God's nature to *complete* what he *promises*

1 Pet 1:5 says that we are being guarded *by God's power . . . for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time* (1 Pet 1:5); What he says, he does; And it endures

So the people described in Hebrews 6 can't be *saved*, b/c it's contrary to God's nature to go *back* on his word, and essentially *un-save* them

5. It flies in the face of being adopted

A concept used to *describe* our salvation

Like in **Eph 1:4** – *In love he predestined us for adoption through Jesus Christ*

He determined beforehand, that we would be a part of his family; Adopted

And **Gal 4:4-5** says – *God sent forth his Son . . . that we might receive adoption as sons.*

That we would become a permanent part of his family; Just like adoption in an *earthly* sense is a permanent thing; It's as if you were *born* into the family

And just like you can't be *un-born*, you can't be *un-adopted*; It's permanent*****

6. It's an insult to Christ

Who said in **Jn 6:37** – *Whoever comes to me I will never cast out*

Jn 6:40 – *Everyone who sees me and believes . . . I will raise up at the last day*

To say you can lose your salvation, is basically saying to Jesus – “you can't follow through on your promises” And *that's* an insult; B/c he *died* to follow through

➤ 6 reasons (**Summary**); 6 reasons you can't *lose* your salvation, and 6 reasons this passage doesn't refer to those who are genuinely saved
Which means it *must* refer to those who have come *close* to making a profession of faith, but haven't stepped over the line
Those who are playing along, but aren't genuine

And the warning remains – don't fall away, don't reject him, don't rebel

Because if you do, there's no way back; That's the 2nd group addressed here

And then 3rd, are the faithful; There's . . .

3. Assurance for the faithful – Your salvation is _____ (v7, 9-10)

[7] *For land that has drunk the rain that often falls on it, and produces a crop useful to those for whose sake it is cultivated, receives a blessing from God. [8] But if it bears thorns and thistles, it is worthless and near to being cursed, and its end is to be burned. [9] Though we speak in this way, yet in your case, beloved, we feel sure of better things—things that belong to salvation [implying that the previous verses did not pertain to salvation; yet another reason they don't imply you can lose it]. [10] For God is not unjust so as to overlook your work and the love that you have shown for his name in serving the saints, as you still do.*

It's a message of assurance; For those who bear *good* fruit; Those who *love* God; Those who serve him

If that's you, God is saying that your end isn't to experience the worst, the fire of hell (v8b), but the best – *better things*; Things that go hand in hand with *salvation*, v9
Though we speak in this way [warning the rebellious of bad things], yet in your case, beloved, we feel sure of better things—things that belong to salvation

Like life with Jesus on a new heaven and new earth

And the presence of his Spirit until then

And sanctification along the way; And glorification when we get there

If you're among the faithful, like those in v7 who produce *good* fruit, you can count on those things, you can be *sure* of it; B/c **your salvation is secure**

That's the assurance here for the faithful – your salvation is secure

➤ And there are 4 reasons for it in this passage:

(A) God sees your faithfulness

Far from overlooking you, he *sees* you; Including your faithfulness to *work* for Christ – *serving the saints* like it says in v10; He sees it, and well knows you're one of his
And he sees your faithfulness to *love* him – *the love you have shown for his name* (10)
And your faithfulness to keep on – *as you still do* (10b)
And your faithfulness to bear fruit in your life – producing a *crop useful* to others, v7
God sees it; All of it; And it's the first reason you can be secure in your salvation

(B) God promises you a blessing

[7] *For land that has drunk the rain that often falls on it, and produces a crop useful to those for whose sake it is cultivated, receives a blessing from God.*

Land that has drunk the rain that often falls on it, refers to us; Those who receive a blessing of life to the full and life eternal

Including joy unspeakable, and peace inscrutable, and grace unthinkable

It's a promise; And that *alone* is security when it comes from God

(C) God has a purpose for your life

The highest of which is to glorify him; Which goes hand in hand w/ loving his *name*, v10

But don't miss v7, and his purpose to *cultivate* your life, in order to bless *others*

Our lives as believers, are meant for two things – glorifying God, and blessing others

That's it; *Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength . . . and your neighbor as yourself* (Mk 12:30)

Glorify God by loving *him*, and bless others by loving *them*

That's God's purpose for your life – his purpose in *saving* your life

A purpose he's so passionate about, you can be absolutely sure of your salvation to accomplish it

(D) God is just

Or as it says in v10 – *God is not so unjust as to overlook* your faithfulness

He won't ignore your work; He won't disregard your love; And he won't renege on his promise to save you and keep you; He's not like that

He's good, and just; *Faithful* to his word, and perfect through/through **(Summary)**

4 reasons your salvation is secure; And blessed assurance for the faithful

But for the unfaithful, the rebellious – the warning remains

Better to grow up

Pray – Lord, thank you for being faithful to us, and giving us the strength to be faithful to

you; Oh to grace how great a debtor, daily I'm constrained to be; Where would we be without you binding our wandering hearts to thee? It's blessed assurance indeed

Receive our tithes and offerings now as a response, and help us to steward them well