

Blessed Assurance vs. Baneful Assumptions

Hebrews 6:4-8

In Hebrews 5 we have seen the importance of moving on to maturity spiritually, to the point of being able to handle the meat of God's word and not remain satisfied with milk. Hebrews 6 is a caution for those who remain static, those who are "dull of hearing" (5:11) or "sluggish" (6:12). This chapter is one that we should examine to see whether or not God's grace truly resides upon us. The writer of Hebrews is not alone. "*Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith; examine yourselves!*" (II Cor. 13:5). "*Give diligence to the assurance of your calling.*" (II Pet. 1:10).

I. Some will profess faith in Christ publicly but will end up "falling away" (v. 4-5).

There are five things said of those whose assumption of grace is ultimately proved invalid.

A. They have been enlightened ... this word is translated "baptism" in the Syriac version.

At the least it means some mental assent to the gospel truths of the New Testament.

B. They have tasted of the heavenly gift ... a gift not identified by the text, but most likely faith is intended, so that those enlightened with gospel truth say, "I believe!"**C. They have been made partakers of the Holy Spirit** ... by His power, not indwelling.

We read that King Saul, Balaam, and even Balaam's donkey all experienced the Spirit.

In King Saul's case it says, "*The Spirit of the Lord was upon him and he prophesied.*"

D. They have tasted of the good Word ... have enjoyed a Christian message or book.**E. They have experienced the powers of the age to come** (spiritual forces).

One can perform miracles, and yet not know God; as did the magicians of Pharaoh.

One can cast out demons, and yet be the messenger of Satan (see Matt. 7:21-23).

II. This "falling away" is a steady and consistent movement away from God (v. 5).

There is no practice in training the mind to "discern good and evil" (5:14). There is no hunger to know God and grow up in Him (5:13). There is "sluggishness" and "dullness of hearing" (6:12 and 5:11) when it comes to God's word. This falling away is not *one* sin, but a *continual movement* away from God. It is a pattern and a practice of this person's life.

A. It commences after publicly professing Christ; you must have some point to fall from.**B. It culminates with a complete repudiation of Christ;** whether it is by what is called

"the blasphemy of the Holy Spirit" or *"the sin unto death"* (Matt.12:32; I John 5:16).

"It is impossible to renew them again ... since they put Him to open shame" (Heb. 6:6).

It is not occasional; it is occupational. It is a steady decline, not a daily slip. It is pervasive.

III. God's people will always make progress for He purposes that we persevere (v. 7-8).

One of the great dangers of decision-oriented evangelism is the creation of apostates. Those convinced that praying a prayer, walking an aisle, raising a hand saves need Hebrews 6.

Vs. 7-8 give us a farming analogy to illustrate blessed assurance vs. baneful assumption.

A. Those whom the Father truly knows, like good soil, drink in the rain from heaven.**B. Those whom the Father truly knows, like good soil, produce fruit for other people.****C. Those whom the Father truly knows, like good soil, have been blessed by God.**

The fruit of the land brings not the favor of God; the favor of God brings forth the fruit.

Jesus taught this principle in the parable of the seed and the sower, a parable that could be more accurately called "the good soil" (Mark 4:1-20). What kind of soil are you?