

Hebrews 6:4-20: An Ancient Christology; Belief-Hope-Mystery

"This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, a hope both sure and steadfast and one which enters within the veil, where Jesus has entered as a forerunner for us, having become a high priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek"

Hebrews 6:19-20

sermonnotes

Introduction

Introduction

Not unlike a lot of places in scripture, we see that the author is ultimately concerned from a missional perspective. In our passage, the author is warning the people to watch out for falling away from the faith, and the falling away doesn't happen because of a wicked lifestyle, but because of a wicked heart that ultimately rejects God's grace, fails to join God in His mission, and fails to gain joy and sustenance from Him. He begins by giving us some hardcore truth, but mitigates it by calling his people's attention to the fact that they have shown signs of a spiritual pulse and that they need to cultivate that and move on to growth and hope in Christ, who is an "anchor for the soul."

Truth (Hebrews 6:4-8)

Sometimes truth is the hardest for us to hear, especially when that truth makes us aware of our condition. This passage is one of the hardest to interpret, as well as one of the hardest passages for us to hear. We are not quite sure if God has the right to judge us, so our natural inclination is to either try to appease this God (motivated by fear) with "good" works, or reject Him outright a, "Sadistic...Absentee landlord." The text clearly indicates that when this person falls away (from the faith), "*It is impossible to renew them again to repentance.*" There are a few ways this has been interpreted. Note first of all that it is impossible for them to repent. I believe that the issue is a heart issue, not a grace issue. It is a non-repentant heart that hates God (see both prodigal sinner; **Luke 15**), and it is that heart condition that makes the situation untenable.

- 1. Hypothetical:** It is a "*reductio ad absurdum*" that is written as a rhetorical device to advance the gravity of unbelief, but it could never happen.
- 2. Real Believers:** This line of thought holds an untenable theological idea that these are actual believers who can lose their salvation. This relies fully on the individual's "free" will in staying in concert with God's grace.
- 3. Pseudo Believers:** I think that this set of verses is discussing apparent believers that profess to know Christ, but do so for self-centered reasons. I think this for the following reasons:
 - a. It is in concert with much of the other teaching in regards to perseverance of the saints in the bible (**Philippians 1:6** cf. **Luke 14:28-32**; **Romans 8:29, 30, 39, 39**; **1 Peter 1:4, 5** cf. **Jude 24, 25**; **2 Timothy 1:12**; **Ephesians 4:30**; **1 John 2:19**).
 - b. The fact that the people mentioned all of these great things does not make anyone a believer. The fact is that God's grace falls on ALL men (**Hebrews 6:7** cf. **Matthew 5:45**; **Acts 14:16-17**), yet they still reject Him (see too **Acts 8:4-23**; **Mark 6:20**).
 - c. There are other teachings in scripture that parallel the idea that one can be deceived into believing that they are religious enough to get right with God (**Matthew 7:21-23**; **13:18-33**; **1 John 2:19**).
 - d. These people who have fallen away are in line with other believers in the wilderness experience, which has been the backdrop of much of this book (see **Hebrews 3+4**).
 - e. **As stated earlier, this problem is the problem of the heart. Judas saw miracles, experienced God through Christ, but simply did not believe (see too Matthew 7:21-23). The experience is NOT the evidence of God working in you!**

This is hard to hear, but the fact remains that this passage clearly teaches that the "unpardonable sin" (see **Matthew 12**) is a rejection of the power of God, and attributing it to the profane (**Matthew 12:32**). This is why it is impossible! Your heart is gone, and it is like you are standing there with the Romans crucifying Christ again (**Hebrews 6:6** cf. **2 Peter 2:20-21**). It is truly important that we don't hear we've got to do more for God, because that also is in the category of unbelief. The author is talking about "knowing" God and trusting Him. We either do or we don't, we don't have to muster up more faith, we must though put everything second and believe in Jesus.

Encouragement (Hebrews 9-12)

The encouragement that comes from the author is not to mitigate the reality of the truth, but to call out some of the true marks of the believer that they are displaying, namely their love toward God and to others. This is the hallmark (or should be) of the believer,

together • pushing • forward

Harambeechurch

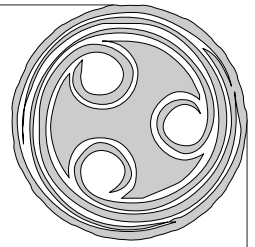
not fabricated cultural mores that have little to do with the ethic of the believer. Jesus summed up God's commands with loving God and others (**Matthew 22:37-39**). This may seem redundant around here, but it is the sign of the believer. Jesus Himself said that people would know that you are His disciples by our love for one another. Unfortunately it only proves all too well that **verses 6:4-6** are more of a reality since the church has not been always known for its love. Our salvation is not realized by our works or our experience, but our love that we have for God and others, and how that is shown in true hospitality. Subsequently, we have to get out of the mindset that we are American capitalists that have as a goal to isolate ourselves and our families from the world, but that we engage the world as a blessing to it. This is no doubt the application of the illustration found in verse 7. In verse 12, the author urges us not to become lazy (sluggish), but to become imitators of those that have gone on before us and persevered (see **Colossians 3:1-4**).

Hope (Hebrews 6:13-20)

Living without hope is I believe unbearable, and the bane of Atheism. Though the skeptic might call our hope vain, we know deep down it sustains us every morning. It is not a surprise that the author uses Abraham as an example of God's grace, and the hope that it produces in a person journeying with the Father. Abraham's journey is by no means pure and easy. He was a pagan from Ur, and he clearly had some critical trust issues. He didn't always treat his wife well, but he continued to believe that God would deliver the promises that He said He would. Hope does not come in blind optimism. Blind optimism is not a bad thing, but it really only has its power under shallow circumstances. Hopeful, optimistic people still die or lose loved ones. Like Abraham and Sarah, optimistic people can still be infertile and struggling to conceive. Optimism in of itself does nothing to curb the pain of these circumstances. Hope comes when we put our faith in the correct object. When we trust that God is in control and has a plan we will never understand, then we can begin to have hope that He is doing something great, and really begin to believe **Romans 8:28**, knowing that God, who doesn't lie and loves me, is carrying out His will for His reasons and glory. We have God's word, and His promised oath that He will deliver our salvation for us in the time of need. And because of this fact the Hope that is placed in Christ as our mediator between God and us is the "anchor for our soul." Our souls grow weary when life takes its toll, but we can always moor up to the fact that Christ entered the thrown room of God and made amends for the sins and injustices of mankind. We have hope that God will right the wrongs, and bring us to worship in a way that we would never had considered before.

...to the Heart

Job 1:20 inexplicitly reminds us that our faith in God is waning. It seems impossible sometimes to worship a God that allowed us the turmoil we are sometimes embroiled in. Let's spend as much of the week as we can meditating on Psalm 42, and ask God what it takes to bring us to a place that we, like the dear panting for water, will thirst again for Him. Let's ask what barriers (sin or otherwise) are keeping us from Him. What self-centered attitudes are crushing your relationships with your spouse, roommate, friends, and most importantly God?



pastors

mikegunn ::
mike@vivaharambee.com
bradsessler ::
brad@vivaharambee.com
marksteeds ::
mark@vivaharambee.com
bryanzug ::
zug@vivaharambee.com

deacons

bryannelson :: administrator
bryan@vivaharambee.com
aaronyoungren :: music
aaron@vivaharambee.com
mike&sandysmith :: prayer
prayer@vivaharambee.com
jennyrygel :: hospitality
jenny@vivaharambee.com