

Hebrews 6:9-20

By Louis T. Talbot

And thank you Mr. Announcer and good morning my radio friends and friends of the Bible Institute of Los Angeles. And welcome to another study in the Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews. I greet you this morning as I always do on behalf of the faculty in the student body of the Bible Institute and we consider you part of our student body. Now I want that we should complete our study of this sixth chapter of Hebrews this morning. And so we're going to start right away. We want to complete this portion so that tomorrow that we will begin the study of Chapter 7. I want every one of you please to have a Bible in hand.

You know that I've been praying that God has given to all of you folks light on the meaning of those solemn words in the opening verses of the book of Hebrews, especially those verses four to six, where the apostle Paul says it is impossible for those who were once enlightened and have tasted of the heavenly gift and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the world to come or the age to come, if they should fall away, to renew themselves again unto repentance.

My dear friends, those apostates the apostle Paul was talking about, what privileges they had. They had almost as many privileges as those that people in Los Angeles who do not know the Lord Jesus Christ have. And yet Paul says if they fall away from the things that they have seen and the things that they have just tasted, that it would be impossible to renew themselves again

unto repentance, just simply because they were turning away from the one who was the anti-type of all those things, even the Lord Jesus Christ, the only one who can produce repentance in the heart and give to one's salvation.

You know, I just want to say this to you in regard to that solemn warning, that it's a solemn thing for a person to hear the Gospel and to know the way of life and turn away from it. And there are thousands and tens of thousands of people in this city of Los Angeles, in this state of California that are doing this very thing. Now I want you to look at verse nine now. After the apostle Paul describes the, these apostates and likens them to a piece of land that continues to bear thorns and briars, even though the rain had come upon it, but the, the land had never drunk in the rain. After he had, he had likened these apostates to a barren piece of land that had been blessed with rain, and it continued to bear thorns and briars because it hadn't taken the rain into the soil. Then he turns to believers, real believers, with encouraging words. I want you to look at verse nine. Now he is addressing another class of people altogether. He says, "But beloved, we are persuaded better things of you." You see, he is talking now about the babes in Christ.

These folks who really had light, they did not have the growth that, that Paul would like to have seen them have. But they did have some things for which he thanked God. And so in verse nine, he says, "But beloved, we are persuaded better things of you. And the things that accompany salvation, though we thus spake, for God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labor of love." I want you to note what kind of labor they bestowed upon God's people, it was a labor of love. "Which ye have showed toward his name in that ye have ministered to the Saints and do minister." do you see, my dear friends, the apostle Paul is now addressing, he is addressing those

who had shown in their lives the evidences of salvation; and if a man is saved, suddenly there will be some change in his life. There are certain things, my dear friends, that accompany salvation, and these people that Paul is addressing in verse nine, their outward manner of life had been transformed and they were not made. They were not making the growth in the deep things of God for which the apostle Paul calls them babes, but, but there was one thing about them that rejoiced Paul's heart and that was that their outward manner of life had been changed and they had what Paul calls the things that accompany salvation. I want you to note, my dear friends, some of these things that Paul mentions as the things that accompany salvation. I guess all of you folks in radio land are saved and you have salvation. I trust, my dear friends, that you have the things that accompany salvation. First of all, one of the things that, that Paul mentions was a work and a labor of love. And my friends, if you do any Christian work, but you are just doing it out of a sense of duty, and you wish that you could get out of it, I tell you that the Lord doesn't want that at all. If you don't do service for the Lord Jesus Christ out of love for him, then you might as well just quit. He wants you to serve and he wants you giving and he wants everything that you do to be a service of love. Oh, if there is anything that is needed in the church today, it is a baptism of love. You know that there are so many folks that, that are sound in their theology but they do not seem to have very much love in their heart.

Now these folks that Paul is talking about, they have rendered the service of love. And then he speaks of their full assurance of hope and zeal for the things of Christ, not slothful and sluggishness. Do you see that they found delight in doing the things that they did for Christ and they did them just out of love for him? He doesn't tell us very much about what their service was. He does tell us in the tenth chapter of Hebrews that they ministered to him. That is, to Paul when

he was in jail and I don't suppose that were very many folks that were ministering to Paul when he was in a Roman jail. But these Hebrews did.

Do you see, my dear friends, that the proof of their reality as far as the outward world was concerned was seen in their faithful and loving service and their love to the fellow saints, leading to self-denying ministry? And then in verse ten, he encourages them not to grow lax or cold in these matters. He wanted them to go on. He wanted them to continue.

I think it is a sad thing when you see a person start out in the Christian life and he is full of zeal and, and full of love for the Saints and then after a while he begins to cool off and, and he doesn't go any farther and it seems that's the, that's the, the end of it as far as he is concerned. Now the apostle Paul wanted these young babes in Christ to go on in the way in which they were going and you know that the apostle in verse 13, he reminds them of their father Abraham in this matter of patience and holding to the promises of God. I want you to look at that verse 13 and see how he brings Abraham into this picture.

He says, "For when God made promises to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself saying, 'Surely, blessing, I will bless thee, and multiplying, I will multiply thee.'" And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise. You know that God made that promise to Abraham and Abraham had to wait a long time before he saw even a partial fulfillment of it, and all that Abraham had for years was the word of promise that God had given to him.

It was the word and the oath of God were all that Abraham had for many, many years. But he just held on to that promise. He believed God, even though there was no evidence that that promise was ever going to be fulfilled. He nevertheless believed God because he knew that God could not be untrue to his promise. And my dear friends, I want to say to you: you think of the promises and the assurances that God has given to us who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, promises of forgiveness of sins.

Promises of the unfailing purpose of God in our lives, and by the way, you know that that very thing, that is, God's promise of his unfailing purpose in your life and mine is the thing that a lot of Christians today have difficulty in believing. When I say the assurance or the promise of God's unfailing purpose in your life and mine, I refer to Romans 8:28. And do you remember that the apostle Paul says "For we know that all things work together for good to those who are called according to his purpose."

You know that whenever texts or call for in a prayer meeting, you, you're sure that somebody will come up with that, and you know that we believe it when everything is going fine. When we have friends and when we're enjoying health. But I want to tell you when the dark day is come, we're not so sure about it. Now when the dark day is come, my dear friend, and they will come, you lay hold upon that promise just as Abraham held on to the promise that God gave to him.

Abraham, he waited for years and there was no evidence, you know how old he was when God made that promise to him. And you know that according to the laws of natural generation, why, it was impossible for that promise to ever be fulfilled. But Abraham held on to it. And I tell you,

my dear friend, that God wants you to be a child of Abraham in that regard, and he wants you to believe in Romans 8:28 especially, because that's the promise, the assurance that God has given to us, the assurance of his unfailing purpose in our lives that we have difficulty in understanding.

Oftentimes I get letters and people tell me of tragedy that has come into their lives and they say "I don't understand this. I do not see why God has allowed this." Well my dear friends, there are a lot of things that have come into my life that I don't understand. But. And there are times, my dear friends, when, when you are just like Jacob. Do you remember when he was down in Egypt and he said "all these things are against me"? And he was referring, of course, to Joseph. He thought Joseph was dead and he was not dead at all.

And then when Benjamin was taken away from him, you know that that same like this last straw to break the camel's back. And the old man Jacob. He stood up and he said "all these things are against me." but rather, why, Jacob lived long enough to see that the very things that he thought were against him were working for him and for his salvation and for the preservation of all of his family. And I want to say to you my dear friends, you know that God has given to you promises and they don't seem to be working out very much for you.

It doesn't seem as though Romans 8:28 is, is really true in your life. But do you know that one day when you stand on Canaan's shore, I mean up there in heaven, and you look over the pathway along which you have come, and the Lord sits down by your side and explains to you all the, his purposes in allowing you to go through tragedy and heartache and what have you. I

tell you, you will bless the heart that planned, and you will bless the hand that led, and you will thank him for the dark days as well as for the days of the sunshine.

All right, I must hurry on here.

I want you to look at verses 17 to 20. Verses 17 to 20. Here is now God, Paul harking back to the promise that God made to Abraham. He says "Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of the promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath." My dear friends, why did God confirm his promise to Abraham in regard to his seed with an oath? You know that God cannot lie. Why then did God make the promise and then swore with an oath that the thing was going to be done? He did that, my dear friends, to confirm, to just conform to our slowness in believing God.

We have such a tendency, my dear friends, to disbelieve God, and so God just comes down and he comes down, as it were, to our level and he makes a statement and then he swears with an oath. Why? How wonderfully gracious is God that he condescends to come down to our level and help us in our unbelief that we might believe. You know that when men go to court and the witnesses called in court, they have to take an oath just simply because the, the court does not know whether the witness is going to tell the truth or not.

And even after he tells the, after he has taken the oath oftentimes, they, he just commits perjury and he, and he does not tell the truth at all. But you know, my dear friends, God, the one who does not need to take an oath, he does it in order just to help you in your weakness. God is not

like a man, but when God says a thing, he'll do it. But in order to help you, my dear friends, he swears everything that he has promised to you with an oath. You know that there are hundreds and hundreds of promises in the Bible that cover every circumstance in this life and that which is to come, and God swears that they're all true. And brother, God wants you to lay hold upon them just as he was exhorting those early Christians, those Hebrew Christians to do what Abraham did. God gave him a promise and Abraham got a hold of it and he believed it. And he waited for years to see its fulfillment. And God wants you, my dear friends, to do the same thing. Now Abraham was a man just like you and just like me. He had his failures and, and he, he had a poorer background than you and I have. But he stands out in the Bible as one of the great giants because he believed God.

God gave him a promise. And according to the laws of nature, the promise could never be fulfilled. But God, Abraham believed God.

And do you know, my dear friends, that when you believe his word, that is when you honor God.

I have folks oftentimes say to me, "Mr. Talbot, I can't do any public work and I can't teach Sunday school and do a lot of things that I see other folks are doing, and I'd like to do something. Tell you, I'd like you to tell me how I can please God. What is it that pleases God?"

My friends, the thing about Abraham that pleased God was that, that he believed. He believed God.

And that's the thing that God has recorded in his word.

And when the apostle Paul wrote the episode to the Romans, you'll remember that in the fourth chapter that the spirit of God led him to hark back to the days of Abraham and to record that Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him as righteousness. My friend, when you stand before an open grave, and you see the body of a loved one lowered six feet below the surface of the earth, God wants you to stand there and say "I believe in the resurrection of the dead. And I believe that this body is going to rise again."

You know that last Saturday a few of us gathered in Forest Lawn to, to lay away the body of a dear saint of God, one who had been a member of the Church of the Open Door for many years. She was there in my time. A wonderful child of God. And her body had just become very thin and very emaciated. And you know that as we looked into that open grave, "my friends," I said to the people, "just as surely as this body goes into this grave, just as surely will it come out."

Now listen: if the Lord didn't come, suppose that the Lord should not come for 50 years, and I should be living at that time and I should go to that grave at Forest Lawn, I'd see less evidence of the truth of what I said when I looked into that open grave than I saw last Saturday afternoon. I would find if I, if that body was taken up by, we would find that it had gone back to Mother Earth and possibly all the bones would have disappeared.

But my friends, if I am alive 50 years from now and that body had disappeared, I'd still stand there and say "I believe that the body that was placed in that grave 50 years back is going to rise

again." God wants you to believe him. And that was the thing that please, pleased God about Abraham. And the thing that, that delighted the heart of the Apostle Paul, although these, that he is writing to, they couldn't understand the, the Melchizedek priesthood, although he goes into that again when we come to chapter 7. Yet there were certain things about them that delighted his heart. And he urges them to go on and don't become sluggish in this thing, but to continue in the labor of love and in their ministry and in what they were doing out of a love for the Lord Jesus. He wanted them to increase in usefulness and fruitfulness. And he wants you, my dear friends, to hold, to lay a hold upon every promise that is in this book.

Now I want you to read the rest of the chapter. Got about five minutes here left. Four minutes.

I want you to look at verse 17: wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of the promise," Now you're in that, my friends, the heirs of the promise, "the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath, that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us. Which hope we have an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil. Wither the fore-runner is for us entered, even Jesus, made a high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek."

My friends, I want you to note those words in verse 18: We have fled for refuge to lay upon the hope that is set before us. Evidently Paul was referring to the six cities of refuge that are mentioned in the Old Testament, you'll remember that there were six cities, and when a man

killed another man unwittingly, he fled to one of those cities and he was to remain there until the death of the high priest, and while he was in that city, he was perfectly safe.

And you know that's what Paul is reminding these Hebrews of, and he is telling us that Christ is our, he is our city of refuge and you know that we're safe forever, because we have a high priest who never dies! The man who entered into the city of refuge was to stay there until the death of the high priest, and then what happened, I don't know, but you know that you and I have fled to Christ as our refuge and He has a priesthood who never dies. And then he speaks also, he speaks of the anchor of the soul. My friend, do you know where, do you know that an anchor, my friend, is not carried inside the boat?

The anchor is cast outside the boat.

And you know that while that boat is linked with the anchor, there is no storm can wreck it.