

Hebrews 6:1–20 — Pressing On to Maturity and Holding Fast to the Anchor of Hope

Moving Beyond the Basics

The writer begins with a clear pastoral exhortation:

“Therefore, leaving the discussion of the elementary principles of Christ, let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, of the doctrine of baptisms, of laying on of hands, of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment. And this we will do if God permits” (Hebrews 6:1–3, NKJV).

He’s not belittling the basics. Repentance, faith, baptism, resurrection, judgment—these are foundational truths. But foundations are not the whole house. The goal is not to live forever at the starting line.

So he says, “Let’s go on to maturity.” Not just information—spiritual development. Not just knowing Christian vocabulary—walking with God in a steady, growing relationship.

There is a subtle danger in a church culture that constantly circles the same entry-level truths but never builds. People may remain sincere, active, even emotional—yet still spiritually underdeveloped. The Lord loves us too much to leave us there.

A healthy church grows the way healthy believers grow: line upon line, chapter upon chapter, learning the full counsel of God. That’s how roots go down deep—and fruit comes out over time.

A Difficult Warning and Why It Matters

Then we come to one of the most sobering passages in the letter:

“For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance, since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God, and put Him to an open shame” (Hebrews 6:4–6, NKJV).

We need to handle this carefully, because Scripture must be understood with Scripture. When a passage is difficult, we don’t isolate it—we balance it with the clear teaching of God’s Word.

We know the Bible teaches that a person may fail grievously and still find restoration. Peter denied the Lord, even with oaths, and yet he was forgiven and restored. Jesus did not discard him; Jesus recommissioned him.

We also know Jesus said:

“The one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out” (John 6:37, NKJV).

So whatever Hebrews 6:4–6 means, it cannot mean that a sincere, repentant person who wants Jesus is rejected by Jesus. Christ does not turn away those who truly come.

Here is the pastoral clarity we can hold onto: If someone is broken over sin, longing for God, wanting to return, wanting mercy—this warning is not written to crush them. That desire itself is evidence God is still working in them.

This warning seems aimed at something else: a hardened, willful, settled turning away—where a person has been exposed to real light, real truth, real spiritual influence, and then deliberately chooses to reject Christ with a fixed, calloused heart. Not momentary stumbling, not a season of drifting, but a determined refusal—treating the Son of God with contempt.

If a person says, “I want nothing to do with Jesus,” and continues in that posture, they should be afraid—not because God is unwilling to save, but because their heart is becoming incapable of repentance.

But if you are hearing God’s voice today, if you feel conviction, if you want to come back, then hear this plainly: Jesus Christ stands ready to receive you. The door is open to the one who will come.

Fruit or Thorns: What the Soil Produces Reveals the Condition

The writer uses an illustration:

“For the earth which drinks in the rain that often comes upon it, and bears herbs useful for those by whom it is cultivated, receives blessing from God; but if it bears thorns and briers, it is rejected and near to being cursed, whose end is to be burned” (Hebrews 6:7–8, NKJV).

Rain falls on the same ground. The difference is what the ground produces. Some hearts respond with life and fruit; others resist until only thorns remain.

This is why spiritual maturity matters. Mature believers don’t just receive truth—they bear fruit from it: humility, love, obedience, perseverance, discernment, generosity, purity, endurance.

Encouragement: God Has Not Forgotten You

After the warning, the tone softens with encouragement:

“But, beloved, we are confident of better things concerning you, yes, things that accompany salvation” (Hebrews 6:9, NKJV).

He is saying, “I had to give the warning, but I do not believe you are headed for ruin.”

Then he adds:

“For God is not unjust to forget your work and labor of love which you have shown toward His name, in that you have ministered to the saints, and do minister” (Hebrews 6:10, NKJV).

What a comfort. God sees. God remembers. God is not indifferent to the labor of love—especially the quiet kind, the behind-the-scenes kind, the faithful kind.

Full Assurance and a Life That Refuses Spiritual Laziness

The writer urges diligence:

“And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope until the end” (Hebrews 6:11, NKJV).

“That you do not become sluggish, but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises” (Hebrews 6:12, NKJV).

Full assurance is not produced by hype. It is cultivated by a steady walk—faith that trusts God’s Word and patience that waits for God’s timing.

Many believers struggle here because they measure their standing with God by how well they performed this week. That is a shaky foundation. Assurance grows as we learn to rest in Christ and walk with Him consistently, not perfectly.

And notice: assurance does not create laziness. True assurance produces stability, gratitude, and endurance.

God’s Promise to Abraham: Faith and Patience Under Pressure

“For when God made a promise to Abraham, because He could swear by no one greater, He swore by Himself, saying, ‘Surely blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply you.’ And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise” (Hebrews 6:13–15, NKJV).

Abraham waited a long time. God’s promises are sure—but they are not always immediate. That’s why faith must be paired with patience.

And this is a critical truth: difficulty must be measured by the capacity of the one doing the work. If it is up to you, many things are impossible. But if God is at work, the word “impossible” does not belong in the conversation.

Two Unchangeable Things: God’s Promise and God’s Oath

“For men indeed swear by the greater, and an oath for confirmation is for them an end of all dispute. Thus God, determining to show more abundantly to the heirs of promise the immutability¹ of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath, that by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation” (Hebrews 6:16–18, NKJV).

God gives His Word—and then, to strengthen our confidence, He confirms it with an oath. Two unchangeable things: God’s promise and God’s oath. And it is impossible for God to lie.

So when the enemy whispers, “What are you going to do now?” the believer learns to flee to a promise and say, “God has spoken. God will be faithful.”

The Anchor of the Soul: Hope That Holds in the Storm

“This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters the Presence behind the veil” (Hebrews 6:19, NKJV).

Storms come. Winds blow. Waves rise. But the believer doesn’t have to be tossed around emotionally, spiritually, mentally, because hope is not a feeling—it is an anchor.

¹ **God’s immutability** is the biblical truth that God does not change in His nature, character, purposes, or promises. He is consistently the same in who He is and in what He has declared, even as He interacts with a changing world and responds to human actions.

“And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character, hope. Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.” (Romans 5:3-5)

The hope God gives us is a confident expectation that He will do everything He has promised. That hope is not anchored to circumstances, human strength, or a best-case outcome. It is anchored behind the veil—in the very presence of God.

“Where the forerunner has entered for us, even Jesus, having become High Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek” (Hebrews 6:20, NKJV).

Jesus is already there. He has gone ahead as our forerunner. He has opened the way. He is our High Priest—living, reigning, interceding. And because He shed His blood on the cross, we are forgiven. Because He rose from the dead, He is declared God, Savior, and Lord.

Practical Application

- Are you growing, or only repeating the basics year after year?
- When pressure hits, do you run to panic—or do you flee to God’s promises?
- Is your soul anchored in hope, or drifting with every storm?

Ask the Lord to make you a believer who is rooted, steady, and fruitful.

A Challenge for Believers

Do not become sluggish. Press on to maturity.

Open your Bible with fresh hunger. Spend time with the Lord consistently. Build on the foundation, and let God deepen your walk. Learn to live anchored, not anxious—grounded, not shaken—steady, not swept away.

Through faith and patience, inherit what God has promised.

An Invitation to Non-Believers

If you are outside of Christ, you do not have this anchor. You may have optimism, but not the hope that holds behind the veil.

Jesus Christ shed His blood on the cross to save you from sin. God raised Him from the dead, declaring Him to be God, Savior, and Lord. He is the only way to forgiveness, peace, and eternal life.

Today, you can come—honestly, humbly, openly—and He will receive you.

Turn from your sin. Put your trust in Jesus. Surrender your life to Him. And let the Lord anchor your soul with a hope that will not fail.