

## Pastor Dan's Answers to the Questions of Last Week, February 3, 2025

### Monday

Hebrews 6:4-6 makes a lot more sense if we understand that the writer of Hebrews meant that it's impossible for any of *his readers* (including you and I today) to bring a backslidden Christian back to repentance ourselves. But he didn't mean that it's impossible for God to bring them back. The writer's point for 6 chapters was to encourage his readers to continue on the path to Christian maturity, because their fellow Christians will be powerless to bring the readers back to repentance if they **"fall away"**. To be fair, there are Christians today who teach that genuine Christians will never backslide or **"fall away"**. That makes Hebrews 6:4-6 a problem for them. So they claim that the author was only referring to anyone who ALMOST became a Christian but who never actually put their faith fully in Christ. These "almost Christians" (you might call them) may have been **"enlightened" (v. 4a)**, as in they were intellectually informed about Jesus, but they never put their faith in him. They may have **"tasted the heavenly gift" (v. 4b)**, as in they sampled the life-giving waters of Jesus' salvation, but they never jumped in. They may have **"shared in the Holy Spirit" (v. 4c)** but they never let the Holy Spirit take up residence in them. They may have **"tasted the goodness of the word of God" (v. 5a)**, but they never let the Bible shape their lives. And they may have **"tasted ... the powers of the coming age" (v. 5b)**, but they never let those powers (e.g. the Holy Spirit) have any effect on them. Personally, I do not agree with this "once saved always saved" interpretation of these verses. I believe the writer of Hebrews is describing people throughout his letter who were once genuine believing and obeying Christians but who had decided to walk away from the faith, for whatever reason, and consequently *they had lost their salvation*. I believe that one of his main purposes in writing this letter was to warn his readers not to let this happen to them. Yet, I know that there are many good Christians who are on either side of this interpretation debate.

### Tuesday

The **"things that accompany salvation" (v. 9)** are: **"your work and the love you have shown him [God] as you have helped his people" (v. 10)**. We are not saved from our sins by any of these. But when we are truly saved from our sins (by faith in Jesus) these actions will follow. True faith is always followed by a lot of work in loving God (thru using the means of grace) and loving others. See Romans 7:4.

### Wednesday

The high priest would make atonement for the peoples' sins, "behind the curtain" of the temple, once a year, in the Holy of Holies. The writer's point is that Jesus did this for us, once and for all, on the cross. He is our final high priest. This is **"the hope offered to us" (v. 18)** by God, through Jesus.

### Thursday

God's people have always returned to him a tenth of their income. If you're not a tither yet, pick some percentage of your income and give that back to the Lord each week, until you are up to 10%.

### Friday

Only Jesus **"lives forever" (v. 24)** and **"always lives to intercede" (v. 25)** for us before God.

### Saturday

Because Jesus is **"holy, blameless, pure, set apart from sinners" (v. 26)**, he is the only totally perfect holy sacrifice for our sins, taking our blame upon himself, on the cross.

### Sunday

The "new" covenant of Jesus is written not on stone but is in our **"minds" and "hearts" (v. 10)**.