

Hebrews 2025 | The Danger of Falling Away

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Hebrews 6:4-12

If you have your Bibles let's go to Hebrews chapter 6. You might have seen that next Sunday night we are doing a 20 year celebration for a few of us at Hardin which just means we are all old now. It's pretty wild to think about Shelley, Abbey, Matt, and myself have been here for 20 years. As I reflect on that, just think that is 20 VBS weeks, 20 Easters, and 20 Christmases. That is a lot of ministry with a lot of different people and I've got to share it with so many of you. I've got to baptize some of you. I've not only baptized some of you but I've also married some of you and then also buried some and there is something sweet about burying somebody who was faithful, who loved the Lord, and finished the race. So when I think about 20 years of ministry, I think about so many highs, so many faces, and so many good moments but when I think about 20 years of ministry there is also that one gut wrenching thing. The hardest thing about 20 years is doing it long enough to see some of the faces that used to be here that aren't here anymore and it is devastating. Now, I don't mean that they're not at our church. They can be at a different church. It's great for people to go to a different place and serve the Lord in a different capacity. What I mean is when they no longer follow Jesus. They once went on mission trips, they got baptized, they were at the Lord's Supper, they did all the things, and shared in all those experiences but now they will tell you that they don't follow Jesus. They don't believe the gospel anymore. They have completely walked away. It is heartbreaking.

What the preacher is going to do in Hebrews chapter 6 is deal with that group of people. There is a group of people that are there, they are among the congregation, but they are in danger of falling away and if they fall away they can't come back so we are going to try and figure out what exactly that means. We're going to ask a bigger question and that is this- can you lose your salvation? Because we find in Hebrews chapter 6 that a lot of people point to this passage to defend the argument that you can

lose your salvation. So I'm just going to say right off the bat that I don't believe you can lose your salvation. That is one of the main Baptist doctrines- security of the believer. I don't believe you can lose your salvation but here is what I do believe. I do believe you can fake it. So you can't lose your salvation but you can fake it and when I say fake it I don't mean on purpose. Sometimes you can fake it while not even knowing it. You're here and you're doing the things but you're not honestly in Christ and eventually a faith that is fake will stray away. So there is a warning.

We had a young girl this morning who came to Christ after the service. She said, "I've been faking it and I want a real relationship with Jesus." So we are praying that the Holy Spirit does some things in this room this morning as well.

If you have your Bibles let's go to Hebrews chapter 6 and heed this warning. I don't think any of us can lose our salvation but there are perhaps some of us in this room that are faking it. We don't have actual salvation and we need to work through that and repent and believe in the gospel. We're going to read our key text and then we'll walk through a few more verses.

Scripture:

Hebrews 6:4-9 For it is impossible, in the case of those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, and have shared in the Holy Spirit, 5 and have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the age to come, 6 and then have fallen away, to restore them again to repentance, since they are crucifying once again the Son of God to their own harm and holding him up to contempt. 7 For land that has drunk the rain that often falls on it, and produces a crop useful to those for whose sake it is cultivated, receives a blessing from God. 8 But if it bears thorns and thistles, it is worthless and near to being cursed, and its end is to be burned. 9 Though we speak in this way, yet in your case, beloved, we feel sure of better things— things that belong to salvation.

I'll be honest, we have a really hard passage here. Every commentator I read this week started out by saying this is one of the hardest passages in

all of the New Testament. It is a hard text so let's just be honest. When we look at this text and that about it broadly, he's saying that something is impossible. What is impossible? There is a group of people who have once done these four different things that he lists. It seems like they are believers. It seems like they've been around the church and been around Christ. It looks like they are true believers yet they fall away. So what is impossible? It's impossible for this group if they fall away to then return, to come into repentance again because they would be crucifying Christ all over.

Now, I'm sure some of you are so confused on what all this means. That's okay! Just bear with us because we're going to walk through this together but the big idea here is this- does this teach a believer can lose their salvation or is there something else going on? So I want to give you the three major views. There were probably fifteen different views that I encountered, but I'm just going to give you the three main ones and I would say most of us fall into one of these camps.

Number one, it's actually hypothetical. So it's the hypothetical view and that means the preacher is giving a hypothetical situation that isn't true and can't really happen but he's just using it to scare the believers to continue in their faith in Christ. Parents sometimes give their kids hypothetical situations. We know they're not real. We know we aren't going to actually do that but we're just trying to scare them because we want them to obey. That's the thought here- this can't really happen and these people can't really fall away and not be restored. It's just hypothetical to keep them in the faith. I don't think that is true. I don't think this is hypothetical because it seems like a real warning to real people with real consequences.

The second one is the idea that it's actual. What I mean by actual is that these people that are described are actual born again Christians, they're Bonafide Christians, they are believers, they have the Holy Spirit, they have new life in God, and they're in the kingdom of Christ but these people who are actually Christians can lose their salvation. That is the second view. Maybe you came from a different church or a different denomination. There are a few denominations that teach and believe that you can lose your salvation. For the most part it is the Methodist, Lutheran, Pentecostal,

and Church of Christ denominations that all believe in some way or another that you can lose your salvation. You came to a Baptist church this morning so we believe in the security of the believer and you can't lose your salvation. Other denominations that believe in the security of the believer would be Presbyterians and reformed traditions. These are the people who would say you can't lose your salvation but there are people who see this- and I can see why- and question it because it seems like this passage is teaching that you can lose your salvation. Look at these people. They clearly fell away. Therefore, true believers actually can lose their salvation.

I think what is really alarming is that if you believe that from Hebrews chapter 6, if you teach Hebrews chapter 6 as the Scripture that says we can lose our salvation then you also have to teach that if you lose it you can't ever get it back because that is what it says. If you lose it, if you fall away, you can't ever come back to repentance. I would say most of my friends who believe you can lose your salvation don't believe you can't ever get it back. So I think there is something else going on in this passage. I don't think it's that people can actually lose their salvation. I think it's the third one which is the apparent view.

The apparent view is the people in view here, they appear, it's apparent that they are true believers, born again, and in the church, but it just APPEARS that way. It's not actually the truth. They look like Christians yet they're not actually born again Christians. These people who look the part at some point might just leave the part because they're not the part. I think what we're going to see as we wrestle through this text and what I'm going to argue is correct is the apparent view. They look like believers but they're not. Again, I don't like you can lose your salvation but you can fake it. You can look like a believer, you can smell like a believer, and you can walk like a believer and not actually be in Christ and I think this is what he's talking about. I know the argument but look at these people! It sure seems like they're believers and to that point I'm going to say yes it does but that is his whole point. He wants us to see that you can look just like you're in Christ and not actually be in Christ and that is the scariest part.

Think about what the preacher is trying to do. Last week he gave us a rebuke. Do you remember the rebuke? It was to grow up. Some of you are

still on milk and you're never going to get meat. You're never going to make progress. You're never growing. The rebuke is to grow up. If you have the gospel then you should be growing in the gospel. You should be moving from milk to meat. Now there is a warning and I think the warning comes at us to say... *hey, if there is no growth there might not be life...*

In other words, if you're not growing then you might not be alive. Examine your own self to see whether you have life or not in Christ because you can look like it and not actually be it. And I think that is the grave warning for all of us in this room. We can look it but not be it. So let's just try to walk through this passage and ask this question- who is the who? Because if you look at this passage and think about this word, "who" it says, "For it is impossible, in the case of those who." Well, who are the "who" that if they fall away they can't return? Who are these who? I think what we want to say is I hope it's not you, right? Who is the who? I hope it's not you! I hope it's not me! I don't want to be the who here. So let's think about who these people are and let's get the warning out to us.

The first part says this, "who have once been enlightened." Now some of you are thinking... *Well, that sure sounds like a Christian. Aren't Christians the people who get enlightened by the gospel and they see a biblical worldview and they decide to turn and follow Jesus?...* Yes, they are! People that follow Jesus have been enlightened by the gospel. But, what I want to argue is that non-believers can also be enlightened to the things of God and actually like the things of God and not truly become a follower of Jesus. Look at the philosophers throughout history. They have had great ideas. They get right up to the truth because God made the world. He made it true! When you argue truth and when true things are spoken, people can be enlightened to truth and love truth and not actually love Jesus.

It's one of the reasons the Charlie Kirk videos are so popular. He argues a lot of truth when he talks about marriage and gender. He is giving some truth and is arguing a lot in biology and history and not always in theology. It's just arguing and people love it. But, here is the danger. You can love his videos and arguments and not actually love Jesus. That is the danger! You can love what he says about marriage! You can love what he says about other things! You can believe you are on his team but actually you

just love a Christian worldview and you're not actually a Christian. You can live in this moment, love a Christian worldview, love Christianity, and not love Jesus. At some point Jesus is going to tell you stuff that you didn't know what part of the deal. You can love the Christian worldview, take it, and war against some sin but wait. Jesus said love your enemies and pray for them. You thought you could take truth and attack your enemies because they're the bad guys. Well, Jesus said love your enemies and pray for them, serve the least of these, and for some of you, sell all that you have and give to the poor. Now some of you are thinking... *Well, hold on. I didn't catch that video. I don't like that...* We can love truth. We can love the things that are true but not actually love what Jesus would call us to so you can be enlightened but not have Christ. You can love the things the church is saying and not actually be in the church so examine your own heart. Have you just been enlightened to biblical truths or have you been enlightened to Christ and are you now following him under those truths?

So, the second part is not just enlightened but it says, "who have tasted the heavenly gift." That sure sounds like salvation, right? So, what does that mean? He could be referring to a few different things. One could be the manna in the wilderness when God gave the people the manna they all tasted it and they all ate it but they weren't all the people of God. Maybe he's taking that to say... *Hey, you've been baptized, you've had the Lord's Supper, and you've had hands laid on you. You've tasted those things yet you haven't ATE those things. You've tasted them but you haven't ingested them...* I remember we were in Nicaragua one time and we got to go to a coffee cupping. Now, you know me. I love coffee. I love coffee probably a little too much. We were on the coffee mountains of Nicaragua where they actually grow the coffee, pick the coffee, dry the coffee, and roast the coffee. Everything is done there. They have these professionals that taste all of the coffee. They had around 15 cups in front of these professional cuppers and what they do is take a sip of the coffee and then spit it out. They are trying to taste for notes and flavors. They're writing these things down and scoring the coffee. So there is a guy with 15 cups of coffee in front of him. He has tasted every single one of them yet he hasn't drank an ounce of coffee. You can taste all the things and not actually ingest all the things. See, he doesn't say that they've received the Holy Spirit. No, they've just shared in this moment, in this broader sense, in sharing and tasting in the Holy Spirit.

The next one is that they've shared in the Holy Spirit. So they've tasted the heavenly gift and shared in the Holy Spirit. How could a non-believer share in the Holy Spirit? Well, I've seen it quite a bit. We've had non-believers go on mission trips with us and share in all that God is doing. They shared in the blessings, they shared in the moments, and they shared in what was happening. They saw and in a sense believe that all this stuff is great. They shared in all of these moments. You can get caught up in worship as a non-believer. You can get emotional when you start thinking about your sin and the guy who died. You can get emotional over all of that and not truly have Christ.

I do praise God for what is happening even in our own country among young people. There seems to be this fire that is catching. I love it and praise God for it. There are things happening on university campuses. I read this week that Alabama had a worship service in their end zone. That is pretty wild! The quarterback and wide receiver had a bunch of people get together in the end zone and sing praises to the Lord. That is amazing. I'm not an Alabama fan, but roll tide! That is good! But, do you know what I have a feeling about? Of the thousands of college people that were in the end zone, praising God, feeling the Spirit, participating in it, and joining in it, there were at least a few of them there that weren't there for Jesus. They were there for the quarterback or the receiver. They were there because they got caught up in the moment. They were there because it was the cool thing to do and truth be told in 10 years they're going to be nowhere to be found. Yes, they shared in it but they didn't receive it. There is a difference in just sharing and also receiving.

Then, the last one, "and have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the age to come." They've tasted. They've read the Bible, they've heard the Bible, they've tasted, and they've saw that it's good. I'm sure you're thinking that this has to be a Christian. Well, not necessarily. Non-Christians can like Christianity. Non-Christians can like the Bible. Non-Christians can like biblical truth. The Pharisees sure loved the Word. They memorized the Word. They soaked in the Word. Do you know who they didn't love? THE Word. They loved the Word of God, the Bible! They memorized it and yet when THE Word, the Son of God, came amongst them, they crucified him. You can love the Bible and what it teaches about

a variety of things like family and marriage, you can love all of those things and not actually love the God of the Bible. That is what is so scary. You can look the part but you're not actually the part. It can be so scary because you can love the Bible and you can love the Christian worldview but do you know what the problem is when it comes to cultural Christianity? We've had that label and we think it's passed now but maybe it's more so political Christianity than cultural Christianity now. Do you know what both of those things are? A cultural Christian loves Christianity. That's why they are a cultural Christian. See, a cultural Christian loves Christianity but the problem is they don't love Christ. So are you a cultural Christian? Do you just love the things of Christ. Or, are you a political Christian? Do you love Christ because you think it fits within your political tribe? Or do you love Jesus? Is Jesus your Lord over your culture and over your politics and over your family? Is it actually HIM that you love? Do you love the Word or do you love THE Word who is Jesus Christ?

It says the powers of age to come. Do you love the things that Christianity brings to your culture or brings to your family? If you just live out what the Bible teaches about family, marriage, kids, work, and your income then things will typically go better because God made the universe a certain way and if you follow his path it's going to go better most of the time for you. So you can love all the powers of the age to come. You can actually love a heavenly earth more than a hellish earth and not be a believer. You just love the benefits of Christianity not actually Christ. So for you there should be this war in your mind asking... *Ok, do I just love the things about Christianity? Do I just love the blessings that might come from it? Do I just love the worldview it shares? Or, do I actually love Jesus?...* That's the question because I think these people are really close but they're actually not in because what happens to them? It says this, "and then have fallen away." So eventually, these people who look the part but are not the part, fall away. They leave. I said earlier that in 20 years of ministry there are faces that aren't here anymore and they're not in another church. They're away from Christ because they loved Christianity but they didn't love Jesus. Yes, those should be one in the same but they're not always. You can love the benefits but not love the savior.

So, the question I want to ask is this- who are the who? And this particular group of people are the ones we don't want to be. We don't want to be

scary close but not in. So who are these people and why do I think they're not believers rather than believers? Well, I think John will give us some help with untangling the idea that these people are not true believers. So, 1 John chapter 2, verse 19 says this, "They went out from us, but they were not of us for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us. But they went out, that it might become plain that they all are not of us." So what is his argument?... *We had a church and we had a lot of people. They were all coming. They were all participating but some of them left...* So what does that mean? Did they lose their salvation? No, it meant that they never had it. See, because they left us it means they were never truly of us. They were just around us but they weren't of us. They didn't actually have Christ because if they did have Christ, if they were among us, they would still be here. No matter what persecution happens, no matter how life goes, they remain because those in Christ remain and those who are not in Christ don't. Those not in Christ eventually fade. They eventually fall.

I think Hebrews chapter 6, verse 9 gives us about those who he's talking about and he's not talking about his current audience. He says this, "Though we speak in this way, yet in your case, beloved, we feel sure of better things—things that belong to salvation." ...*So there is this other group of people who are scary close that walk away but then there is you and I don't think you're in this group. I think you are the ones that belong to salvation...* What is the difference in this group and the other group? One belongs to salvation and one doesn't. One has saving faith and one doesn't. They have a false faith, a faked faith. So I don't think you can lose your salvation but you can fake it.

So what happens? Who are the people in this current context that the preacher is preaching to? I think we have to think about it historically. He's preaching to a Hebrew congregation who have converted from Judaism to Christianity. That is a big marker. They've left their traditions, their stories, the temple, the sacrifices, and all of the stuff. They are leaving that and they're coming to Jesus and saying he's the Son of God, he's the Messiah, and they need the cross not the system that came before it because the system that came before it pointed it the cross and to Jesus. That is the people he is talking to and here is his argument- if you leave all of that will all of the advantages to point you to Christ, if when you get to Christ and

then decide that Christ is not enough and you go back to the old way of the system then you can't come back to Christ.

Now, why is that the case? I want to reason what he says from the scriptures. In verse 1 he says it's impossible to restore them again to repentance. So if you leave in that way it's impossible to come back. If you're a Jewish kid who leaves Judaism, goes into Christianity, proclaims Christ, and then goes back into Judaism you can't come back. Why is that the case? He gives us the argument in verse 6, "since they are crucifying once again the Son of God to their own harm and holding him up to contempt."

I'll be honest. This is a hard verse and I've wrestled with it this week and I don't know that I know what it says but I'm going to give you what I think it says. I think his argument is this- the reason you can't come back is because you would crucify Christ all over again. Now, what does that mean? They can't actually crucify him because he's in heaven now and they can't actually do that but metaphorically they would be crucifying Christ again. So what is his argument?... *Hey, to my Jewish believers, if you go back to mom and dad's religion of Judaism, away from Christ, then what you're doing is re-crucifying. You're doing exactly what your mom and dad did. What did they do? When they saw Jesus they said, "Crucify him." When they saw Jesus they said he wasn't the guy. They said he wasn't the Son of God...* No, they mocked him, spit on him, and crucified him. They wanted nothing to do with him. They put him to open shame. You have actually come to Christ, you've investigated Christ, you've walked with Christ, and you've said you were a follower of Christ so if you go back home and abandon Christ what are you doing? You are openly mocking him again. You are putting him to open shame again. You are saying what your parents said. You are saying that he isn't really the Messiah and he isn't really the Son of God so you in a sense are crucifying him just like your parents did. That is his argument. You're putting him into contempt. You're saying Christ is no longer sufficient for you. You are saying you need sacrifices, the temple, and the law again. Christ is not enough.

Think about the preacher here. They are trying to build a Christian community. They're trying to pronounce Christ. If they go back they're bringing contempt over everything that they are saying. So what is the

idea that you can't be restored to repentance? Why is that? Well, because what is repentance coming through? It's the cross and now the cross is the very thing they hate. The cross is the very thing they're repudiating by going back. In other words, the only way you're saved is through the cross and they are saying the cross is not enough so they can't be saved. There is no chance of repentance. The cross that was supposed to save has now become the stumbling block that they stumbled over so there is no hope.

I think George Guthrie puts it well. He says this, "the idea of the impossible, it's because there is nowhere else to go for repentance once one has rejected Christ. The apostate in effect has turned his or her back on the only means available for forgiveness before God." The only means for forgiveness is the cross and this is a group of people saying they tried the cross, they don't love the cross, and it didn't work. They went back to the sacrificial system. He tells them... *Don't do that because if you do that there is no way back because the only way back is through the cross of Christ...*

It's a stern warning. The warning is not that you can lose your salvation. The warning is that you can sure fake it. You can sure be with us, among us, and look like us but not be us. Eventually something will happen and you'll fall away. It's a warning. Maybe you're not going to become an apostate like they are but you can certainly fall away if you're not genuinely in Christ.

So before we move any further I want to answer this question very plainly- can a believer lose his or her salvation? I am going to answer no and you probably saw that coming but I want to give you five reasons because here is what happens. When you have a hard text of scripture one of the principles is to interpret it with an easier scripture to understand so that you can look at a hard text and exegete it in light of easier text that we know to be true. So I want to give five places in scripture that would argue that you can't lose your salvation.

1. Philippians 1:6 And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.

Do you know who the he is there? It isn't you! You didn't start this thing. You didn't begin your salvation. Jesus Christ began your salvation. It was him and guess what? Jesus is the one who is going to finish it. You didn't start it therefore you aren't required to finish it. Jesus started it and he is going to finish it so you can take comfort. And what do you do? Hold onto Christ the anchor for your soul as we are going to see next week.

2. 2 Corinthians 5:17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.

Salvation is more than signing up. It's supernatural. You didn't just come and say a prayer and check a card. No, salvation is a supernatural work of God. God does something to you. Something happens. You become different. What is the metaphor in John chapter 3? You are born again. What does that mean? You're a whole new baby with a whole new life. Just like it says in Ezekiel chapter 36, you get a new heart and new spirit. There is a new you that happens. In Ephesians chapter 2 you go from death to life. In other words, salvation is not a little thing. Salvation is a supernatural thing of God that happens to you and the God who did it to you will show that he can keep you in him.

3. John 10:28 I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand.

Eternal life is eternal. It's pretty obvious but eternal life is enternal. You can't have eternal life and it not be eternal. What does eternal life mean? It means it's eternal! It never ends. If you somehow fall after having it then it wasn't ever eternal life. Jesus gave you temporary life that might turn eternal. He didn't give you eternal life. Notice the language. You're never going to perish. Why? Because you have eternal life. Eternal life cannot perish. It is an impossibility. Once you have actual eternal life it's going to grow and expand and it's never going to lead you to death.

4. John 10:27-30 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. 8 I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. 29 My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no

one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. 30 I and the Father are one."

True sheep are gripped by God. I love this imagery in John 10. If you are his sheep then you hear his voice and come to him. He gives you eternal life. You will never perish. How is that? Because Jesus has you in his hand. He has a death grip on your life and he says no one can snatch you out of his hands. Romans chapter 8 tells us that not even life can separate us from the love of God. That means not even the dumb stuff you do can separate you from the love of God in Christ if you're a believer. Christ has you. He has a death grip on you but check this out. He also says, "and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand." If you're a true believer Jesus is holding you AND God the Father is holding you. You are in their grip so who is going to get you? What is going to get you? The answer is nothing. It's almost Jesus taunting... *Just try to get out. If you're in me then you are there. You're stuck and I'm going to see to it that you remain because I have a grip on your very life...*

5. Ephesians 1:13-14 In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, 14 who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.

The Holy Spirit guarantees our inheritance. When you believed in Christ you were sealed with the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit came into your life. Do you know what that means for it to be sealed in you? God says it's a guarantee. It's a down payment. It's a promise. Have you ever put a down payment on something? When you put a down payment on something guess what? You have to go. I just signed both of my kids up for mission trips at Hardin and those can be expensive. I just deposited around \$300 for camp. Guess what? If Finn decides he isn't going then I guess Chase gets \$100. I don't get it back! It's a deposit! That is how deposits work. Do you know what Paul is saying? If you are a believer and you have the Holy Spirit, if you don't make it to the end then you get to keep the Holy Spirit. That means the Holy Spirit would be separated from God forever. Is that going to happen? NO! That's the point! The one who pays the down payment is going to come back and make the payment in full. He is going

to bring you home and the Holy Spirit is your guarantee that God is going to do what he says.

I think we can see in those texts and even in the texts we wrestled through that the point is not that you can lose your salvation but that you can certainly fake it. So, I just want to ask, are you faking salvation right now? And I don't mean that maliciously. It's often unknown. I faked it from age 7 until age 20 and I had no idea I was faking it until God showed me that I was lost and needed to repent and believe. I had no idea. I thought I was in Christ but I wasn't because you can be scary close and not be in.

So how do you know if you know Him? Here is a beautiful illustration that the preacher gives us in verse 7. Verse 7 says this, "For land that has drunk the rain that often falls on it, and produces a crop useful to those for whose sake it is cultivated, receives a blessing from God. 8 But if it bears thorns and thistles, it is worthless and near to being cursed, and its end is to be burned." It's this beautiful illustration about two fields. One field got all the rain it needed, all the cultivation it needed, and everything it could ever want and it never produced a useful crop. It only produces thistles and thorns. What is he trying to say? That is this group! They are near. They are scary close. They are right up next to it. They are receiving all of the blessings that they could ever want yet they're not receiving the gospel because gospel seeds grow. If the gospel isn't in you there will be no grow. It will only be thorns and thistles. The other field has the same rain, the same privileges, the same church, and the same sermons and what happens? A harvest comes out of your life!

In other words, look at your life. I think he's getting that from Jesus. Do you remember the parable in Matthew chapter 13 about the soils? You have hard soil, rocky soil, thorny soil, and good soil. Seed on hard soil immediately gets snatched away. Seeds planted on rocky soil come up but then immediately withers away. Seeds planted on thorny soil may grow for a while but the cares of the world-the thorns- choke it away. You have friends and loved ones that you've seen make professions and then walked away. What happened? They didn't have good soil. They didn't actually repent and believe in Jesus. Those that repent and get new hearts, do you know what they do? They grow gospel seeds and they grow gospel fruit.

So what does your life look like? Do you have a harvest of the gospel working in and through you? That is going to be his argument of comfort. It's if you can see that you're the field that is growing rather than the field that is barren. Notice the comfort. Verse 9 says this, "Though we speak in this way, yet in your case, beloved, we feel sure of better things—things that belong to salvation. 10 For God is not unjust so as to overlook your work and the love that you have shown for his name in serving the saints, as you still do. 11 And we desire each one of you to show the same earnestness to have the full assurance of hope until the end, 12 so that you may not be sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises." What is his hope for them? They have salvation because he can see their work, their goodness, their love, their patience, their steadfastness, and their life! So what does he say? Hold onto Jesus. Keep walking with Jesus.

The warning is there are some in the congregation that might not have life and the danger is they might one day fall away. The danger is they might not ever come back. That is the warning for us. I don't know where you land on the argument about the ability to lose your salvation but for me personally, I don't think you can lose your salvation but I definitely think you can fake it. You can think you have salvation but you actually don't have Christ. You're scary close but you're not in. So here is the warning- do you really know Christ? Are you growing up in him? Are you a field where the gospel seed is growing out of it? Or, are you dead and there are only thorns? What should you do if that is you? Repent and believe in the gospel. He will tell us next week to hold onto Christ, the anchor of our souls. Come to Jesus! Don't just love Christianity. Love Christ. Don't just love truth. Love THE truth. Don't just love the word. Love THE Word. Don't just hate your sin. Love a savior who saved you from your sin.

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