
Words of Truth

Hebrews 6:4-5

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The need for the growth of the saints addressed in this letter had been made abundantly clear (Hebrews 5:11-6:3). Now, we are going to consider how important this growth was for those being addressed as it relates to apostasy. Notice: *“For 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”* (Hebrews 6:4-5).

The word “impossible” should grab some great attention. The Greek word translated “impossible” in our current text was used three other times in this letter (Hebrews 6:18, Hebrews 10:4, and Hebrews 11:6). The term is clear. In this context, it is scary. The fact that someone could fall away (Hebrews 6:6) and it be impossible for them to be restored to the faith is not comforting at all. Christians then and now have generally found great comfort in the fact that while apostasy can occur (Luke 8:13, Galatians 5:4, and II Peter 3:15-17), you can also be restored (Luke 15:1-32, Galatians 6:1-2, and James 5:19-20). In this instance however, the opposite is being stated. That principle will be restated again later in this epistle (Hebrews 10:22-39).

So, who could have fallen so far that they could not have gotten back up? Let's start with considering who “those who were once enlightened” is referring to. If you do a word study on the Greek term [φωτισζω] that is translated “enlightened”, you will find this term is used eleven times in the New Testament (Strong's # 5461). To help us understand the term, I am going to give a couple of verses wherein it is translated differently in the KJV. Notice: *“Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will **bring to light** the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God... And to make **all men see** what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ”* (I Corinthians 4:5 and Ephesians 3:9). Reading the underlined/bolded statements above are very clear. Thus, those who were impossible to have restored are those who saw the truth clearly and still fell away. It doesn't stop there though.

In addition to being enlightened, the person whom could not be restored if fallen also tasted the heavenly gift and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost. First century Christians were given miraculous, spiritual gifts (I Corinthians 12:3-14:40 and Ephesians 4:7-16). How

that happened is really clear. A person obeyed the Gospel of Christ and then an Apostle came and laid his hands on them to give that person the gift of the Holy Ghost. That person then had some spiritual gift (Acts 8:4-25 and Acts 19:1-7).

Enlightenment tied into the work of the Holy Spirit and spiritual gifts. Think about this inspired teaching: *“Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time. They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us. But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things. I have not written unto you because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it, and that no lie is of the truth. Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son. Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: (but) he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also. Let that therefore abide in you, which ye have heard from the beginning. If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Son, and in the Father. And this is the promise that he hath promised us, even eternal life. These things have I written unto you concerning them that seduce you. But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him”* (1 John 2:18-27).

In an effort to quickly tie these things together a bit more, consider what happened in the churches of Galatia. They were erring by following perversions of the truth (Galatians 1:1-9). Part of their errors we going back to following things that were done away in the Law of Moses (Galatians 5:1-9). So, the Holy Spirit had Paul question these erring saints and have them consider how the Spirit was working miracles through them (Galatians 3:1-5). It was not through the Law of Moses that they could work such miracles. It was through the work of the Spirit. They had the evidence in them and working through them. What more could have been done to prove to them that the ways of Christ, taught to them by Paul, was the truth?

They have tasted the word of God (1 Peter 2:1-3). So, they have both heard and seen the truth. “The powers of the world to come” refers to Heavenly powers. We have seen the phrase “world to come” already in this letter (Hebrews 2:5). The point being, they had seen things that are above the natural laws of this world. Signs and wonders were worked regularly in the first century (Acts 14:3). Thus, the word of God was taught and confirmed (Mark 16:15-20). What more could be done to convince someone who had these experiences?

We know that miraculous works done through the Spirit have ceased (1 Corinthians 13:8-13). We have the words of the witnesses (Acts 10:38-39; cf. John 20:30-31). We have all things we need in writing (2 Peter 1:3-21). We are more capable of enlightenment as all things have been revealed. So, how careful should we be not to fall from the faith (Luke 12:35-48)?