
Words of Truth

Hebrews 6:6-8

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In the article last week, we considered how these saints were enlightened. They had seen the power of the world to come through miraculous spiritual gifts. What more could they have seen or known to cement their faith in Christ Jesus our Lord? Our study continues with: *“If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame. For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God: But that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned”* (Hebrews 6:6-8).

Some people just love the world too much to stay faithful (II Timothy 4:10). Some withstand the teaching of the truth (II Timothy 4:14-15). It is even possible for some to become spiritually blind and forget what it meant to be purged from their past sins (II Peter 1:9). With a lot of Jewish saints in the first century, they became prey to teachers looking to bring them back to the Law of Moses or certain parts of the Law of Moses (Acts 15:1-35). Some escape the pollutions of the world just to turn backwards and head right back into sin (II Peter 2:20-22).

If a person falls away, the work of restoring that person begins (Galatians 6:1-2). As Paul wrote to Timothy, that person needs properly instructed so that he or she can recover himself or herself (II Timothy 2:24-26). For the people described in the Hebrew letter, this process was called “impossible” (Hebrews 6:4). It was not just what they had come to know as we have read, but also that their actions were the equivalent of crucifying Christ again.

To consider the point of crucifying the Son of God afresh, consider something that Jesus said to Saul [Paul; Acts 13:9] on the road to Damascus. After Jesus had already been killed, buried, risen, and ascended into Heaven (Luke 24:1-51 and Acts 1:1-11); Jesus asked Paul, *“why persecutest thou me?”* Wait, Paul couldn’t have literally persecuted Jesus, because Jesus was not on earth. So, what did our Lord mean? Paul was persecuting Christians (Acts 9:1-2, Acts 9:11-13, Acts 22:3-4, Acts 26:9-11, and Galatians 1:13). The perspective of our Lord is that when you do something to His followers that is the equivalent of doing it to Him (Matthew 10:40-42, Matthew 25:31-40, and John 13:20). A similar line of thought is presented here in the point about crucifying Jesus afresh. If one of His disciples falls away, thus rejecting Him and putting Him to an open shame, it is like you have killed Him all over again. It was rejection that sent Jesus to the cross (Luke 9:22 and Luke 17:25). Learn something from that.

Think about what sin does to our Lord (Genesis 6:5-6, Psalms 78:40, Psalms 95:9-10, Isaiah 63:7-10, Ezekiel 33:11, Luke 19:41-42, and Romans 2:23).

The Lord then begins to illustrate the lack of fruit from apostate saints by talking about what rain does for the earth. If the Israel of old stayed faithful, God promised them this: *“Then I will give you rain in due season, and the land shall yield her increase, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit”* (Leviticus 26:4). If they were not faithful, He promised them this: *“And then the LORD'S wrath be kindled against you, and he shut up the heaven, that there be no rain, and that the land yield not her fruit; and lest ye perish quickly from off the good land which the LORD giveth you”* (Deuteronomy 11:17). Fruitful seasons then was a reward and the lack thereof was a punishment. Now that God indirectly works through the seasons He has set in motion, we read this: *“Nevertheless he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness”* (Acts 14:17). So, whether directly of old or indirectly now; we see the evidence of God in the fruit of the earth. The faithfulness of saints is similar. We see who our brethren really are by their fruit (Matthew 7:15-20 and Titus 1:16).

Christians are created in Christ Jesus to do good works (Ephesians 2:1-10). Good works are supposed to be fruitful (Colossians 1:10). Jesus taught the expectation of His followers being fruitful (Matthew 13:1-23 and John 15:1-9). That message was continued after His death (Philippians 1:9-11). Saints are not supposed to be unfruitful (Titus 3:8; 3:14).

You would not want to plant something that you want fruit out of among thorns (Jeremiah 4:3). The same is true spiritually (Mark 4:18-19). What happens when fruit is expected, but thorns and briars spring forth instead? Like was preached even before Jesus began His work, the unfruitful tree is cut down and cast into the fire (Matthew 3:1-10). The Lord showed them that fruitless saints are useless to Him.

Now, think about yourself. Don't essentially crucify Christ again. If you are fruitless, all hope is not lost. Consider this in conclusion: *“There were present at that season some that told him of the Galilaeans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. And Jesus answering said unto them, Suppose ye that these Galilaeans were sinners above all the Galilaeans, because they suffered such things? I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish. Or those eighteen, upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and slew them, think ye that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem? I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish. He spake also this parable; A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none. Then said he unto the dresser of his vineyard, Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and find none: cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground? And he answering said unto him, Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung it: And if it bear fruit, well: and if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down”* (Luke 13:1-9).