

Hebrews Chapter 6:1-6 Press On To Maturity

Verses 1-2

Therefore – Because you need solid food...

Let us press on to maturity – The writer includes himself!

Believers are the subject of the warning.

Not laying again a foundation of repentance from... The writer lists six basic truths, the ABCs of the OT:

1. *Dead works* – Such as Levitical sacrifices.
2. *Faith toward God* – You know to Whom your faith is directed.
3. *Instructions about washings* – Ceremonial washings and rituals related to the Law.
4. *Laying on of hands* – Identification with the offering, (Lev 1:4, 3:2, 16:21).
5. *Resurrection of the dead* – An OT principle that does not need to be retaught (Dan 12:2).
6. *Eternal judgment* – Eternal retribution for evil was clearly understood.

Verse 3

And this we shall do if God permits – This = press on to maturity!

Remember, the key is to Pray, Prepare and Persevere! We cannot mature ourselves, God must be the source of all we do.

Verses 4-6

There are at least four major views on what these verses are saying. They hinge on two questions:

- 1 – To whom is the author referring?
Believer or unbeliever?
- 2 – What is the punishment?
Eternal damnation or loss of reward?

The identity of “those.”

There are five Greek participial phrases that describe “those.”

Participle – Word that has both verbal and adjectival characteristics.

- Passive participle – The subject is being acted upon or receives the verbal action.
- Middle participle – Subject is affected by its own actions.
- Active participle – Subject is performing the action.

1. *Once enlightened* – Once emphasizes finality. Enlightened is used in 10:32 to describe them as believers. A passive participle.
2. *Have tasted the heavenly gift* – *Tasted* means to actually experience. In 2:9 Jesus *tasted* death! A middle participle.
3. *Have become partakers of the Holy Spirit* – The word *partaker* is *metochoi* and is used of believers throughout Hebrews (3:1). A passive participle.
4. *Have tasted the good word of God...* They have experienced the power of the coming kingdom. A middle participle.
5. *And then have fallen away* – *Fall away* only occurs here in the NT. It is an “active” participle, meaning the subject is performing the action. There is no conditional in this phrase although it may be implied. *Then* or *if* are supplied by the translators. Many translate this as apostasy but that is a theological meaning that is being imposed on the word. The literal meaning is “fall aside or away from something.” They are not denying Christ but are rejecting His provision in favor of Judaism.

Clearly all of the above descriptions speak of true believers.

What is the consequence or punishment?

It is impossible to renew them again to repentance - It is impossible because God does not permit it (verse 3).

Renew again to repentance – We know they are believers because they have already repented at least once. Note: It is *repentance* not *salvation*!

In context, *to fall away* is the opposite of *going on to maturity*. It is “loss of effective service for Christ in this life, loss of the blessings of God that come from an obedient life, and in some cases perhaps premature physical death. Eschatologically, it involves loss of rewards at the judgment seat of Christ.”

David Allen, *Hebrews*

1 – To whom is the author referring - Believers!

2 – What is the punishment -

Loss of reward because of a failure to press on to maturity?