

Warnings

Rejection

Hebrews 6:1-8

April 26, 2026 am

HDBC

Most of the Bible is simple and straightforward. However, we've all come across verses that are tough to get our heads around.

Interpretive challenge. Words are confusing. What does it mean?

Doctrinal challenge. Words are easy, but the truth that they teach is tough.

Consistency issue. Seems to contradict other Scripture passages.

Application issue. How does this apply to my situation, time or culture?

Today's passages includes a few of those challenges. It is Hebrews 6:4-6. Though it presents some challenges, **it also contains a very clear warning.**

Remember: Warnings from God are intended for our good. They are never meant **steal our joy or to rain on our parade.** They are offered to protect us. With that in mind let's look at the passage. The focus is Hebrews 6:4-6. But let's read **Hebrews 6:1-8**. As we read, watch for the warning. You'll see it.

This is a warning to those who have **experienced the gospel** in a variety of ways, but who have **rejected** it. It is not a warning for those who have never heard the gospel. You can't reject what you do not know. This is for those who have been sufficiently exposed to the truth and have **rejected** it.

This warning is direct and bold, yet is couched in a passage that can be confusion and misinterpreted. Here's what I mean. On the surface it seems to be teaching the **possibility of losing one's salvation**. This is a problem, because the New Testament teaches that salvation is permanent. If a person has truly been born again, he/she can never lose that salvation. Because that foundational truth is important in helping us understand this passage, I want to share why I believe in the permanent security of every true believer. In other words, why I believe it is impossible for a true believer to lose his or her salvation. I think it is critical that we understand the nature of our security. **I'm going to offer three reasons for our security.**

The Security

1. The promise of *eternal life*

The New Testament makes it clear that eternal life is given to those who are saved. By its very nature eternal life refers to life that never ends. If it ever could end, then it could never have been eternal.

2. The nature of salvation

It is a transaction which is performed by God, not man. All of God.

It brings (eternal) life to my spirit, which formerly had been dead.

It causes me to be born into God's family. Spiritual birth that cannot be undone.

It causes me to be adopted into God's family. Legal standing, irrevocable.

It involves the complete forgiveness of all my sins, past, present and future.

It is based on the finished work of Jesus on the cross. He took my judgment. If I could lose my salvation, His sacrifice would be meaningless. He already paid the penalty for my sins.

3. Promises of God (I will only give you a sampling)

Romans 8:1 - *Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.*

Heb. 7:25 - *Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them.*

Jude 24 - *To him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy.*

Ephesians 4:30 - *And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.*

John 10:28-29 - *I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no*

one can snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand.

1 Peter 1:3-5 - *Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and **into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade** — kept in heaven for you, who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time.*

Philippians 1:6 - *Being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.*

Ephesians 1:13-14 - *And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession — to the praise of his glory.*

The Biblical evidence for eternal security is **extremely strong**. So, we approach Hebrews 6 with that in mind. It is a warning about falling away. But who is it for and what does it mean? He is describing people who have been given ample opportunities to be saved, yet have said no. At some point God honored their rejection and the door is no longer open.

The Warning

The warning is to make sure you never get to that point. Note what these people have experienced. They have . . .

1. Sampled the truth (4-5)

They have had every opportunity to be saved. **Five great advantages.**

1) Once been enlightened (4)

These people have not been born again. None of the normal NT terms for salvation are used of them. That is telling.

Though they have not been saved, they have been given by God an **awareness of the truth**. There are some things that they know because of God's revelation that they did not know. They have some important truth that could lead them to salvation.

Matthew 4:16. Jesus came, fulfilling the prophecy of Isaiah, and it says, **The people who sat in darkness saw a great light**. That does not mean they all got saved. They were enlightened. They saw Christ and His miracles. They were witnesses to the truth.

They've had the lights turned on. Seen the truth. These are not casual observers. They have **been given a spiritual sensitivity**. The light of the Gospel has personally broken in on their darkness.

2) Tasted the heavenly gift (4)

The *heavenly gift*. I see three possibilities. **Holy Spirit, Jesus Christ, Salvation**. All are called gifts. Since the Holy Spirit is mentioned in the very next phrase this does not refer to him.

Salvation is called the gift of God in Eph. 2:8.

Christ is called the unspeakable gift in 2 Cor. 9:15.

So Christ and salvation are heavenly gifts.

Take note that they only tasted, they did not drink. Like taking a sip.

Baskin Robbins offers a taste without having to buy and eat.

These people had a taste of salvation in that they witnessed the salvation of others and could see what a difference it was making in the lives of others. **They tasted, but rejected it themselves.**

3) Made partakers of the Holy Spirit (4)

The text gets a bit more specific. These people actually have experienced the touch of the Holy Spirit in their lives. They have had a personal touch by the Spirit of God. The word for **partakers** has to do with **association, not possession**. These people have been touched by the Spirit, but have not received the Spirit.

The initial work of salvation is always done by the Holy Spirit. It is His responsibility to convict a lost person of his sin and to bring that person to an **awareness of the need for salvation** and of the offer of salvation. It is in that sense that these people have been touched by the Holy Spirit.

4) Tasted the good Word of God (5)

Once more we see that word “*tasted*.” This time they have tasted the Word of God. They have heard the Scriptures. Sat under the preaching and teaching of the Word. They have sampled the revelation of God through His word.

5) Tasted the powers of the age to come (5)

The **age to come** refers to the kingdom of God. These people have had a taste of that. How could this be? Writer is speaking of people who have been **associated with the church**. They have been in church and witnessed the wonder-working power of God in the lives of other people. They’ve seen the presence of the Kingdom of God in those around them. Felt it’s aura & power. But only as bystanders.

They have sampled the truth, but they have also . . .

2. Rejected the gospel (6a)

In spite of all these advantages and opportunities, these people have rejected the Gospel. They have said **no** to the wonderful gift of salvation. **Text simply says *they have fallen away*.**

The phrase ***fallen away*** is a translation of a word that means *To fall beside, to slip away, to deviate from the right path.*

In the New Testament it refers to **an intentional turning away from the truth, or apostasy**. The particular tense and voice of this verb implies **a definitive action of turning away, rather than a gradual wandering or drifting**. Intentional, determined rejection. When I get a **call from a telemarketer. I am intentional and determined.**

3. Sealed their fate (6b)

It is impossible to renew them again to repentance.

When a person has been given all the opportunities listed here, and willfully rejected the Gospel, it becomes impossible to bring them to repentance. **They have been brought to the brink and said no.** Face to face with heaven and turned it down. At that point they have rejected their only hope of salvation.

At what point does a lost person cross that line? I don't know. Why risk it?

Stone Mountain, in Georgia, is the largest boulder in the world. Rises over 700 feet above the surrounding area near Atlanta. It has a rounded top which makes it especially dangerous. There is a fence which is to protect people from falling. Yet, deaths are occasionally reported.

March 24, 2010, Tony Edge, a 35-year-old banker fell to his death. He was working on his MBA and went to the top of the mountain to study. He never returned. His body was found at the base of the mountain. He had fallen 600 feet to his death.

Details are difficult to pinpoint with certainty, but the mountain has a history. Because of the rounded nature of its top, people have sometimes been deceived by the danger. Moving closer to what they think is the edge to get a better look, when, often without warning gravity begins to pull them further downward.

Problem with Stone Mountain . . . can't tell where the tipping point is.

That's the way it is with many people who are exposed to the Gospel. Hear it, feel it, sense it, understand it. But keep saying "no." They are gradually giving away their only hope of salvation.

A classic example of an almost-conversion to Christ happened to Kenneth Clark, one of Great Britain's most prominent art historians and authors. He

was the producer of the BBC television series *Civilization*. In an autobiographical account, Clark writes that when he was living in a villa in France he had a curious episode.

I had a religious experience. It took place in the church of San Lorenzo, but did not seem to be connected with the harmonious beauty of the architecture.

I can only say that for a few minutes, my whole being was radiated by a kind of heavenly joy, far more intense than anything I had ever experienced before. This state of mind lasted for several minutes ... but wonderful as it was, it posed an awkward problem in terms of action.

My life was far from blameless. I would have to reform. My family would think I was going mad, and perhaps after all, it was a delusion, for I was in every way unworthy of such a flood of grace.

*Gradually the effect wore off and I made no effort to retain it. I think I was right. I was too deeply embedded in the world to change course. But I had **felt the finger of God** quite sure and, although the memory of this experience has faded, it still helps me to understand the joys of the saints.*

Posed an awkward problem in terms of action. He did not want to change. He was unworthy of such a flood of grace. He misunderstood grace. He felt the finger of God. Yet he said no.