
THE HOPE THAT CAUSES US TO PERSEVERE

Michael Woody | Hebrews 6:9–12

The assurance of salvation is a work of God that causes the redeemed to hope until the end.

WHY THIS TEXT?

1. In chapters 5-6 he is chiding them for failing to mature as they should have and he even notes that some have failed to mature because they are unregenerate - these will be exposed at the end with verses 7-8, “For the earth which drinks in the rain that often comes upon it, and bears herbs useful for those by whom it is cultivated, receives blessing from God; but if it bears thorns and briers, it is rejected and near to being cursed, whose end is to be burned.”
2. So in verse 9 the storm is subsiding and the Son is showing His gracious face to these believers.
3. Believers have a mark that shows in times of trial - they show unrelenting confidence in Christ and they show tenderness regarding their own sin. Scripture is full of warnings:
4. As we came through verses 4-8 it is natural to be a bit fearful - I look just like those people and they look just like me! Why can I be assured of a different outcome?

CONFIDENT OF BETTER THINGS?

1. He starts this section with a tender term, beloved. The sense is beloved (lover), a person dearly loved and cherished; sometimes preferred above all others and treated with partiality.
2. He speaks in this passage of things that accompany salvation.
3. I preach salvation by faith alone, because of grace alone, and in Christ alone, and to the glory of God alone, and I find this in Scripture alone, but saving faith doesn't remain alone!

WHY CONFIDENT OF BETTER THINGS?

1. Let us be clear, the works are not the cause of salvation but they accompany salvation. To accompany is to logically associate with something else; to make a logical or causal connection.
2. Why can he have this significant confidence? He gives them two reasons
 - a. Because they love God, which is seen in their loving others (v. 10)
 - b. Because they have not become sluggish, which is seen in their faith and perseverance (v. 12)

BECAUSE OF WHAT HE KNOWS ABOUT OUR LORD (v. 10A)

1. All of these reasons are based off one absolute fact, For God is not unjust; He will not forget your work and the love you showed.
2. If this confidence was purely man focused one would have good cause to fear they might fall away as in the prior verses; however, the fact that God is just, and the fruit He is seeing is not generated by man but by His Spirit, they should have great confidence in God.
3. God's miraculous work of salvation is not half-way; it changes men as promised in 2 Corinthians 5:17
4. A.W. Pink states: "What God rewards is only what He Himself has wrought in us: it is the Father's recognition of the Spirit's fruit.... It may look now as though God places little value on sincere obedience to Him, that in this world the man who lives for self gains more than he who lives for Christ; yet, in a soon-coming day it shall appear far otherwise."

BECAUSE THEY LOVE GOD WHICH RESULTS IN LOVING OTHERS (v. 10)

1. His first sign of confidence is that he has observed in his congregation the things that accompany salvation.
2. How do you know if you love God?
3. Notice the construction of verse 10: he names a quality, their labor of love, and then he gives a way it is seen, they have ministered to other believers and they continue to do so.
4. Love for God is a causal relationship which results in loving others; consider verse 10 and then compare 1 John 4:19-21

BECAUSE THEY HAVEN'T BECOME SLUGGISH, RATHER THEIR FAITH HAS PERSEVERED (v. 11-12)

1. These verses start off with the author speaking of his desire for them.
 - a. This word for desire is understood as a craving.
 - b. This craving that he has for each one of them is to show fervor in their hope until the end.
 - c. We sum up this confidence by the title of perseverance: there is no doubt, there is no question of the end because it is based on reason of what we know about God and the work He has done in us.
 - d. I skipped one part of verse 11 that is critical and I did so to bring it to you now, this is the words "full assurance."
 - e. Consider Ephesians 1:18-19, do you have this?
2. So how is this diligence shown? What does it look like?
 - a. In verse 13, which we will look at in 3 weeks, gives us the primary example of Abraham.
 - b. Abraham was a man like you and me - he was not perfect, like you and me.
 - c. This word for sluggish can also mean lazy or apathetic - without emotion.
 - d. So you and I are called to be imitators of those who walked before us.

APPLICATIONS

1. If you are today under conviction that you do not know this Lord, you are a pretender like those mentioned in verses 4-8 will you continue in this charade until you are totally and finally lost? Turn to Christ today!
2. Believer, are you remaining diligent for the Lord? Are you imitating those who walked before you? Are you fervent about the hope you have in Christ? Let me assure you of this, through faith in Him, with patient endurance on the trail He blazed before us, we will inherit all that God has promised in Him. And we will come to know Him, to be His disciples, and to know forever the reality of His love, which is the greatest gift of all.