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BETTER THINGS ARE SURE TO COME

A STUDY OF THE BOOK OF HEBREWS
NUMBER 42
HEBREWS 6:9-10

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Before we go on, let us get a corrected translation of verses 7 and 8. "For the ground (the believer positive toward doctrine) having drunk the rain (which is doctrine) coming many times upon it (God always provides doctrine for those who want it) and producing a harvest of crops, usable by them (The Trinity) because of whom (The Trinity) it (The ground--the believer) is also cultivated; obtains blessings from the source of God. But when it is growing and producing thorns and thistles it becomes worthless and near a curse whose thorns is for burning."

In these two verses we saw the picture of two believers. In verse 7 we saw the picture of the super grace believer taking in doctrine. In verse 8 we saw the picture of the reversionist who was out of fellowship and was producing briars and thorns.

A Valuable Lesson

These verses teach us that it is possible for a believer, who is out of fellowship, to go around and plant briars and thorns. He does this by jealousy and bitterness and gossip and maligning and criticism. God will permit it to go on just for so long and then he calls a halt to it and this results in the sin unto death.

So the summary of these two verses is this: God stands before us and offers us an alternative. We can take in doctrine and enjoy the super grace life, or we can ignore doctrine and experience the life of reversionism. There are just two roads open before us, and we can't walk on both of them at the same time. The difference in receiving blessings or cursings is the amount of emphasis you place on learning doctrine. If your attitude toward doctrine shows that you believe doctrine is more important than anything in your life, then by positive volition toward doctrine you throw open before you an open door to super grace. But every time you make a decision to discount doctrine and play down the importance of God's Word, then you make a decision to move toward reversionism. Therefore, your attitude toward doctrine is the issue every day that you live on this earth after the moment of your salvation.

Two Determining Decisions

Salvation involves your attitude toward Christ. You are saved if you accept him and you are lost if you reject him. John 3:36 divides the entire human race. JOHN 3:36 "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him."

Your salvation determines your eternal future. But after you settle that issue of salvation, and are born again, you have only one issue to face every single day of your life, and that issue is Bible Doctrine. You can say yes or no to Bible Doctrine. Every time a chance is given you to learn Bible Doctrine you will have a thousand other things to crowd in on you and demand your time. It is so easy to become involved in the pseudo happiness of the Devil's world.

Must Choose Every Day

Every day when you get up you have just two choices to make. You make a choice that you will move toward super grace, or you make a choice to move toward reversionism. There is nothing more important in the life of the believer than Bible Doctrine. Learning and living by Bible doctrine is the only way to reach super grace and is the only way to magnify the Lord Jesus Christ. Your attitude toward the written word determines your attitude toward the Living Word. As a believer, all you can say is that you have believed in the Lord Jesus Christ. After salvation, your attitude toward Christ is not determined by getting emotionally involved with him. You do not grow in Christ-likeness by singing emotional songs, by hearing emotional testimonies, or by working up your emotions through exciting worship experiences. Your attitude toward Christ is determined by your attitude toward Bible Doctrine stored in your soul. This is the only true capacity for love for The Lord Jesus Christ.

It Is Doctrine Versus Everything

The closer you get to super grace, the more decisions you have to make concerning doctrine. It is doctrine versus friends, doctrine versus loved ones, doctrine versus family, doctrine versus husband or wife, doctrine versus father or mother, doctrine versus TV, doctrine versus everything. When doctrine is paramount with you, then God begins to pour into your cup. Whatever you have lost by making these decisions in favor of doctrine, God will see to it that you gain far more than you lost. Sarah and Abraham lost each other in reversionism, but in super grace they found each other again. So whatever you must set aside, whatever decision you must make, God will make it up to you a thousand fold if you will go the doctrine road. When you have made a doctrine decision, you have made the greatest decision of your Christian life.

My Personal Testimony

I want to mount the stand a moment here and add my personal testimony. I made my greatest life decision when I was a very small boy, the day I believed in Jesus Christ and became a Christian. The next most important decision I ever made was a day in 1967 when I decided that Bible Doctrine would be the major issue of my study and my preaching. That was the day of my rebirth as a Christian. Little by little that decision has changed everything about me, about my daily schedule, about my relationship with my church and my denomination and about my understanding of the mind of Christ. I can never cease to be amazed as I watch so many so-called great Christians and I discover how little concern they have for The Word of God.

HEBREWS 6:9 "But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak." We begin with the conjunctive particle of contrast de. That little de says something like this--"Look, you reversionist, having chewed you out in these verses we have just studied, and having just given you a good thrashing, I now have confidence to believe that better things are coming from you." This eloquent writer of Hebrews says, "But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you." He really chewed them out with thorns and thistles. He really ate on them back in verses 11-14 in chapter 5. He called them quite a few names, but now he tells them he is persuaded better things are coming.

"Beloved" is the vocative plural of agapetos. This "beloved" includes you, it is plural, and it includes all the believers of the world. He calls them beloved because God loves believers with a perfect love. Even though they have been chewed out and braced good, they are to profit by it. "We are persuaded" is the perfect, passive, indicative of peitho. It means to obey, to trust, to recognize authority, to be convinced. Here the best meaning is "be convinced." "We have been convinced, we have received confidence, we have been persuaded" is the meaning of this word. The writer here has received enough encouragement from them to be persuaded that they are tired of reversionism and are ready to come back and get with it and learn doctrine. "Better things" is the accusative neuter plural of kreitton. (Your word here is spelled two ways in Greek--kreitton or kreisson.) It should be translated "higher things" or "things of a superior quality." This is what the hymn means "Higher Ground." "Concerning you" is the preposition peri plus the plural personal pronoun su and it means "all of you believers."

Next we have "and things that accompany salvation." This kai means we are going to have something added here. "Things that accompany" is a present, passive, participle of echo and echo means to have and to hold. So this means "things belong to, things attached to salvation." This is a static present and means something that habitually exists. From eternity past God has intended that you, as a believer, would receive a certain number of salvation blessings. Those store house blessings are all wrapped up and they have your name on them. (Romans 8:28 says they blend together to give you maximum blessings.) God didn't save you so you could have a sloppy life of defeat and sadness. He saved you so you could have maximum happiness, maximum blessings, maximum usefulness. But look what had happened. They had been saved, but before they could even get started on that upward road, reversionism set in, and out of fellowship under the control of the old sin nature, they not only had not grown spiritually, but they had slipped farther and farther away. Did you know that this is common among Christians?

The Curse Of Modern Christianity

The curse that is haunting modern Christianity is not the multitude of unbelievers, but the millions of born again Christians who haven't grown an inch in their Christian lives since the day of their conversion. And if these people don't repent and turn around and get with doctrine, they are going to die that way. (Just like being converted and then going back to the temple and offering an animal sacrifice. It is a royal priest in the Church Age putting himself under a Levitical priest of an age that has been passed by. It is the sin of a Church Age saint reverting to a dead dispensation and in this way bringing new shame to Jesus Christ.) The passive voice of this word echo is very interesting here. At the point of your conversion, you were given the indwelling Holy Spirit to empower you, and the indwelling Christ to give you fellowship. The Holy Spirit will never leave you, but Christ leaves you when you slip into reversionism. Then Christ returns and knocks at the door, wanting this fellowship with you again. (That's the real meaning of Revelation 3:20. This verse is for a reversionistic church and a reversionistic believer. This knocking is the first stage of reversionism. Jesus Christ no longer dines with you every day but is outside knocking.) The Holy Spirit in you to stay is the Father's guarantee that you will never be lost and also his guarantee that there are super grace blessings available right now. But these super grace blessings will never be yours until you link your life with doctrine.

The Optimist Of The Writer Of Hebrews

The writer of Hebrews here in verse nine shows us that he is optimistic. He sees the potential in these believers. The writer of Hebrews had visited God's divine warehouse. On the front of that warehouse are the words BLESSING AVAILABLE FOR EVERY BELIEVER. He even went all through that warehouse and he saw those bundles with your name on them. The writer of Hebrews realized that God was just waiting to deliver those bundles of blessings to you, but he had to wait so you would acquire the capacity to receive those blessings. Christ sits at God's right hand just waiting to touch the switch and release the current so the blessings can start flowing your way. This present, passive, participle of echo is an ascriptive participle and it ascribes to salvation super grace blessings. This word "accompanying" says that with the salvation life God intended super grace blessings to flow your way. Salvation is the objective genitive singular of soteria and it refers to that moment of time when we accepted Christ as Saviour. "Though" is a conditional particle ei used to introduce a first class condition. This is getting us ready for the next verse, which is a reference to the pastor-teacher who faithfully teaches doctrine. "Thus" is an adjunctive kai and an adverb houtos and these words together should be translated "If also in this manner we speak." He has really braced them and has laid it on the line. This, of course, is the task of the pastor-teacher. "We speak" is a present, active, indicative of laleo and it means to communicate verbally. This has to be done if the people are going to reach super grace. This is a statement of absolute assertion.

Now get a corrected translation of this verse--

"But, beloved ones, we have been convinced of better things of you, and things attached to salvation, if also in this manner we habitually communicate doctrine to you, and we do."

A Parenthetical Statement

This next verse is a parenthesis, set in here to explain the function as well as the reward that comes to the pastor-teacher. As we anticipate this verse, we need to remember this: The blessing of the pastor-teacher precedes the blessing of the congregation, and quite obviously, the pastor-teacher must reach super grace if the people in the congregation are going to reach super grace. When people discipline themselves to listen when doctrine is taught, then the same super grace blessing which has come to the pastor-teacher comes to them also. There is no other road to the top. As we saw back in verse 5, the blessings of the ages to come become our blessings right now.

HEBREWS 6:10 "For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister." "For" is an explanatory particle from gar. God is here explaining that he is going to be faithful to his pastor-teacher. There are two verses in Hebrews that every member of every congregation should know and understand.

HEBREWS 13:17 "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for you souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you."

HEBREWS 13:7 "Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation."

Now the pastor-teacher may not always be right, but that is not the point. The point is this--God has given him the authority and if a member can't stand the authority of the pastor-teacher, that member should quietly withdraw and go to some church where he can find the right pastor-teacher. The pastor-teacher, by careful teaching of The Word of God, can lead the member to super grace, and if the member rebels against this leadership, then he will remain a superficial member. Next we have "the God" and this is the one authority over the pastor-teacher. He is the one and the only one who instructs the pastor-teacher and leads him to know the truth. God gives the pastor-teacher double blessings and if he goes away from The Word of God, then God gives him double discipline. God is the personal boss of the pastor-teacher. "Not unrighteous" and this is a poor translation. We have ouk plus the adjective adikos and it means unjust. It is impossible to speak as much as a pastor-teacher must speak and not at some time say something that he should not say. He will say something that will irritate the members. But by God's grace, you are still here and alive and the pastor-teacher is still here. So these words say, "The God is not unjust" and it means "The God is not unfair" to the pastor-teacher. If the pastor-teacher will proclaim the Word faithfully, then God will build a wall of protection around him and hold him in his hand. Next we have "to forget" and this is an aorist, middle, infinitive of epilanthanomai and it means to disregard, to ignore, to forget. (To explain this long word epilanthanomai we might say it is like something you are doing and you get so interested in it that you forget something else. This is exactly what this word means.) This is a nomic aorist and it means it is an absolute fact. So we have thus far this idea--"God is not unjust to disregard." That middle voice means that God himself goes into action and sees to it that the faithful pastor-teacher will not be disregarded, will not be forgotten by God. God never disregards the faithful pastor-teacher. God never says, "Sorry, pastor-teacher, I'm late coming to help you. I got busy running the universe and forgot about you." That never happens. So what we have here is actually an anthropomorphism, actually ascribing to God a characteristic which he doesn't have to explain to us God's everlasting faithfulness to the pastor-teacher as he proclaims the Word of God. The infinitive means that this is the result every time. The word "your work" is the objective genitive of ergon. This means studying and teaching day after day and month after month. In the next phrase "labour of love" the word "labour" is not in the original, so drop it out. "Of love" is the objective genitive of agape and it is referring to a relaxed mental attitude. The pastor-teacher must have a relaxed mental attitude to keep going on in spite of opposition or ill health or anything else. He can't even be quite human, for he must treat everybody alike and keep going on no matter how heavy the load may be. Next we have the word "which" and it is a genitive singular feminine relative pronoun of the word hos and it refers to love "which you have showed toward his name." The word "showed" is an aorist, middle, indicative of endeiknumi and means "you yourself have demonstrated."

How To Love The Membership

If the pastor tries to gain popularity with the members of the congregation and does little tricks to gain their love, then he will never cut it. Many pastors try to gain friendship by slapping everybody on the back and by courting the fancy of every member. It may look good for a little while, but it soon falls on its face. The way the pastor-teacher is to love the congregation is to love them with the Word of God. That constative aorist of the word "demonstrated" is the key. The pastor-teacher must stay with it, morning, noon and night. The only real way the pastor-teacher can show his love for the congregation is by faithfully teaching the Word of God. "Toward his name" is from eis onoma and it means toward his person, toward his personality.

"In that you have ministered to the saints, and do minister." This is a very important statement, and we will explore it in our next study.