

**Text:** Hebrews 6:9-12

**Title:** Confident of Salvation

**Date/Location:** February 13, 2011 at FBC

## Introduction

Summary of 5:11-6:8.

Has all this studying brought doubts about your own salvation? Consider how to handle those.

### I. Confidence in the Readers Salvation, v. 9

A. The audience is addressed as **beloved**. What a tender address to people he knows and loves.

B. **We are persuaded**. This is a wonderful word because it is in the perfect passive—"We have become and stand persuaded." This means that Paul is convinced of something concerning his audience. He has attained a level of certainty about their spiritual standing before God.

1. What Paul is convinced of has to do with their salvation. He is persuaded of better things—better than what he has been pondering in 6:4-8 about apostasy and judgment and burning and the impossibility to be renewed to repentance.

2. These better things are things that "have to do with" or "go along with" salvation. Paul sees his audience as made up of saved people. Was he 100% certain in every case? I doubt it, and I do not believe he had to be certain in every case in order to be able to say this—that in the main, the group was made up of saved people.

C. Take note of this confidence in light of the preceding context. In our study of Hebrews, we've been in some tough sledding since 5:11 with the author rebuking immaturity in the audience, prodding them on to maturity, and then warning them of the danger of apostasy for those who depart from Christ. But the author expresses utter confidence that even though he has been saying these sorts of hard things, he doesn't think all the "bad parts" apply to his audience.

He was commissioned by God and superintended by the Holy Spirit to write the whole message—the good and the bad. It's like this: "I've got some good news, and I've got some bad news. The person sending me obligated me to tell you the bad news, but don't get stuck on that. Look on the good news side of things too."

D. The idea of "persuaded" is a strong one. Consider some examples.

### II. Two-Fold basis for the Confidence, v. 10

Why can Paul have this confidence? Well, he knows the audience for one. And he also knows God and the character of God.

A. Basis #1 for Confidence: The Evidence of Faith, v. 10b

Here is an extreme example. Suppose someone has become a believer and given good evidence of the reality of it in their life. But further suppose that they are worried, based on verse 6, that they could "slip up" and somehow fall away in a moment of weakness. This should not be a point of worry (be anxious for nothing, right?!). God knows the heart of that person, He has observed the evidence of their profession, knows it is genuine, and will not "forget" that.

Note carefully that these works are not the basis of acceptance with God—only Christ and his finished work on the cross can be the basis. But God can and does consider works as evidence of the vitality of faith—that is, whether it is alive or not (James 2).

The believers in Hebrews were folks with such a credible profession of faith. They were laboring and doing things for the name of God. They had served other believers, and they were continuing to do that.

#### B. Basis #2 for Confidence: God's Justice, v. 10a

God's character is just. It is not unjust. That is, He rewards good and punishes evil. He doesn't do so necessarily in the time we expect (1 Tim. 5:24), nor in the way we expect (for example, He does allow substitution, 1 Peter 3:18), but He does run a tight moral ship. This means that just as much as God is bound to punish evil, He is bound likewise to reward good. See Exodus 20:5-6 for an example. For believers, God is bound to be faithful and just toward the work of Christ for us and so He can and will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness (1 John 1:9).

He is not unjust to forget those good works done for the sake of His name out of faith and love for God. This is what the Hebrew believers has been doing as a natural practice of their lives.

### III. Encouragement to Go On for the Lord, v. 11-12

#### 1. Show the Same Diligence

This means that the readers (and we too) should continue on in the pattern of good works toward the saints (v. 10).

#### 2. Result #1 of Going on for the Lord: Full Assurance

Assurance is related to your walk with the Lord. If someone is struggling with assurance, I would ask them: 1) Do you believe the promises of God? ; 2) Do you sense the Spirit of God testifying to you that you are born again? ; 3) Are you walking in sin in some way? Is there some immorality in your life?

The latter may include that you are not serving God diligently in your life. If that is the case, or there is any other sin, assurance is somehow going to be affected.

If you do serve him like the Hebrew believers did, then you can have that full assurance of the Christian hope right to the end of your life.

#### 3. Result #2: of Going on for the Lord: No Sluggishness

The point of all this has been to encourage the readers to avoid, or get out of, the spiritually dull state that they found themselves in (5:11). Instead, through diligence and imitation of those who have been faithful and longsuffering in their Christian life, you can avoid this sluggishness of immaturity.

### Conclusion

Thus we conclude this serious warning and exhortation in Hebrews 5-6. I trust God will use these words in your life to help you become a mature believer in Jesus—one who is strong in faith, skilled in the word of God, discerning good and evil, giving evidence of a living faith, and being diligent so that your assurance is full. MAP