

The preaching of this text has three effects: 1) **To believers**: remind them of the preciousness of salvation and the Spirit's regeneration of our hearts and minds. The Spirit of God gave me faith to believe. 2) **To False Believers**: the finality of this passage. The impending doom to those who haven't been converted. It drives us to repent. 3) **To the Church as a Whole**: helps us remove the rose-colored glasses of those in the church and challenges us to have an accurate view of salvation in Christ. Seeing regeneration, faith, repentance, and a changed life as the results of a profession of true faith in Christ. There is a new heart, mind, and allegiance. There are tares among the wheat as Christ said there would be until the end, Matt. 13:24-30.

**A Sobering Test: 3 Features of a False Believer:**

1) **Deception**: V21, easy believism and free grace false gospels say those making a one-time profession of faith makes one saved. There is then 2 classes of believers: 1)Disciples and 2) Carnal. Eph. 4:3, calls believers to unity in the Spirit- into one body, faith, baptism, etc. Rom. 6:17, believers are delivered from being slaves of sin and now into obedience. Phil. 3:20, Jesus referred to in Scripture as Savior and Lord. Luke 2:11, the angel declares Jesus the Savior who is Christ the Lord.

>>Evidence given by Christ: "he who does the will of My Father in heaven." That is one who lives a sanctified life (Rom. 12:1-2). It is one who is a new creation, in whom, everything has changed (2 Cor. 5:17), one with a new heart and loyalty towards Christ. One who has grief over sin (2 Cor. 7:10), regenerated by the Holy Spirit (Tit. 3:5), not just with words but obedience.

2) **Description**: V22, **Quantity**: "Many," (see also V13) "will say to me." **Location**: "On that day," (Rev. 20:11-15, White Throne Judgement). These appeals in V22 are very much a charismatic, Pentecostal viewpoint: **Prophecy in your name**: speaking for God shows ignorance of Scripture and a false Gospel. **Cast out demons**: they thought they were casting out demons, but they certainly weren't by the name of Jesus as Jesus revealed. What is this? Trying to do good works for others, help them with their marriages, children, etc. **Miracles**, "mighty works," see also Satan disguises himself with works that appear to be righteous and people believe them, but won't believe the truth of the Gospel, 2 Cor. 11:14-15. There is no reference to humility, repentance, the cross, or sin. This is an arrogant response not an obedient one.

3) **Destiny**: V23, "I never knew you, depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness." The word "knew," is a biblical word "in love." It is an intimate love (marriage) and used by Jesus in John 10:14 that His sheep "know" Him and are "known" by Him. Jesus is saying He never knew them, they were not His and commands them (as judge) to "Depart!" This is not discipline or a temporary chastisement, it is an eternal judgement of damnation to the Lake of Fire described with gnashing of teeth for all eternity.

>>**Why is hell forever?** Because unforgiven sin remains forever. These are those called lawless, which are those in habitual sin, without sorrow, without repentance, disregarding the Lord while being outwardly religious.

**What is a false believer to do?**

1) **Stop Fooling Yourself**: V3, if God permits. V4: **5** Responses of a false believer who thinks that they are right with God. They are spiritual things but are not used in Scripture to describe a believer.

- a. **Once Enlightened:** V4 & 6, not one will be lost (Jn. 10: 25-30). It means intellectual exposure, light of the Gospel, seeing and receiving not same thing. These have come to understand the Gospel but didn't receive it.
  - b. **Exposed:** "tasted heavenly gift": Christ and His salvation must be consumed not tasted, Jn. 6:53.
  - c. **Witnesses:** V4, "partakers of the Holy Spirit," a witness, shared in the Holy Spirit. This is someone who has seen the change in others. For believers once we are saved the HS dwells in us and we are being changed into the image of Christ and formed into Christ, Gal. 4:19; Rom. 8:28-29.
  - d. **Taught:** V5, "tasted the good word of God." "Word" in this passage refers to pieces, phrases, statements not whole Scripture (Jn.5:39). These are those who have spent months and years listening but never changed.
  - e. **Astounded:** V5, "and the powers of the age to come." They have seen power of the Kingdom to come. From Heb.2:3-4, these have seen miracles and wonders.
- 2) **Stop Waiting:** V4, 'impossible for those who were enlightened," V6, "if they have fallen away to renew them again to repentance." They have rejected Jesus and put Him to "open shame." This term demonstrates that they heard all that Jesus has done, what He offers, are not compelled to repent. The "open shame" is the rejection of Christ and believing that if He wasn't God then He was guilty, deserved death, and was a liar. Judas being an example. This is "trampling" the Son of God, Heb. 10:29, and have outraged the Spirit of grace by rejecting salvation.
- >>This could result in permanent loss of salvation in this life and there would be no longer a sacrifice for sins for that person, Matt. 12:30; Heb. 10:26.
- >>Moreover, an example of this person in verse 4-6 is found in Heb. 6: 7-8. If the land drinks in the rain that often comes upon it, and bears herbs useful for those by whom it is cultivated, receives blessing from God. V8, but if it bears thorns and briers, it is rejected and near to being cursed, whose end is to be burned. Does the rain bear fruit or thorns?

## Further Discussion and Application

What are the signs of a false teacher according to 2 Peter 2: 1-22? What are the signs of a true believer according to 2 Pet. 1:1-11? What fellowship does a believer have according to 1 John 1:1-4?

This message is sobering for all who hear. How is the life of a believer demonstrated in Romans 12:1-21? How is the life of an unbeliever demonstrated in: Rom. 6:15-23, Gal. 6:16-26, Eph. 4:17-29, Col. 3:1-11.?

What makes knowing those who profess faith in Christ without demonstrated fruit of righteousness difficult to determine if they are believers? Why is fruit a simple way to see the work of Christ in them? If we have young believers, what would they demonstrate as they mature and learn more about Christ? Where would their affections be? Do they attend church, hear the preached word, submit to leaders, and ask to be disciplined to learn more? How can you explain this truth by using Heb. 6:7-8?