

# Hebrews 6:9-10 Commentary

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CONSIDER JESUS OUR GREAT HIGH PRIEST  
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<b>The Epistle to the Hebrews</b>				
<b>INSTRUCTION</b> Hebrews 1-10:18			<b>EXHORTATION</b> Hebrews 10:19-13:25	
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MAJESTY OF CHRIST	MINISTRY OF CHRIST			MINISTERS FOR CHRIST
DOCTRINE			DUTY	
DATE WRITTEN: ca. 64-68AD				

See [ESV Study Bible "Introduction to Hebrews"](#)  
 (See also [MacArthur's Introduction to Hebrews](#))

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Hebrews 6:9 But, **beloved**, we are **convinced** of **better things concerning** you, and things that **accompany salvation**, though \* we are **speaking** in **this way**. (NASB: Lockman)

**Greek:** [Pepeismetha \(1PRPI\) de peri humon, agapetoi, ta kreissona kai echomena \(PMPNPA\) soterias, ei kai houtos laloumen; \(1PPA\)](#)

**Amplified:** Even though we speak this way, yet in your case, beloved, we are now firmly convinced of better things that are near to salvation and accompany it. ([Amplified Bible - Lockman](#))

**NLT:** Dear friends, even though we are talking like this, we really don't believe that it applies to you. We are confident that you are meant for better things, things that come with salvation. ([NLT - Tyndale House](#))

**Phillips:** But although we give these words of warning we feel sure that you, whom we love, are capable of better things and will enjoy the full experience of salvation. ([Phillips: Touchstone](#))

**Wuest:** But we have come to a settled persuasion concerning you, divinely loved ones, the things which are better and which are attached to a saved condition of life, even if we also thus speak.

**Young's Literal:** and that which is bearing thorns and briars is disapproved of, and nigh to cursing, whose end is for burning;

**BUT, BELOVED WE ARE CONVINCED OF BETTER THINGS CONCERNING YOU: de peri humon agaphetoi Pepeismetha (1PRPI) ta kreissona peri humon:**

- Heb 6:4-6,10, 10:34,39, Php 1:6,7, 1Th 1:3,4
- [Hebrews 6 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**But beloved** - This description is very interesting. For one thing, this is the only used of [agapetos](#) in Hebrews. **Beloved** is *never* used in the NT to describe unbelievers! The contrast word "but" signals a marked change in tone as the writer addresses the readers as **beloved** rather than **in the case of those who** (Heb 6:4+)! The severity of the previous warning passage is further balanced in this section by an exhortation to be diligent and an encouragement of a sure hope in Hebrews 6:9-20.

As **A W Pink** once wrote...I cannot really love a brother with the Gospel love which is required of me, unless I have a well-grounded persuasion that he is a brother.

**Vincent** writes that in the previous verse...The field of thorns and thistles is burned over and abandoned to barrenness. But the writer refuses to believe that his readers will incur such a fate.

**Wuest** - We come now to the concluding section of this analytical unit. We will need to remind ourselves again of the historical background and analysis of the book, and the purpose of the author in writing it. He was writing to the visible professing Church made up of saved and unsaved. There is no greeting to the saints like we find in most of the epistles. The concern of the writer is with those of his unsaved Jewish readers who under stress of persecution were in danger of renouncing their professed faith in Messiah and returning to the abrogated sacrifices of the First Testament. These he repeatedly warns against this act, and repeatedly exhorts to go on to faith in the New Testament sacrifice, Messiah. The fact that he urges them on to faith, shows that they merely made a profession and were not saved. After issuing this solemn warning in Hebrews 5:11-6:8, he addresses the saved among his readers and uses them as an example to urge the unsaved on to the act of faith. ([Hebrews Commentary online](#))

**Stedman** - Having issued this warning, the pastor's heart of the writer expresses reassurance and encouragement in Hebrews 6:9-12. Though some among them deserve his sobering caution, nevertheless he does not see them all in this dangerous state. It is clear that he sincerely believes that the larger part of his readers are truly saved and only need exhortation to diligence and patience. Their works of love and support to other believers strongly testify to their genuine faith, for as James declares, a faith that does not result in works is dead! (see note James 2:26; Hebrews 6:11 - note) states again the truth found everywhere in Scripture: The only reliable sign of regeneration is a faith that does not fail and continues to the end of life. (**Ed note:** Such perseverance does not merit or earn the person's salvation but does show the genuineness of their conversion). It may at times falter and grow dim as it faces various trials and pressures, but it cannot be wholly abandoned, for Jesus has promised, "I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand" (Jn 10:28). ([Hebrews 6:9-12 Good Works Proves Faith Is Real](#))

This is the only passage in the whole letter where the writer addresses his people as **beloved**. Furthermore in this section the writer is clearly speaking to them as believers which contrast with the way he began to present the severe warning of **Hebrews 6:4-8**

addressing them as **those who**. As was noted in the discussion of **Hebrews 6:4-6** (see **notes** Hebrews 6:4; 6:5; 6:6) there is a definite distinction being made by the author.

**John MacArthur** observes that now the writer of Hebrews - Now he is speaking of things that accompany salvation, whereas in the previous part of the chapter he had been talking only about things concerning revelation. Both of these things—the use of “beloved” and the discussion of salvation conditions—indicate the writer’s change of audience. The previous topics—intellectual enlightenment about God’s word, tasting God’s gifts and His Spirit, and so forth—accompany revelation, not salvation. They are meant, of course, to help lead to salvation, but they do not do so apart from faith in Jesus Christ. ([MacArthur, John: Hebrews. Moody Press](#) )

**Convinced** (3982) (**peitho**) means to come to a settled persuasion concerning some truth or fact and so to be persuaded, convinced. **Peitho** suggests that a conclusion has been reached on reasonable ground. The writer’s observation of what God had done among the **beloved** in particular, and his reflections on the ways of God in general, led him to form this judgment. He was entirely convinced of the truth of what he said and he thus uses the language of a man who had no doubt on the subject. T

**Peitho** is in the **perfect tense** meaning “I have come to a settled conviction” (and still hold that conviction). It expresses the writer’s confidence in a once for all completed work of salvation with present ongoing results or effects of that salvation. What a contrast with preceding desolate picture. The writer’s confidence is based in part on his remembrance of their past and continuing behaviour and partly on the justice of God.

**Better** (2909) (**kreitton/kreisson** from **kratos** = strong, which denotes power in activity and effect) serves as the comparative degree of **agathos**, “good” (good or fair, intrinsically). **Kreitton/kreisson** means more useful, more profitable more advantageous, greater, superior; greater advantage.

On the 19 NT uses of **Better**, 12 are in Hebrews. **Better** than what? **Better** than falling away and being compared to a field the vegetation of which is burned. He assures them that he is persuaded better things of them than those of falling away and crucifying the Son of God. He also is persuaded that things that accompany salvation are true of them.

Note that writer switches **pronouns** from "in the case of those", "them", "themselves" back to YOU.

**Better** is a **KEYWORD** (see key words) in Hebrews. This repetition of "better" demonstrates beyond all doubt to the Jewish reader that the **New** is better than the **Old** system. Study the uses below. What is **better**? You will need to read the surrounding context to answer this question.

## Hebrews - A "Better" Book

Uses of "Better"

**Hebrews 1:4** (note) having become as much **better** than the angels, as He has inherited a more excellent name than they.

**Hebrews 6:9** (note) But, beloved, we are convinced of **better** things concerning you, and things that accompany salvation, though we are speaking in this way.

**Hebrews 7:19** (note) (for the Law made nothing perfect), and on the other hand there is a bringing in of a **better** hope, through which we draw near to God.

**Hebrews 7:22** (note) so much the more also Jesus has become the guarantee of a **better** covenant.

**Hebrews 8:6** (note) But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, by as much as He is also the mediator of a **better** covenant, which has been enacted on better promises.

**Hebrews 9:23** (note) Therefore it was necessary for the copies of the things in the heavens to be cleansed with these, but the heavenly things themselves with **better** sacrifices than these.

**Hebrews 10:34** (note) For you showed sympathy to the prisoners, and accepted joyfully the seizure of your property, knowing that you have for yourselves a **better** possession and an abiding one.

**Hebrews 11:4** (note) By faith Abel offered to God a **better** sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained the testimony that he was righteous, God testifying about his gifts, and through faith, though he is dead, he still speaks.

**Hebrews 11:16** (note) But as it is, they desire a **better** country, that is a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for He has prepared a city for them.

**Hebrews 11:35** (note) Women received back their dead by resurrection; and others were tortured, not

accepting their release, in order that they might obtain a **better** resurrection;

**Hebrews 11:40** (note) because God had provided something **better** for us, so that apart from us they should not be made perfect.

**Hebrews 12:24** (note) and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood, which speaks **better** than the blood of Abel.

F B Hole ([Biographical Note](#)) writes that...

In verse 9 the writer hastens to assure the Hebrews, to whom he wrote, that in saying these things he was not throwing doubt upon the reality of all them, nor even upon the most of them. The opposite to this was the fact. He stood in doubt of a minority evidently, but he was assured of the reality of the mass. He discerned in them features which gave him this assurance. He calls them "things which accompany salvation."

There are then certain things which act as a kind of hallmark upon our Christianity. The hallmark upon a silver article does not make it silver, but it gives us an official guarantee that it is silver. It assures us of its genuineness. What then are these things which assure us of the genuineness of Christians — things which so definitely accompany salvation that if they be present we know that salvation also is present? This question is answered in verse 10. And the answer is — they are many little acts which reveal genuine love for the saints.

Some of us may feel inclined to exclaim: — "How extraordinary! I should have thought that great acts of faith, great exploits of devotion to God would better have revealed reality than that." In so saying, or thinking we should be wrong. Under stress of emotion or sudden enthusiasm great acts are sometimes accomplished which are no true index to the heart. It is in these little things that we reveal our true selves far more truly. Ministering to the saints, who are the people of God, they showed their love toward God Himself.

It is one thing to minister to a saint because I happen to like him or her, and quite another to minister to a saint just as a saint; and it is this latter which is spoken about here. The former is a thing which might be done by an unconverted person; the latter is only possible to one who possesses the divine nature. Now this is just the point here. The things that accompany salvation are the things which manifest the divine nature; and things which therefore prove the reality of faith, in a way that the possession of miraculous powers or the outward privileges of Christianity never can. ([Hebrews Commentary Notes](#))

#### AND THINGS THAT ACCOMPANY SALVATION THOUGH WE ARE SPEAKING IN THIS WAY: kai echomena (PMPNPA) soterias ei kai houtos laloumen (1PPAI):

- **Things that accompany salvation** - Heb 2:3, 5:9 Isaiah 57:15, Mt 5:3-12, Mk 16:16, Ac 11:18, 20:21, 2Co 7:10, Ga 5:6,22,23 Titus 2:11-12, 13-14
- [Hebrews 6 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**Things that accompany salvation** - For example your **work** and **love** and **ministering** (see next verse). The constant practice of the **beloved** in ministering to the saints demonstrates that the Holy Spirit had produced spiritual fruit in their lives, and that they were genuinely born-again. Their lives showed evidence of their saving faith, and the writers point is that the mere professing Hebrew should go on to that act.

#### Related Resource:

- James 2:14-26-See study of faith that works - James 2:14 ; James 2:15; James 2:16; James 2:17; James 2:18; James 2:19; James 2:20; James 2:21; James 2:22; James 2:23; James 2:24; James 2:25; James 2:26)

**Accompany** - The Greek word is literally "having" or "holding". This was a common Greek idiom meaning to hold one's self to a person or thing; hence to be closely joined to it.

**Salvation** ([4991](#)) (**soteria** from **soter** = Savior in turn from **sozo** = save, rescue, deliver) (Click here or here for in depth discussion of the related terms soter and sozo) describes the rescue or deliverance from danger, destruction and peril. **Salvation** is a broader term in Greek than we often think of in English. Other concepts that are inherent in **soteria** include restoration to a state of safety, soundness, health and well being as well as preservation from danger of destruction.

The idea of **salvation** is that the power of God rescues people from the penalty of sin, which is spiritual

death which is followed by eternal separation from the presence of His Glory. **Salvation** delivers the believer from the power of **Sin** (see discussion on Romans 6-8 beginning at Romans 6:1-3)

**Salvation** carried tremendous meaning in Paul's day, the most basic being "**deliverance**," and it was applied to personal and national deliverance. The emperor was looked on as a "savior" as was the physician who healed you of illness.

It is interesting that Collin's (secular) dictionary defines "**salvation**" as "the act of preserving or the state of being preserved from harm... deliverance by redemption from the power of sin and from the penalties ensuing from it."!

In short, this "**so great a salvation**" is not just escape from the penalty of sin but includes the ideas of safety, deliverance from slavery and preservation from danger or destruction.

In addition, this "**so great a salvation**" includes the idea of what is often referred to as the Three Tenses of Salvation (justification = past tense salvation = deliverance from sin's penalty, sanctification = present tense salvation = deliverance from sin's power and glorification = future tense salvation = deliverance from sin's presence). It follows that the discerning student will check the context to determine which of the three "tenses" a given use of *soteria* is referring to.

Mankind has continually looked for **salvation** of one kind or another. Greek philosophy had turned inward and begun to focus on changing man's inner life through moral reform and self-discipline. The Greek Stoic philosopher **Epictetus** called his lecture room "the hospital for sick souls." **Epicurus** called his teaching "the medicine of salvation." **Seneca** taught that all men were looking **ad salutem** ("toward salvation") and that men are overwhelmingly conscious of their weakness and insufficiency in necessary things and that we therefore need "a hand let down to lift us up". Seneca was not far from the truth as Scripture testifies " (Jehovah speaking) Is My hand so short that it cannot ransom? Or have I no power to deliver?... Behold, the LORD'S hand is not so short that it cannot save... (Jeremiah speaking) 'Ah Lord GOD! Behold, Thou hast made the heavens and the earth by Thy great power and by Thine outstretched arm! Nothing is too difficult for Thee.' (**Isaiah 50:2... Isaiah 59:1... Jeremiah 32:17**)

**Salvation** through Christ is God's powerful hand extended down to lost souls to lift them up.

**Though we are speaking this way** - Seems to allude to the tone of severe warning just given in the preceding verses.

**John MacArthur** has an interesting discussion of **the things which accompany salvation** writing that...Many things accompany salvation. The entire fifth and six chapters of Romans (see notes Romans 5:1ff; Romans 6:1ff) are devoted to these accompaniments. But the particular ones mentioned in this section of Hebrews are those that contrast with the accompaniments of unbelief mentioned in Hebrews 5:11-6:5. For example, accompanying salvation is not infancy but maturity, not milk but solid food, not inexperience in righteousness but perfect righteousness, not repentance in dead works but repentance toward God unto life. The accompaniments of salvation are primarily positive, not negative. They do not reflect external ceremonial religion but internal regeneration, transformation, new life. Their significance comes not from repeated sacrifices but from the one perfect and complete sacrifice of Jesus Christ. They do not focus on the elementary truths of resurrection and judgment but on the believer's blessed hope, not just on being enlightened but on being made new, not just on tasting salvation but feasting on it, not just partaking of the Holy Spirit but having Him indwell, not just getting a taste of God's good word but of drinking and eating it, not just seeing God's miracles but being one. These are the things that accompany salvation. ([MacArthur, John: Hebrews. Moody Press](#) )

## Hebrews 6:9-12

### Things That Accompany Salvation

#### Steven Cole

The football team did poorly in the first half of the game and is getting beaten badly. They come into the locker room and the coach chews them out: "You guys are playing as if this is the first time you've ever played the game! Jones, you missed a key block that allowed them to sack our quarterback. Smith, you didn't see that receiver that was wide open in the end zone. We could have had an easy touchdown there. Williams, you weren't paying attention to the signals and jumped offside, costing us a penalty that we couldn't afford."

But after a few minutes, the coach changes his focus: "I know that you guys can do better! I've seen you play well. I know that you

have it in you to go out there in the second half and control the ball. You can win this game! Let's go do it!"

Our text reminds me of that kind of locker room pep talk. In 6:4-8, the author has warned the Hebrew church about the danger of repudiating faith in Christ and returning to Judaism. He is fearful that there may be some in the flock who are in danger of doing that. But he knows that this is not true of the majority. He also knows that some sensitive souls in the church may be discouraged by his strong rebuke. He wants them to know that his words do not come from anger, but from love and concern. So in 6:9, he changes his focus from warning to encouragement. He addresses them as "beloved" (the only time in Hebrews), and tells them, "We are convinced of better things concerning you, that is, things that accompany salvation, though we are speaking in this way."

That statement implies, as I said last week, that the warning pertains to those in the church who may not be genuinely saved. He hopes that the few souls who may be tempted to turn from Christ will take the warning to heart. But now he wants to encourage the majority to press on in endurance to maturity. He doesn't want these genuine believers to doubt their salvation, but rather, to realize "the full assurance of hope until the end" (Hebrews 6:11). So he tells them that he—and even more importantly, God—sees the evidence of genuine salvation in them. And he encourages them to press on diligently in serving Christ, so that they will persevere in spite of any persecution or hardship. The main idea here is that...

Genuine salvation is accompanied by diligent, faithful service to God's saints out of love for Him.

### **1. Genuine salvation is always accompanied by visible evidence.**

In Hebrews 6:10, he mentions their work and the love which they had shown toward the Lord's name, in having ministered and in still ministering to the saints. "Shown" points to something visible. He could see how their lives had changed from living for themselves to now living to serve others. Their salvation resulted in visible evidence. He refers to this same evidence again in 10:32-34, where he specifies how in former days they had endured public reproach, had showed sympathy to prisoners, and had joyfully accepted the seizure of their property, knowing that they had a better and lasting possession in heaven.

The point is, if you have faith in Christ, it will manifest itself in your life. There will be other evidences than those listed here (1 John lists many evidences of genuine faith), but there are always visible evidences of the new birth just as there are unmistakable signs of life in a newborn baby. As we saw (Hebrews 6:7-8), it may take a while to see whether the ground that drinks in the rain bears thorns and thistles or a good crop. But as Jesus' parable of the sower shows, the good soil will yield a crop, "some a hundredfold, some sixty, and some thirty" (Matt. 13:8). Genuine salvation will result in a life of increasing fruitfulness and holiness. Our text focuses on one such evidence of salvation:

### **2. A major evidence of genuine salvation is diligent, faithful service to others out of love for Him.**

Note three things in this regard:

#### **A. Love for God stemming from His love for us is the primary motive for all Christian service.**

The author refers to "the love which you have shown toward His name, in having ministered and in still ministering to the saints" (Hebrews 6:10). The first and greatest commandment is, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind" (Matt. 22:37). It is the basis for the second greatest commandment, to love your neighbor as yourself. Jesus commanded us to love one another as He has loved us (John 13:34). The basis for loving God is to recognize that He first loved us, even while we were yet sinners (see notes Romans 5:6; 5:7; 5:8; 1 John 4:19).

Many Christian psychologists wrongly teach that you must learn to love yourself before you can love God and others. But that is to pervert these commandments! The second commandment assumes what we all know to be true, that we all love ourselves quite well! Even the person who goes around dumping on himself loves himself. He is completely self-focused. If he would care about others as much as he focused on himself, he would begin to obey the command. Even the suicidal person loves himself more than he loves others. When he thinks about killing himself, he isn't thinking about the effect on others. He is only thinking of trying to escape his own problems, even if it devastates his family or friends.

The author mentions the love which they had shown toward God's name. His name represents all that God is as revealed in His Word. It refers to His holy attributes and His ways. To love His name is to have a passion for His glory, to see God exalted to His true place of honor over every creature. Loving God and His name is the basis for all that we do in service for Him. John MacArthur (The MacArthur New Testament Commentary, Hebrews [Moody Press], p. 155) points out, "When Jesus recommissioned Peter, He did not ask him if he loved men and, if so, then to go out and serve them. He asked Peter three times, 'Do you love Me?' After each of Peter's affirmative replies, Jesus commanded him to feed His sheep (John 21:15-17)." MacArthur concludes, "We can never love men, saved or unsaved, lovable or unlovable, until we properly love Christ."

Why does the author begin Hebrews 6:10 by saying, "For God is not unjust so as to forget your work ..."? I think that one reason is that these people had suffered early in their Christian lives, and now they're facing the prospect of more suffering. At such times,

Satan tries to undermine our love for God by whispering, "You trusted in Christ and look where it got you! You've had nothing but problems. Is that how this loving God takes care of you?" He wants you to start thinking that either God is unjust or else He has forgotten you. So the author says, "God is not unjust and He has not forgotten you." He goes on to set their focus on the certain hope of inheriting God's promises (see notes Hebrews 6:11; 6:12).

Take a moment to apply this to your heart. Perhaps trials or hardships have caused you to doubt God's love. Maybe the trial is other Christians who have disappointed you. The church has not been all that you thought that it should be. Believers have criticized you when you were simply trying to serve the Lord. The enemy has come in and gotten you to think either that God is unjust or that He has forgotten what you have done for Him. If you buy into that line of thinking, pretty soon you'll be having a pity party, you'll cut yourself off from other believers because of your hurt feelings, and Satan will have you right where he wants you to be! You've got to come back to love for the Lord and His name as the motivation for everything else.

### **B. To love others is one way to show love for Him.**

These Hebrew believers had ministered and were still ministering to the saints, but the author says that this service reflected their love for the Lord's name.

The Russian author, Leo Tolstoy (Twenty-Three Tales, online illustrates this in a story titled, "Where Love is, God is." It is about an old Russian cobbler who has lost his wife and all of his children. He is bitter and lonely, wanting to die. A traveling monk stops by to visit him and after hearing his story, tells him that he must not question God's ways. God has a purpose for his life. His despair is the result of living for himself. He must learn to live for God. He tells the old cobbler to read the Gospels to learn how to live for God.

The old man does so and is transformed. He becomes content and at peace. Every night he pores over the gospels. One night, he falls asleep reading in Luke 7 about the Pharisee who did not welcome Jesus to his home. Suddenly, whether in a dream or what the old man doesn't know, he hears a voice calling his name: "Martin, Martin, look out in the street tomorrow for I shall come."

The next day, he keeps watch out of his window as he works. He sees an old man that he knows, invites him in and gives him some tea. He tells the man about Christ's mercy as he had been reading in the gospels. The old man listened with tears running down his cheeks and left thanking him for his hospitality.

A while later, Martin saw outside a woman dressed in shabby summer clothes, trying to keep her crying baby warm. He invited her in to sit by the fire. She was destitute and had pawned her shawl the day before to get something to eat. He fed her, gave her an old coat to wrap around her baby, and gave her the money to get her shawl out of pawn.

Later, he saw a poor woman with a basket of apples for sale. A boy tried to steal one, but she caught him by the hair and was threatening to take him to the police. Martin went outside, calmed her down, and got the boy to ask forgiveness and the woman to forgive. He told them both Jesus' parable about the master who forgave the servant an incredibly large debt, only to have the servant go out and mistreat a fellow servant who owed him a slight amount. After listening, the woman picked up her heavy load to go, but the boy offered to carry it for her, so they went off together.

It was evening now. Martin went inside, lit his lamp, and opened his Bible. He had intended to read where he had left off, but the Bible fell open to another place. Before he read, he heard a voice call out, "Martin, it is I." He looked up and saw the old man and then he vanished. This was repeated with the woman and her baby, and with the woman selling apples and the boy. Then he read, "I was hungry, and you gave Me something to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me something to drink; I was a stranger, and you invited Me in..." At the bottom of the page, he read, "To the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me" (Matt. 25:35, 40). Tolstoy concludes, "And Martin understood that his dream had come true; and that the Savior had really come to him that day, and he had welcomed him."

Thus love for God stemming from His love for us is the primary motive for all Christian service. To love others is one way to show love for Him.

### **C. Love for others is work that requires diligence, faithfulness, and patience.**

Love is not spontaneous and effortless. The author calls it "work," and exhorts them to continue showing the same diligence. He doesn't want them to grow sluggish or lazy, but through faith and patience, to become imitators of those who inherit the promises. It's as Paul writes (Gal. 6:9-10),

Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary. So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith.

The Christian life is not a sprint; it's a marathon. The reward comes at the end of the race. We need to commit to the long haul and fight the natural laziness that we're all prone to. Let's face it, it's almost always inconvenient to show love to others. But love isn't an

optional character trait for those so inclined! It is the primary Christian virtue.

We hear a lot today about burnout, and I do not mean to be overly simplistic. But a lot of burnout stems from the fact that we have not maintained our devotion to Jesus Christ. If we let other things crowd out time alone with God in His Word and in prayer, and if we do not think often on His great love as shown to us at the cross, the work of loving others will soon drain us. Ministry is having your cup full to the brim of God's love and then slopping over on others. When you let your cup go dry, you burn out.

We've seen that genuine salvation is always accompanied by visible evidence and that a major evidence is diligent, faithful service to others out of love for God.

### **3. Diligent, faithful service to others out of love for God will strengthen your assurance of salvation.**

While there may have been a few apostates in the church, the author is confident that the majority are saved because he has seen the evidence in their lives in their ministry to the saints. Then (Hebrews 6:11) he shares his desire that each of them continue with the same diligence and adds, "so as to realize the full assurance of hope until the end." **Full assurance of hope** is tied in with diligent service, especially practical deeds of love towards fellow believers. As John states,

"We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brethren" (1 John 3:14; see also 15-20).

The bedrock of Christian assurance is that God has promised eternal life to those that believe in Jesus Christ, and you know that you have trusted in Him. But, how do you know if your faith is genuine, saving faith? Since the apostates had what seemed to be many evidences of salvation (see notes Hebrews 6:4; 6:5), and yet were not truly saved, how can you know that your faith is the real thing?

The biblical answer is, your life should reflect the reality of what God has done in your heart. As John also states (1 John 2:3),

"By this we know that we have come to know Him, if we keep His commandments."

The more that you see God's working through you, the greater will be your assurance that

"He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus" (see note Philippians 1:6).

In Hebrews 6:7, the author uses the analogy of ground that drinks in the rain. If it brings forth vegetation useful to those who tilled it, it receives a blessing from God. In other words, fruitfulness is the result of salvation. But when you are fruitful, God adds further blessing, a fuller salvation (Alexander Maclaren develops this point in Expositions of Holy Scripture [Baker], Hebrews, pp. 364-366). As 6:10 implies, God will reward your service for Him, and one reward is "the full assurance of hope until the end." Persevering in good deeds is not the cause of why God keeps you, but it is the evidence of it. That evidence strengthens your assurance.

But diligence is hard to maintain and laziness is easy to fall into. So how do we keep running the race when we feel like drop-ping out?

### **4. One key to diligent, faithful service to God is to imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.**

The author is referring to the Old Testament saints. He goes on to use Abraham as an illustration of a man who patiently waited in faith and obtained God's promise (6:15). He will expand this list in chapter 11. All of these heroes of the faith, plus those in the New Testament, are there so that we can learn from them and imitate their faith. Both Jesus and Paul told their followers to learn from and imitate them (Matt. 10:29; John 13:15; 1 Cor. 4:16; 11:1; Philippians 4:9 [note]; 1 Thessalonians 1:6 [note]; 1 Thessalonians 2:14 [note]; 2 Timothy 3:10 [note]; 2 Timothy 3:11 [note]). I've often said, only half-joking, that child-rearing is easy, because kids follow your example. So all you have to do is live a godly life before them!

We are to imitate those who by faith and patience inherit the promises. As Hebrews 11 makes clear, most of the Old Testament saints died in faith without realizing the promises in their lifetimes (see note Hebrews 11:39). This means, as Paul puts it, that if "we have hoped in Christ in this life only, we are of all men most to be pitied" (1 Cor. 15:19). God's promises are fulfilled in eternity. That's where faith comes into play. Will we trust God to keep His promises, even if in this life we are despised, rejected, and destitute? Will we endure hardship as good soldiers of Jesus Christ, knowing that He will reward us far beyond any sacrifices that we make here below?

Two applications: First, read and study the biographies in the Bible. There are also some biographical novels of biblical characters. Last summer as we drove on our vacation, Marla and I read aloud through Francine Rivers' account of Bathsheba, which had some interesting insights. But before you read books like that, study the biblical account, so that you know when the author is speculating and when he or she is relating fact. Learn both the positive and negative lessons from the saints in the Bible.

Second, read Christian biographies. I've benefited greatly from reading dozens of biographies of pastors and missionaries. I am always reading a biography, along with other types of books. Currently, I'm reading The Journals of Jim Eliot. When that's done, a



biography of Augustine is waiting. Good biographies do not just extol all the amazing things that these spiritual giants accomplished. They also tell you their struggles and failures, so that you can learn from their mistakes. You see how they responded to situations that often are not much different than what you face. Sometimes the differences in time period or culture will help you think about issues in our culture that you may have been blind to. I have a bibliography of Christian biographies available.

## Conclusion

Note that our text contains the three cardinal Christian virtues, faith (Heb 6:12), hope (Heb 6:11), and love (Heb 6:10). Those who are genuinely saved will be growing in these three areas, and so they are good yardsticks to measure your life by. Are you living by faith in God's promises in your daily life? If you are, you will know God's promises (through Scripture memory), and you will be praying those promises back to God, claiming by faith what He has promised in His Word.

Are you growing in hope? Biblical hope is not uncertain, as when we say, "I hope it doesn't rain tomorrow." Biblical hope is certain, but not yet realized. It is an attitude that is the opposite of discouragement and depression. The person who hopes in God is buoyed up by the promise of Jesus' coming, and that the future will be glorious for all of those who love God and are called according to His purpose. As Paul prays (Ro 15:13+)

Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you will abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Are you growing in love? Do you love God more and more, cherishing His Word? Do you love His people, difficult as they may be at times? Plug in the marks of love from 1 Corinthians 13 (see notes 1Corinthians 13:4ff) and ask, "Do I love my immediate family members in this way?" Do you love the lost enough to give your money and time so that they can hear the good news, that Christ came into this world to save sinners? None of these graces are automatic. You must cultivate them daily through the spiritual disciplines. These are the things that accompany genuine salvation.

## Discussion Questions

Some say that if you make assurance depend in any way on works, you undermine all assurance. What does the Bible say?

Why is the motive (love for God) vital in Christian service? What can happen if you have other motives?

Some would say that if love requires effort and is not spontaneous, it is not genuine. Why is this false?

Why is "learning to love yourself" a fundamentally anti-biblical concept? What does the Bible say we should think about our-selves (see Ro 12:3+, Ro 12:10+, Ro 12:16+; Php 2:3-4+ 2:3; Pr 3:7). ([Hebrews 6:9-12 Things That Accompany Salvation](#))

**Hebrews 6:10** For **God** is not **unjust** so as to **forget** your **work** and the **love which** you have **shown toward** His **name**, in having **ministered** and in still **ministering** to the **saints**. (**NASB: Lockman**)

**Greek:** [ou gar adikos o theos epilathesthai \(AMN\) tou ergou humon kai tes agapes es](#) enedeixasthe [eis to onoma autou, diakonesantes \(AAPMPN\) tois hagiois kai diakonountes. \(PAPMPN\)](#)

**Amplified:** For God is not unrighteous to forget or overlook your labor and the love which you have shown for His name's sake in ministering to the needs of the saints (His own consecrated people), as you still do. ([Amplified Bible - Lockman](#))

**KJV:** 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.

**NLT:** For God is not unfair. He will not forget how hard you have worked for him and how you have shown your love to him by caring for other Christians, as you still do. ([NLT - Tyndale House](#))

**Phillips:** God is not unfair: he will not lose sight of all that you have done nor of the loving labour which you have shown for his sake in looking after fellow-Christians (as you are still doing). ([Phillips: Touchstone](#))

**Wuest:** For God is not unjust to forget your work and the divine, self-sacrificial love which you exhibited toward His Name in that you ministered to the saints and are continuing to minister.

**Young's Literal:** for God is not unrighteous to forget your work, and the labour of the love, that ye shewed to His name, having ministered to the saints and ministering;

**FOR GOD IS NOT UNJUST SO AS TO FORGET YOUR WORK AND THE LOVE: ou gar adikos ho Theos epilathesthai (AMN) tou ergou humon kai tes agapes:**

- **For** - Pr 14:31 Mt 10:42, 25:40, John 13:20
- **God** - Deut 32:4 Ro 3:4,5, 2Th 1:6,7, 2Ti 4:8, 1Jn 1:9
- **Forget** - Neh 5:19. 13:22,31. Ps 20:3. Jer 2:2,3. 18:20. Acts 10:4,31
- **Work and the love** - 1Co 13:4-7 Ga 5:6,13, 1Th 1:3 1Jn 3:17,18
- [Hebrews 6 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**Pr 14:31** He who oppresses the poor reproaches his Maker, But he who is gracious to the needy honors Him.

**Mt 10:42** "And whoever in the name of a disciple gives to one of these little ones even a cup of cold water to drink, truly I say to you he shall not lose his reward."

**Mt 25:40** "And the King will answer and say to them, 'Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me.'

**Jn 13:20** "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who receives whomever I send receives Me; and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me."

Note the **KJV** adds "**and labor**" because this phrase is in the Textus Receptus (*kai tou kopou* = weariness from toil). This phrase is absent from the more widely accepted manuscripts used for the modern translations such as the NAS, ESV and NIV.

**Not (ou)** signifies absolute negation. The literal rendering of the Greek is "for the absolutely not unjust God".

Beloved let the comments of **David Guzik** encourage (and challenge) you...When we are discouraged, we often think God has forgotten all we have done for Him and His people. But God would cease to be God (He would be unjust) if He forgot such things. God sees and remembers. How many lose sight of the fact that God sees their service? How many serve for the applause and attention of man, and are discouraged because it doesn't come?

**Unjust (94) (adikos)** pertains to not being right or just and thus means wicked, treacherous, unrighteous, crooked, characterized by lack of integrity. **Adikos** pertains to acting in a way that is contrary to what is right, an action which is impossible for God.

Dt 32:4 "The Rock! His work is perfect, For all His ways are **just**; A God of faithfulness and without injustice, Righteous and upright is He.

Romans 3:5 (note) But if our **unrighteousness** demonstrates the righteousness of God, what shall we say? The God who inflicts wrath is not **unrighteous**, is He? (I am speaking in human terms.)

2 Timothy 4:8 (note) in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the **righteous** Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing.

**Barnes** writes that...God will do no wrong. He will not forget or fail to reward the endeavours of his people to promote his glory, and to do good. The meaning here is, that by their kindness in ministering to the wants of the saints, they had given full evidence of true piety. If God should forget that, it would be "unrighteous," (1) because there was a propriety that it should be remembered; and (2) because it is expressly promised that it shall not fail of reward, Mt 10:42.

**Forgetting (1950) (epilanthanomai)** from **epi** = in or upon - intensifies meaning of following verb + **lanthano** = lie hidden or concealed) conveys 2 basic nuances in the NT, to **forget** (not recall information concerning something) or to **neglect** (give little attention to, to omit by carelessness or design). The **epi-** preposition intensifies the meaning as noted and thus the idea is not just forgetting but **completely forgetting**.

**Works (2041) (ergon)** refers to toil as an effort or occupation. See **Good Deeds** for what constitutes **works** that are not "**dead**" (Hebrews 6:1 -note) See Torrey's Topic [Reward of Saints](#)

**Paul** spoke of God's non-forgetfulness concerning **Onesiphorus** who had often refreshed him and had not been ashamed of his chains explaining that

when he (Onesiphorus) was in Rome, he eagerly searched for me, and found me— the Lord grant to him to find mercy from the Lord on that day—and you know very well what services he rendered at Ephesus. (2 Ti

**Augustine** said that... We do the works, but God works in us the doing of the works. Without God, we cannot. Without us, God will not.

**Jesus** taught that **love** is a manifestation of those who belong to Him declaring...

A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another. (John 13:34-35)

**Love** (26) (**agape**) describes unconditional, sacrificial love, supremely the love that God is (1Jn 4:8+, 1 Jn 4:16+), that God shows (Jn 3:16+, 1Jn 4:9+) and that God enables (by His Spirit) in His children (see note on fruit of the Spirit - Gal 5:22+). Clearly such love can only be bore as a fruit in saints filled with (controlled by), walking in His Spirit (cf Eph 5:18+; Gal 5:16, 18, 25+), and so he is addressing those who had believed and had therefore received the Holy Spirit Who gave them "holy power" to love and work.

In contrast to every sin which is blotted out, which God will **'remember... no more'** (Hebrews 8:12 note), ministry in His Name, abiding in the Vine and for His glory will not be forgotten in this life or the one to come. A similar idea is seen in Matthew 5:16 (see note) where ultimately it is God Who receives the glory.

Paul told the Thessalonian believers that he knew God had chosen them because of their

**work of faith** and **labor of love** and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Th 1:3-4+).

#### WHICH YOU HAVE SHOWN TOWARD HIS NAME: *hes enedeixasthe (2PAMI) eis to onoma autou:*

- **Which you have shown** - Heb 13:16, Pr 14:31, Mt 10:42, 25:35-40, Mk 9:41 Acts 2:44,45, 4:34,35, Acts 9:36-39, 11:29, Ro 12:13, 15:25-27, 1Co 16:1-3, 2Co 8:1-9, 9:1, 2Co 9:11-15, Ga 6:10, Php 4:16-18, Col 3:17, 1Ti 6:18, 2Ti 1:17,18, Philemon 1:5-7 James 2:15-17 1Jn 3:14-17
- [Hebrews 6 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**Toward His Name** - In other words toward Him or toward God. In the Bible, God's name is synonymous with His essence, His character, His attributes. His Name is Who He is. See **related resource** on the **Name of the LORD**.

In **Colossians** Paul exhorted the saints...

And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father. (see note Colossians 3:17)

**Shown** (1731) (**endeiknumi** from preposition **en** = in, to + **deiknumi** = to show) means to point out, to demonstrate, to put on display, to prove, to show proof, to show forth, to show oneself, to give visible proof, to show in anything and implies an appeal to facts. The preposition (**in**) in the compound suggests more than the simplest demonstration. It is like laying the index finger, as it were, on the object. It means to to show something **in** someone.

In the papyri **endeiknumi** occasionally conveyed a quasi-legal sense of proving a petition or charge or of proving that a charge was wrong. Josephus used **endeiknumi** to describe Herod Agrippa's display of generosity to those of other nations (Josephus, Antiquities, 19:330).

The **orist tense** indicates this visible proof was a historical fact - these saints had indeed demonstrated love toward God (**toward His Name**) in carrying out these deeds. The **middle voice** indicates that them themselves had consciously initiated this action (empowered by the Spirit of course) and participate in the effect/result thereof.

The verb **endeiknumi** means, strictly, to show or demonstrate and the opposite action is to hide, conceal or cover The **saints** he is describing were neither "closet, clandestine nor cloistered" Christians but put on display good (God) works for all to see as proof of Who their owner was. It is not just **who we are** in Christ but **whose we are** that is important.

The saints had given visible proof of **love** and **work** toward God's name. This demonstration stands in dramatic contrast with crucifying Christ (see note Hebrews 6:6).

Someone has suggested that this statement of their demonstration of love could imply that their coming to the assistance of their brethren was evidence of their willingness to identify themselves with the stigma attached to the name of Jesus and the genuineness of their love for Him. In any event, the description in this verse pictures "vegetation useful to those for whose sake it is also tilled"

and is that vegetation which "receives a blessing from God" (Hebrews 6:7 note).

Writing to **Timothy** Paul said...

Instruct them to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, (1 Timothy 6:18)

## IN HAVING MINISTERED AND IN STILL MINISTERING TO THE SAINTS: diakonesantes (AAPMPN) tois hagiois kai diakonountes (PAPMPN) tois hagiois:

- [Hebrews 6 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**Having ministered and in still ministering** - emphasizes continuous action which was even going on at time of receipt of epistle, despite difficult circumstances. Note the **aorist tense** signifying the fact of the past completed acts of ministry and the **present tense** the continuing or ongoing acts of ministry.

**Ministered... ministering** (1247) (**diakoneo** derivation uncertain - cp **diakonis** = in the dust laboring or running through the dust or possibly **diako** = to run on errands; see also study of related noun - **diakonia**) means to minister by way of rendering service in any form or to take care of by rendering humble service. **Diakoneo** gives us our English words diaconate (an official body of deacons) and deacon.

The root word **diakonos** refers to one who serves as a waiter upon tables performing menial duties (see Matt 8:15; 20:28; 27:55; Mark 1:31; 10:45; 15:41; Luke 4:39; 10:40; 12:37; 17:8; 22:26, 27; John 12:2). **Diakoneo** conveys the basic idea of personal service, and depending on the context can mean specifically to serve, to wait on, to see after or to care for someone's needs by performing a service (conveying the sense that help is provided to the one being served - see Mt 4:11, 25:44, Mark 1:13).

**Vance Havner** wrote that...There are no trivial assignments in the work of the Lord.

**Henrietta Mears** adds that...Serving God with our little is the way to make it more; and we must never think that wasted with which God is honoured or men are blessed.

**John Calvin** remarks that...The highest honour in the church is not government but service. (and then added)... We shall never be fit for the service of God if we look not beyond this fleeting life.

**Bridges** rightly observes that...Service to God through service to mankind is the only motivation acceptable to God for diligence and hard work in our vocational calling.

**To the saints** - To other believers. Ministry to other believers (Jewish or Gentile) would have been difficult in the first century (eg, Hebrews 10:32; 10:33; 10:34 see **notes** Hebrews 10:32; 10:33; 10:34).

In **Galatians** Paul exhorts his readers...

And let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we shall reap if we do not grow weary. So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all men, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith. (Galatians 6:9-10+)

In **Romans** Paul describes those who have presented their bodies to God as living and holy sacrifices as those who were...

contributing to the needs of the saints, practicing hospitality. (see note Romans 12:13)

Later in **Hebrews** the writer exhorts his readers...

And do not neglect doing good and sharing; for with such sacrifices God is pleased. (see note Hebrews 13:16)

**Saints** (40) (**hagios**) means set apart ones, separated ones, sanctified ones, or holy ones. **Hagios** is literally holy ones or those set apart (sanctified) from the world and for God's purposes. Saints are positionally holy because they are in Christ but they are to be practically holy in character and conduct before a lost and watching world. They have been set apart by God to be exclusively His, to be dedicated to Him and to manifest holiness of heart and conduct in the midst of the darkness and impurity of paganism and idolatry.

**Kenneth Wuest** has an additional note on **saints** writing that "The believer in the Lord Jesus is set apart for God by the Holy Spirit, out of the First Adam with the latter's sin and condemnation, into the Last Adam (Christ) with the latter's righteousness and life. Thus, the worshipper of the God of the Bible partakes of the character of the God for Whom he is set apart. This is positional sanctification, an act of God performed at the moment

a sinner puts his faith in the Lord Jesus (1Cor 1:2). The work of the Holy Spirit in the yielded saint, in which He sets the believer apart for God in his experience, by eliminating sin from his life and producing His fruit, a process which goes on constantly throughout the believer's life, is called progressive sanctification (1Th 5:23-note). When our Lord sanctifies Himself, He sets Himself apart for God as the Sacrifice for sin ([Jn 17:19](#) Heb10:7 -note)." ([Hebrews Commentary online](#))

**Hagios** is used to describe the holy crown inscribed "Holy to the LORD" Ex 39:30. Saints as Holy Priesthood figuratively wear the same crown "Holy to the Lord" and as such our conduct should be wholly holy so that others who see us get a proper opinion of the One Who has purchased us as His own possession.

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**The Best Retirement Plan** - A. C. Dixon told the story of Johanna Ambrosius, the wife of a poor farmer who lived in the German Empire during the latter part of the nineteenth century. She and her husband spent many long hours in the fields, so she knew little of the outside world. But she had the soul of a poet. With her hope in God, she wrote down the thoughts that filled her heart. She had great sympathy for the struggling people around her, and her mother-heart expressed its joys and sorrows in poetry. Somehow, a bit of verse she had written found its way into print and later into the hands of the Empress of Germany. Impressed by the beauty of what she read, she asked that the author be located. On finding Johanna and learning of her meager lifestyle, the Empress expressed her love for the woman by supplying her immediate needs and by giving her a pension for life.

God calls many of us to serve Him in obscure places where no one expresses gratitude or even seems to notice what we do. But God observes everything we do to help bear the burdens of others, and He will reward us for our labors. He sees our struggles, knows the load we carry, and takes note of our faithfulness. He cares for us in our pilgrimage and will make it all worthwhile when He comes again.

Our eternal pension is guaranteed. God will not forget our "work and labor of love." —Paul R. Van Gorder ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

**Work for the Lord—the pay may not be much,  
but the retirement plan is out of this world.**