

Hebrews 6:4

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost,

Analysis

This begins the most sobering warning passage in Hebrews. 'Once enlightened' (Greek 'hapax photisthentas') refers to initial gospel illumination. 'Tasted of the heavenly gift' and 'partakers of the Holy Ghost' describe genuine experiences of gospel blessing and the Spirit's work. 'Tasted the good word of God' and 'powers of the world to come' indicate exposure to supernatural realities. The description suggests professing believers who experienced much without genuine conversion.

Historical Context

First-century churches included both genuine believers and false professors. The visible church has always contained wheat and tares (Matthew 13:24-30). This warning addresses those who taste kingdom blessings without true faith.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. Can you distinguish between experiencing gospel blessings and genuinely trusting Christ for salvation?
2. What evidence beyond external experiences confirms your genuine faith?

Interlinear Text

Ἄδύνατον γὰρ τοὺς ἄπαξ φωτισθέντας
it is impossible For G3588 for those who were once enlightened
G102 G1063 G530 G5461

γενσαμένους τε τῆς δωρεᾶς τῆς ἐπουρανίου καὶ
have tasted and G3588 gift G3588 of the heavenly and
G1089 G5037 G1431 G2032 G2532

μετόχους γενηθέντας πνεύματος ἄγιου
partakers were made Ghost of the Holy
G3353 G1096 G4151 G40

Additional Cross-References

Matthew 5:13 (Parallel theme): Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.

John 15:6 (Parallel theme): If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.

Ephesians 2:8 (Parallel theme): For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:

Matthew 12:45 (Spirit): Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation.

John 3:27 (Parallel theme): John answered and said, A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven.

Hebrews 10:32 (Parallel theme): But call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions;

Galatians 3:2 (Spirit): This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?

2 Timothy 2:25 (Parallel theme): In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth;

Hebrews 2:4 (Holy): God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?

1 John 5:16 (Parallel theme): If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it.