

“If God Permit”

Hebrews 6:3
David C. Mills

Many personal commentaries that I have read have stated that “No person can "go on to perfection" if God will not allow it!”

One has stated, with respect to our target verse, that “The point of our text is that stubbornly remaining in spiritual infancy brings a hardness to the heart. An "evil heart of unbelief," which is unquestionably condemned by God, can overtake the individual that is not advancing.”ⁱ

The problem is, that this “going on to perfection” for many has been tied to salvation and God’s willingness to permit us to enter into heaven based upon our spiritual growth, or lack thereof.

It then brings about such teachings as these, (which were made in reference to Hebrews chapter 6) whereby a statement was made by the North Jackson Church of God that “Jesus wants you to know there is a place for you in the kingdom of God but only those who are willing to leave everything for Christ need apply for this position.”ⁱⁱ Another wrote, that “Salvation is a free gift of God, however, God has placed conditions on the obtaining and retaining of that gift”.ⁱⁱⁱ Finally, as another “theologian” stated, “This text describes Christians who not only accepted Jesus by faith into their life, but also personally tasted God’s Holy Spirit. What happens to them if they “fall away”? This text

is clear. It is impossible for them to be brought back to repentance, and thus obtain eternal salvation, because they did sin against the Holy Spirit. They have lost it!”

It is true that if we refuse to grow up spiritually, that God may not bless us as he would like to. And that He may include a restriction of “going on to perfection “, as defined as allowing us to growing in the grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. (2 Peter 3:18, Eph 4:12) Thus, magnifying our responsibly to grow up (Eph 4:15) and studying to shew thyself approved unto God. (2 Tim 2:15)

We must keep mindful that it is by God’s grace alone (Eph 2:8), and not by any works that we are granted the privilege of entrance into heaven. And the Lord is not slack concerning his promise (2 Peter 3:9).

However, this does not negate the truth of scripture which clearly teaches that some will suffer loss (1 Cor 3:15), but we must remember, that they themselves “shall be saved”.

As stated in Barnes' Notes, this should not be taken as though God has an unwilling heart.^{iv}

Disobedience to God is one way that He may be forced to disallow or not permit one to continue on in a certain manner, direction or activity.^v Because of one’s lack of dependence and obedience to God, he has no choice but to justly restrict us, and if He sees fit, bring judgement.^{vi}

We see this example in 1 Kings and chapter 13, where the Man of God was called by God to carry out the Lord's work. He clearly knew that God had commanded him not to eat and drink in that place and he disobeyed God in the end. And because of his disobedience, God could not "permit" him to continue on, and ultimately took his life.

However, we must keep in mind that God took his life but not his salvation.

Ultimately, we need to understand that it is not our will and effort but "it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." (Phil 2:13) And without God's blessing, the cultivation of the ground does not succeed (Heb 6:7).

“God will permit, His will.”

ⁱ Blakely, Given O., The Internet Ministry, wotruth.com

ⁱⁱ North Jackson Church of God, www.chuch-of-god.net

ⁱⁱⁱ Smithson, Paul, Examining the Scriptures, www.examiningscriptures.com

^{iv} Barnes' Notes, Electronic Database. Copyright (c) 1997 by BibleSoft

^v Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright (c) 1997 by BibleSoft

^{vi} Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible: New Modern Edition, Electronic Database. Copyright (c) 1991 by Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.