

## **"We Are Persuaded ..."**

*"But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak: for God is not unrighteous to forget your work and the love which ye showed toward his name, in that ye ministered unto the saints, and still do minister, and we desire that each one of you may show the same diligence unto the fullness of hope even to the end: that ye be not sluggish, but imitators of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises"* (Heb. 6:9-12).

*"But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you."* The writer had spoken in grave tones of some who have been enlightened and now fallen away, declaring it was impossible to renew such ones again unto repentance. He did not, however, believe these had yet reach that point: he was persuaded better things of them than that they were ungrateful for the blessings God had bestowed upon them; he was persuaded that better things; things which accompanied salvation would be demonstrated by them. The things which accompanied salvation were fruits which were borne by them, which in times past they had manifested and still were manifesting. *"God is not unrighteous to forget your works and the love which ye showed toward his name."* God is fully aware of every thing Christians do because they respects the name (authority) of Christ, which things they do, not because they feel they must, because they want to. The writer gave an illustration of the things he had in mind *"in that ye ministered unto the saints, and still do minister."* Very likely the writer had reference to the early days in the infancy of the Jerusalem church when there was such a closeness and care the brethren had for each other. Luke records it thus: *"and all that believed were together and had all things common; and they sold their possessions, and parted them to all, according as any man had need;" "and the multitude were of one heart and soul, and not one of them said that aught of the things which he possessed was his own"* (Acts 2:44-45; 4:32). This early attitude was still present with those who received this letter for the writer called attention both to past and present actions.

*"And we desire that each one of you may show the same diligence unto the fullness of hope even to the end."* The exhortation to diligence is urged in many passages. The Roman letter said, *"In diligence, not slothful"* (Rom. 12:11). Peter urged, *"Giving all diligence to make your calling and election sure,"* having earlier urged, *"Adding on your part all diligence, adding to your faith ..."* (2 Pet. 1:10, 5). Later, the Hebrews were reminded that *"God is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him"* (Heb. 11:6) In this passage (Heb. 6:9-12), the writer urges the same diligence; that is, as they had ministered to the saints in times past and still did, they were to show the same

diligence in seeking other things. This carefulness in all things (including ministering to the saints) would bring about fullness of hope: realization and attainment.

*"That ye be not sluggish."* A sluggish car is one which evidences struggles in running. The exhortation to these brethren is that the incumbrances which were impeding their full power were to be laid aside; that they were to be *"imitators of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises."*

Calls to imitation are made in other scriptures. Christ *"left us an example that we should follow in his steps"* (1 Pet. 2:21). Timothy was to be an example to the believer in word, manner of life, love, faith and purity (1 Tim. 4:12). Paul urged, *"Be ye imitators of me, even as I also am of Christ"* (1 Cor. 11:1). Christians are to let our light so shine before men that others *"seeing your good works, may glorify your Father who is in heaven"* (Mt. 5:16). Those whom we are to imitate are those who *"through faith and patience, inherit the promises."*

The Hebrews letter is "chock full" of appeals to faith and patience, highlighting their importance and need. The Hebrews are long since dead, but we live and there is still an ever present need for us to reflect faith and patience, that we also might inherit the promises!

Jim McDonald