

BIBLE DIFFICULTIES

Hebrews 6. 1-8.

God does not encourage by mere statements of doctrine, He encourages **experience** of eternal salvation by obedience (ch. 5-9). How precious is this. It is well to be exercised in heart. The Holy Spirit here speaks of the **impossibility** of renewing to "**repentance**" those who are **crucifying** to themselves (present tense) the Son of God *afresh*, i.e., without **repentance** there is **no** encouragement: but God never refuses a truly **repentant** one. If any are **crucifying** and **persisting**, there **cannot be** repentance at the same *time*. Thus the subject is practical and searching, not merely academical or theoretic. In like manner there is no "if" in verse 6 in the original: literally, "and having fallen away," i.e., a fact. But such would have fallen from the conditions of blessing in verse 4 and 5, which could be possessed by a Judas (cf. 1 Cor. 13. 1-3); whereas the things that accompany salvation, the better things of the eternal covenant, are distinguished in verse 9. And the likeness in verse 8 is to the thorny ground, distinguished from the good in Matthew 13.

Hence we reach the **promises** through **continuance and obedience** in the Spirit (verses 11 and 12), and the "strong consolation" of verse 18. Thus the Holy Spirit fences true doctrine by holy practice (cf. 2 Tim. 2. 19). The one who **sinneth** in 1 John 3. 6 is not said to have left "knowing" God, but he "**hath not** seen Him neither known Him" at any time. So the fruitless branch in John 15 is **not** said to have **ceased** from fruit, but it is **never** viewed as bearing. **Every** branch that bears is said to be **purged**. Thus all truth harmonizes and affects the loving and humble consciences of the children of God.
