

Tusculum Hills Baptist Church  
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Sermon Title: The Danger of Just Sampling Jesus, Hebrews 6:4-12

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**SCRIPTURE:** Hebrews 6:4-6 <sup>4</sup> *It is impossible for those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, who have shared in the Holy Spirit,* <sup>5</sup> *who have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the coming age* <sup>6</sup> *and who have fallen away, to be brought back to repentance. To their loss they are crucifying the Son of God all over again and subjecting him to public disgrace.*

**INTRODUCTION:** We could study and argue this scripture several different ways. On the surface, it appears this scripture indicates one can lose his salvation. However, we must take into account the many other scriptures which make it clear God's salvation through Jesus Christ is unconditional and that it is—permanent. I've preached several messages on the doctrine of eternal security, and I am certain I will do it again, so I do not want to go in that direction for now.

What I believe the writer of Hebrews is talking about here is the danger of being a temporary believer. We must take into account to whom the book was written. As you know, it was written to Jews who were under pressure to forsake Christ and to return to the old Law or to continue with Christ yet obey the old Law at the same time.

In such a setting, there were probably Jews who were now solid Christians, Jews who were considering becoming followers of Christ, and Jews who played with the idea. I believe this chapter is a warning to those who have not committed to Christ but have toyed with the idea of becoming one of his followers. We could call them temporary believers or convenient believers.

I think of the martyrs around the world who have given all for the name of Jesus. I think of their lives, how they were once innocent children like the rest of us, how they once were held in a mother's arms like the rest of us, how they played with other children, and how they probably went to school. And, then at some point in their lives, they repented of their sin and followed Christ. They had no idea such a commitment would cost them their lives. I heard an older believer recently say she

doesn't know what she would do if she were told she'd be killed unless she verbally denied Christ. This came from a long time believer, someone I consider a strong Christian. And, truly, none of us know what we would do or say at such a time. I certainly hope none of us ever have to face that.

But, what we do face is convenient Christianity. I will point this out to you today in three points:

1. To merely sample Jesus is an insult to Jesus.
2. To merely sample Jesus means no benefit is gained whatsoever.
3. It's worth the cost for those who have tasted, consumed, and become laborers.

### **First, TO MERELY SAMPLE JESUS IS AN INSULT TO JESUS.**

**EXPLANATION:** Look back at the verse that says *those who have tasted*. The image here is a sampling—those who have sampled Jesus but haven't claimed him as Lord and Savior. If you go into an ice cream shop, small spoons are available for you to sample the various flavors before you make the choice. I am sure there are people who just come in for the free samples and never spend any money.

- “Ah there's the ice cream shop! Let's go in!”
- “I'd like to sample the triple chocolate flavor delight.”
- “Now I'd like to sample the raspberry cherry express.”
- “Now I'd like to try the double sweet pistachio.”
- “Thank you. I've decided I don't want to buy anything.”

Now let's go back to the scripture:

**SCRIPTURE:** Hebrews 6:4 *...those who have once been enlightened...*

- “Ah there is the Jesus shop. Let's go in! Let's try some free samples.”
- “Let me try the Holy Spirit...hmm...that tastes good.”
- “Let's taste the goodness of God's word...hmm, wow that's good.”
- “Now, can I sample the future...wow, this is the best yet!”
- “But no, I don't want to commit. Thanks for the samples. Goodbye.”

**SCRIPTURE:** Hebrews 6:6 The end of verse 6: *To their loss they are crucifying the Son of God all over again and subjecting him to public disgrace.*

In a manner of speaking, they are leaving Jesus on the cross permanently.

**Second, TO MERELY SAMPLE JESUS MEANS NO BENEFIT IS GAINED WHATSOEVER.**

**SCRIPTURE:** Hebrews 6:7-8 <sup>7</sup> *Land that drinks in the rain often falling on it and that produces a crop useful to those for whom it is farmed receives the blessing of God. <sup>8</sup> But land that produces thorns and thistles is worthless and is in danger of being cursed. In the end it will be burned.*

**EXPLANATION:** Agriculture is used many times in scripture. And, today we understand the image as well as those who first read this. In this example, our understanding is spiritual. The blessings of God are to those who've committed. Rain falls, and a healthy crop is produced. But, worthless plants are gathered and burned.

Listen to me, those who merely sample Jesus will be gathered and burned like the worthless thorns and thistles.

**SCRIPTURE:** 2 Peter 2:21 says, “<sup>21</sup> *It would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than to have known it and then to turn their backs on the sacred command that was passed on to them.*”

**SCRIPTURE:** Hebrews 6:9 <sup>9</sup> *Even though we speak like this, dear friends, we are convinced of better things in your case—the things that have to do with salvation.*

In other words, let's quit talking about this topic and move on to another topic.

**Third, IT'S WORTH THE COST FOR THOSE WHO HAVE TASTED, CONSUMED, AND BECOME LABORERS.**

**SCRIPTURE:** Hebrews 6:10-12 <sup>10</sup> *God is not unjust; he will not forget your work and the love you have shown him as you have helped his people and continue to help them. <sup>11</sup> We want each of you to show this same diligence to the very end, so*

*that what you hope for may be fully realized.* <sup>12</sup> *We do not want you to become lazy, but to imitate those who through faith and patience inherit what has been promised.*

God remembers those who haven't fallen by the wayside.

He remembers those who love him by loving others.

He wants you to keep serving until the very end.

He doesn't want you to become lazy, or *become weary in well doing*, as it says in Galatians 6:9.

**SCRIPTURE:** In Luke 9:62 Jesus replied, "*No one who puts a hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God.*"

**APPLICATION:** Perhaps you are here today, and you've wondered if it will be worth it all. You've wondered if all of this is real.

It is true, we hope for this Savior we have not seen with our own eyes. We don't even have a photograph or video of him. We have no recordings of his voice.

**SCRIPTURE:** John 20:29 <sup>29</sup> *Then Jesus told him, "Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.*

**CONCLUSION:** [Terry Taylor sings *It Will Be Worth It All*]

I've talked with a lot of people right before they died. I've talked with people as they reviewed their lives and talked about their joys and their regrets. In every single case, without exception, no one has ever said they regretted being a follower of Christ, serving others, and being faithful until the very end.

And, so we come to decision time a time of reflection, confession, decision.

Have you been merely sampling Jesus? If so, the Bible is clear what will happen to you.

You can quit sampling today and partake. God's Spirit is calling you now.

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I use the NIV translation of scripture because of its conversational nature. Feel free to go to Bible Gateway and copy and paste whichever translation you want to use. This transcript has been edited to an outline format that improves readability and therefore may not exactly follow the video edition.

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