

Different types of sinners #3 The Apostate

Heb. 6⁴ It is impossible for those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, who have shared in the Holy Spirit,⁵ who have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the coming age,⁶ if they fall away, to be brought back to repentance, because to their loss they are crucifying the Son of God all over again and subjecting him to public disgrace.

We must remember that that the book of Hebrews was written to Jews who are coming out of Judaism into Christianity. There were Jewish proselytes who would attempt to bring them back under the law.

The word apostasy means “one who renounces his religious faith”. Therefore we are looking at Christians who are renouncing their faith.

This is serious indeed. These passages of scripture make it clear that a person that has once known the Lord can forfeit the gift of their salvation. It is not that God withdraws his salvation but rather the source of salvation is eliminated; That is faith in Jesus Christ.

I. An apostate is first a believer in Christ.

1. **Illuminated-** Heb 6⁴ “once enlightened”
2. **Obtained salvation-** v 4 “who have **tasted** the heavenly gift”
3. **Were led by the Spirit-** v 4 “who have shared in the Holy Spirit”
4. **Were taught the Word of God-** ⁵ who have tasted the goodness of the word of God...
5. **Experienced miracles-** v5 “tasted... powers of the coming age”

The word “powers” in the Greek is the same word as “miracles”.

II. Steps that lead one from being a Christian to an apostate.

Heb 6⁶ “if they shall fall away”

Heb. 10²⁶ If we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, no sacrifice for sins is left,²⁷ but only a fearful expectation of judgment and of raging fire that will consume the enemies of God.²⁸ Anyone who rejected the law of Moses died without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses.²⁹ How much more severely do you think a man deserves to be punished who has trampled the Son of God under foot, who has treated as an unholy thing the blood of the covenant that sanctified him, and who has insulted the Spirit of grace?³⁰ For we know him who said, “It is mine

to avenge; I will repay,” and again, “The Lord will judge his people.”³¹ It is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. NIV

These steps are a gradual progression.

- A. Carelessness-** Heb 6 6
- B. Desire for the Word of God diminishes**
- C. Begin to backslide with evidence of loss of spiritual gifts and fruit.**
- D. Lose intimacy with Christ.** Matt 7 21-23
- E. Lose faith in Christ**
- F. Insult the Spirit of Grace –** Heb 10 29
- G. Renounce the power of Jesus blood to save.**

Heb 10 29 How much more severely do you think a man deserves to be punished who has **trampled the Son of God under foot**, who has **treated as an unholy thing the blood** of the covenant that sanctified him....

III. The end of the apostate

- A. It is impossible for them to come to repentance**
Heb 6 4
How is this possible? A hardening of the heart.
- B. They crucify the Son of God afresh.** Heb 6 6
- C. They renounce Christ -**

They reaffirm the view of Jesus’ enemies that He deserved to die on a cross. Since the original Crucifixion was especially the work of the Jewish nation, if the readers were Jews being lured back into some form of their ancestral religion, the writer’s words made a particular point. Their apostasy would be like stepping back over the line again and once more expressing solidarity with their compatriots who wanted Jesus put on the cross. That this was most serious was precisely the writer’s point. Such persons could not be won back to the state of repentance which marked their original conversion to Christianity.

- D. They eliminate themselves from the only means of salvation.**

Heb 10 ²⁶ If we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, no sacrifice for sins is left.

When they do away with the power of the blood, “there remains no more sacrifice for sin”.

- E. They face the judgment of God –v27**