

Departing from the Faith

The Bible expressly warns that some will depart from the faith. Although some do not believe it is possible to renounce their faith, the Word of God teaches that this is possible—which is a sign of the end times without a doubt. Therefore, we should be careful not to depart from the faith because there remains no more offering for sin. We are doomed forever. Once one departs from the faith, he or she becomes an apostate. He is a reprobate (one who is worthless, unapproved and rejected).

Every man has free will either they are born again or not. Born again, believers do relinquish or lose their free will. They can choose to believe in the Lord, or they can choose to reject their faith. Our will can be yielded to God's, but we still retain it.

For instance, in the New Testament, the following departed from the faith:

- a) Judas (John 6:70-71)
- b) Demas (2 Timothy 4:10)
- c) Hymenaeus (1 Timothy 1:19-20)
- d) Alexander (1 Timothy 1:19-20)

An understanding of the answer to this question will also address a common saying, “Once saved always saved” and another “born again, then born again, again.”

I have heard an argument made by some that by no means can a "true believer" renounce their faith or blaspheme the Holy Spirit. This argument sights examples like Romans 11:29; Romans 8:30; Ephesians 1:13-14; Romans 5:1; 1 Peter 1:18-18; 2 Corinthians 5:17. Although they have a strong point, it is only argued from one side—**God's side**. The side of the believer is not addressed which Hebrews 6:4-6 and Matthew 12:31 clearly address and teach. Their argument completely eliminates the fact that people willfully believed and can willfully disbelieve or reject their faith. It says nothing about the truth that all Christian believers still retain and have their **free will** after they are born again.

Although God wants people to stay in a relationship with Him, people can and may choose to depart or renounce it. **It is not a forced relationship with no more choices.** The Lord will not cast anyone away from this relationship (John 6:37), but we can walk away from it, renounce or totally reject it. It must be made clear again that it's not sin in general that will cause one to "lose" their salvation, renounce or totally reject it. We do not lose our salvation because we sinned.

A true believer cannot *lose* his salvation. You can't wake up one day and wonder where your salvation is or what happened to it. The word "lose," is better described by the words that mean fall away, depart from, renounce and/or blaspheme of the Holy Spirit.

- a) You can't lose it like you would lose your wallet. You know what happened to it if you no longer have it. It is not a surprise. You can either totally renounce it or Blaspheme the Holy Spirit. Suicide, murder, and adultery can't do it. For you to *lose* your salvation, you would have to totally renounce it or blaspheme the Holy Spirit.
- b) You can't sin away your salvation because all sin is paid for: past, present and future sins (Hebrews 10:12, 14). If sin can cause you to "lose" your salvation, then which sin is it? Why that specific sin, not another? We do not "lose," fall away, reject, renounce or depart from our salvation every time we sin.

Hebrews 10:26-27 "For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries."

- a) When we get born again, we do it willfully. We are not forced into it. We do not lose our free will because we are now saved. We still retain it. **This verse shows that and also uses the word "willfully" meaning that it would not be willful if you had no will.**
- b) Therefore, believers can turn around and exercise their free will to reject their salvation and/or blaspheme the Holy Spirit. Although the Lord does not desire this, and the results are extremely severe and irreversible, a Christian believer can still choose to renounce and reject their personal salvation. True, every sin a person commits is willful, however, these verses are specifically talking about **the willful sin of renouncing the Lord and/or blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, not sin in general.**

"If it were true that after we are born again we lose our salvation when we sin and we are "backslid" and are in a damned state until we repent and get back into salvation, then the best thing to do would be to kill all new converts as soon as they were saved. That would be the only way they could ever retain their salvation. That is a foolish religious doctrine." —Mr. Andrew Wommack (Andrew Wommack's Living Commentary)

1. Colossians 2:6 "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him:"
 - a) The question I have for you is, "How did you receive the Lord Jesus Christ?" It was through faith.
 - b) You put your trust and faith in the Lord. You did not perform or do all these good deeds to receive the Lord. **It was purely faith in the Lord.**
 - c) In the same way you received, it is the same way you are supposed to walk, and it is the same way you can choose to depart from the faith—by withdrawing your faith from the Lord.
2. Hebrews 6:4-5 For *it is* impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come,
 - A. These verses make it clear that it is impossible for a person who meets the above requirements to be renewed or restore back unto faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. If we

renounce our faith, we can't be renewed again into faith in Jesus as our Lord. In other words, we can't be saved anew.

- a) Because it is impossible to be born again, again, these verses prove that a Christian can depart from or renounce their salvation but cannot be born again, again.

B. **These verses are talking about the rejection of salvation or blasphemy.** It possible that one can reject their salvation. Once that person does, he cannot be restored back into their relationship with God. They become reprobates (Romans 1:28).

- a) In other words, a person cannot be born again, then renounce their faith, and then be born again, again.

C. Once someone is born again, he is and need not be born again, again because they sinned, but once they are born again and renounce or reject their salvation, they cannot be born again a second, third or fourth time.

- a) When we got born again, we weren't forced nor are we forced to stay born again.

- i) **We chose to enter into and accept this relationship with God by simply believing and we exit by just disbelieving or rejecting our salvation.**

- b) We should not be preaching the salvation message to those who are already born again. They can't be born again, again. They are already born again.

- i) We need to move from every week milk of the salvation sermons and move on to strong meat so they can be maturity.

- ii) We do not lose our salvation every time we sin.

- c) We have an eternal redemption and we have sanctified and perfected once and for all.

- i) Hebrews 5:9 And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;
- ii) Hebrews 9:12 Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, **having obtained eternal redemption for us.**
- iii) Hebrews 9:15 And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions *that were* under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.
- iv) Hebrews 9:28 So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.
- v) Hebrews 10:10 By the which will we are **sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.**
- vi) Hebrews 10:12 But this man, after he had **offered one sacrifice for sins for ever**, sat down on the right hand of God;
- vii) Hebrews 10:14 For by one offering he hath **perfected for ever** them that are **sanctified.**

D. Sin is not the reason we lose our salvation. We don't just sin it away. We disbelieve it away or reject and renounce it. We did not get saved by our actions and we do not lose salvation by our actions.

E. We can renounce, not lose our salvation.

F. There are five qualifications that these verses give that must be met before a Christian can renounce their salvation and be reprobate. But close attention to these five qualifications reveals that very few Christians believers would have to meet these

qualifications because they are still immature. Therefore, few of the Christian believers today could renounce their salvation or blaspheme the Holy Spirit and not be forgiven because they are immature and do not meet these requirements to hold their total rejection of their salvation and blasphemy of the Holy Spirit against them.

The five requirements are:

- a) “Once enlightened” refers to those who have once had a revelation of Jesus to them through the Holy Spirit—John 6:44-45.
 - b) “Tasted of the heavenly gift”—This is a reference to the salvation gift, not religion or religious practices.
 - i) Ephesians 2:8 “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:”
 - c) “Were made partakers of the Holy Ghost” refers to receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit).
 - d) “Have tasted the good word of God”—Refers to revelation knowledge of God’s Word).
 - e) The powers of the world to come—Supernatural power and the gifts of the Holy Spirit.
- G. This renouncing of the faith cannot be done by any believer such as a baby Christian. **These qualifications and/or requirements can only be met by a mature believer.**
- a) An immature Christian will not be held for this sin in the same way a child is not held for certain sins if they aren’t old enough. Once they are old enough, they won’t get away with it.

Verse 6 of Hebrews 6 is saying clearly that once a person who is mature in the Lord willfully rejects the Lord (fall away) knowing what he is doing, he can't be saved again (Born again, again). Our sins were paid for once (Hebrews 10:12, 14). If we reject it, there is no more sacrifice for our sins. Jesus is not dying again for our sins. There is no recovery from renouncing our faith in Jesus. Our fate is sealed.

All these requirements are pointing to a **mature Christian, not an immature Christian** like Paul was when he blasphemed the Holy Spirit ignorantly and in unbelief (1 Timothy 1:13). This removes the fear that could be operating in some who might think that they lost, blasphemed the Holy Spirit and/or renounced their faith. If you still have a heart and love for the Lord, you are not a reprobate, you have not departed nor renounced your faith. If you still have a longing to pursue and seek after the Lord, you have not "lost" your salvation. If it so happens that you have renounced the Lord, blasphemed against the Holy Spirit or departed from the faith, you will have zero desire for the Lord and the things of the Lord. You will have pleasure in doing filthy ungodly things. You will increase in committing unrighteousness. You will be completely immoral with no remorse and zero desire to change. You will be completely given over to your reprobate mind.

"And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things. Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen. For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet. And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient; Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, Without understanding, covenant breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful: Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them."—Romans 1:23-32

- a) “**Reprobate**” refers to a sinner who is not of the elect and is predestined to damnation. One who has lost all conviction of God, unrepentant, beyond rescue, and has been given over to do those things that are unspeakable. One who is rejected, unapproved and cast away.
- b) We also see from these verses that once someone departs from the faith either through renouncing or blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, **they have pleasure in doing evil and sin, doing those things that are inconvenient and unrighteous.**

The Unpardonable Sin

Besides the total rejecting or renouncing of one’s salvation, the other way one can “lose”, depart from, and totally reject the faith and salvation is by blaspheming the Holy Spirit.

Matthew 12:31 “Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men.”

- a) The word “blaspheme” means attributing the work of the Holy Spirit to the devil, to revile. It is *vilification* (especially against God) Strong’s Concordance).
 - b) In this situation of blaspheme as well as the renouncing and total rejection of faith, the same qualifications of Hebrews 6:4-6 also apply. Only a person who is mature in the Lord can meet those requirements. Blasphemy done ignorantly in unbelief is excused and is not counted against that person. This blasphemy against the Holy Spirit must be done willfully with knowledge of what is being done. In 1 Timothy 1:13, Paul said that reviled (blasphemed) and he spoke against the Holy Spirit ignorantly in unbelief but received mercy. This verse (Matthew 12:31) further attests to the deity of the Holy Spirit, seeing that this sin committed against Him shall not be forgiven.
3. 1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

- a) Although it's important to confess our sins (1 John 1:9), some have erroneously taught that if we do not confess our sins and get born again, *again*, we wouldn't make heaven but hell. Are we to confess our sins or confess Jesus? Which is the priority?
 - c) This teaching makes our salvation dependent on confessing all our sins to make heaven. In return, this has destroyed people's faith because no one has ever fully and completely confessed each and every sin in their lives to maximum completion.
 - d) We are to confess Jesus as our Lord (Romans 10:9-10) at no fail. Additionally, why then did Jesus die on the cross if all it took was confessing our sins to make heaven.
 - e) It takes believing, receiving, and confessing Jesus not confessing our sin to enter into a relationship with the Lord.
4. 1 Timothy 4:1 Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;
- A. Some shall depart from the faith
- a) Furthermore, how can someone depart from the faith he has never once had? You can't depart from something you aren't a part of, and you can't even do so if you had no free will to do so.
 - b) "Depart" means to "remove, desist, desert"
 - i) The word "depart" used here in this verse signifies someone walking away from something and this case is salvation.
 - ii) This verse clearly indicates that one can depart from the faith. You cannot depart from something that you have never had. So, this scripture among many others throws out the doctrine of "once saved always saved."
 - iii) This is as a result of giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of the devils. See 1 Tim 4:2-3.

5. Hebrews 10:23 Let us hold fast the profession of *our* faith without wavering; (for he *is* faithful that promised;)

A. Hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering.

a) "Hold fast" means to hold down"

b) The Greek word for "profession" is "HOMOLOGIA" which means "acknowledgment"

i) Is it possible that someone can waver?

ii) Why hold fast onto something you can't lose or depart from?

6. 2 Timothy 2:18 Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some.

A. "Who concerning the truth have erred,"

a) It is possible to err concerning the faith. We must continually renew our minds and stay away from doctrines of the devils.

B. "saying that the resurrection is past already;"

a) The resurrection is not over and done with. There remains a resurrection of the saints at the second coming of the Lord. (2 Thessalonians 4:13-18)

b) If the resurrection has already taken place, then this also is suggesting that the return of the Lord has already taken place. This is not sound doctrine.

c) This teaching also takes away the comfort that comes from the scriptures concerning the resurrection.

C. overthrow the faith of some.

a) "Overthrow" means" to overturn"

- i) Bad or demonic doctrines can cause the faith of many to be overturned.
- ii) How can the faith of some be overthrown if once saved is always saved? There are things that believers can do that will lead them to a place of departing, renouncing their faith. They can become reprobates according to Romans 1:23-28; Hebrews 3:12-1
- iii) The just shall live by faith and we must endure to the end holding onto our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

7. 1 Timothy 6:12 Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.

A. Why should we hold on to eternal life if we can't depart from it?

These verses below are parallel to Hebrews 6:4-6:

- a) Hebrews 10:26-29 "For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?"
- b) Matthew 12:31-32 "Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy *against* the *Holy* Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the *world* to come.

Now you might be thinking, "Have I blasphemed the Holy Spirit, or have I renounced my faith?" Like in the situation of total rejection and renouncing of the faith, if you have blasphemed against the Holy Spirit, you will have no desire for the Lord, and you would not be worried about it like you are. The fact that you are concerned about it is proof enough

that you have not blasphemed the Holy Spirit. If you are repentant, you have not truly blasphemed the Holy Spirit or else you would be a reprobate. When someone blasphemes the Holy Spirit, he becomes a reprobate. That person will lose all conviction from God, he is unrepentant, has pleasure in doing evil and wickedness although he knows the judgment of God to come, he doesn't care, does not like to retain God in his knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;

There is a caution I want to leave with you. If we choose to live a sinful, ungodly and unrepentant lifestyle, we will harden our hearts to the Lord (Hebrews 3:13). Living in this continual state and lifestyle will get a believer to a place and position so far away from the Lord and disconnected that he will be presented with an opportunity from Satan to renounce and totally reject their faith or even blasphemy of the Holy Spirit. None of these sins (Total rejection and renouncing of the faith and blasphemy against the Holy Spirit) just happen overnight. It is a continual state of mind and lifestyles that eventually leads to someone totally rejecting the faith.