

FALLING AWAY FROM THE FAITH, Part 2

Heb.6: 4-6 has long been a battleground of controversy between grace and works salvation in Christianity.

It was the theological controversy that caused the need for the first Church conference held in Jerusalem in the First Century (AD) (Acts 15).

The Apostles and Elders of the Church reached a doctrinal conclusion that was stated in Acts 15:7-21. Their doctrinal conclusion can be summed-up in this statement – *“We believe that we (Jews) are saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus in the same way as they (Gentiles) also are.” (Acts 15:11)*

Unfortunately, the opponents of grace salvation and eternal security refused to accept this doctrinal conclusion. The works salvation Church is still in opposition to grace salvation and eternal security to this day.

There are three popular schools of work salvation in the Church today.

- One school teaches a correct gospel but adds works to it like circumcision in Acts 15:5-11 (Gal.5: 1-8; Eph.2: 8-9).
- A second school of works salvation teaches a correct gospel without adding anything to it but then teach that a believer can lose his salvation by committing certain type of sins like in Gal.5:16-25 (1 Cor.5; 1 John 5:16).
- A third school teaches that if a person professes salvation but lives in sin that proves that he has never been saved like in Matt.7:15-20 (Heb.12:5-11).

**This lesson will study four aspects of what the writer of Hebrew meant in Heb.6: 4-6 about
FALLING AWAY FROM THE FAITH.**

1. The writer of Hebrews was fighting the same battle of grace verses works salvation when he wrote Heb.6:4-6.

He was not teaching the lost of salvation but rather the danger of spiritual retrogression because of reversionism (back-sliding / Prov.14: 14).

Some Jewish believers had returned to the Old Covenant teachings of shadow Christology as a modus operandi of the CWL.

The Book of Hebrews gives six warnings to Christians about the danger of apostate reversionism - Heb.5: 11-6:12 is the 3rd warning (Read 5:11-14).

The writer's intention is to get them to progress in their spiritual growth where they can leave the elementary teachings and press on to spiritual maturity (5:12; 6:1, 6).

Six elementary Old Covenant (OC) shadow Christology teachings about Christ are listed in 3 sets of 2 (6:1-3).

2. The 3rd warning begins by discussing how some Jewish believers had fallen away from the elementary (tes arche / foundation or basic doctrines) teaching (ton logos) about Christ (6:1).

The writer of Hebrews warned Jewish Christians about leaving (aphiemi / a.a.ptc / nplm) six elementary teachings about Christ because of apostate reversionism (6:1-2).

There is a hermeneutic law of interpretation that says that the use of a word in context is determined by its first use. The Greek word repentance (metanoia) is a word used in this way. It was listed as the 1 of 6 elementary teachings (6:1) so that when it is used again in 6:6 we know that it refers to the 1st of the 6 teachings about Christ. This hermeneutic law allows the writer to mention one rather than post all 6. In fact, it doesn't require posting the rest of the phrase "from dead works."

This is important to the interpretation of Heb.6: 4-6.

3. The Greek syntax of Heb.6: 4-6 is also important to understanding its theology. Syntax is the way words are put together to form phrases, clauses, or sentences.

Heb.6: 4-6 is one Greek sentence. There are seven syntactical features to study.

- There are 7 participles (Ptc) working off one main verb.
- 5 (milk doctrines) of the 7 Ptc are aorist tenses (tous/ in the case of those who) and set up the main verb and 2 are present tenses and give reasoning for the main verb.
- First 4 aorist Ptc are positive and emphasize the blessing of grace salvation the last one is negative describes the falling away from the elementary teachings about Christ's salvation because of reversionism.
- 2 present Ptc explain why it is impossible to renew them to spiritual growth momentum as long as they are in reversionism. The action of the 2 present Ptc occurs at the same time as the main verb. This teaches that "it is impossible" to renew them as long as they are practicing the 2 present Ptc.
- Adunatos is the first Greek word of the sentence of Heb.6: 4-6 (not where it is found in English Bible). It emphasizes what is impossible and why it is impossible.
- Adunatos (impossible) establishes a Greek parenthesis of the 5 aorist Ptc – "impossible [] to renew." This parenthesis identifies them as reversionistic believers.
- Main verb is translated as a phrase "it is impossible to renew (anakainizo / p.a.infin / restore, rennovate) them again to repentance." It is what they are doing that make it impossible to renew them.

4. By returning to the Old Covenant shadow Christology, these Jewish believers were engaged in apostate reversionism.

They were saying in effect that the historical redemptive work of Jesus Christ was not efficacious much like Acts 15:1,5,24; Gal.5: 1-6.

"And then falling away (parapipto / a.a.ptc / backslide) it is impossible to renew them again (palin / adverb) to repentance, since they again crucify (anastauroo/ p.a.ptc/ re-crucify) *to themselves (dative of disadvantage)* the Son of God, and put Him to open shame (paradeigmatizo / p.a.ptc / to expose to public disgrace)." (6:6) (Rom.10: 4; Matt.5: 17; Rom.8: 1-4)

This is what the three schools of works salvation mentioned in our introduction are doing under apostate reversionism.