

Difficult and Hard to Understand Passages

The Hebrews "Conditions" of our Salvation

We find many in the religious world today who teach that once we have "accepted Jesus into our lives", we are eternally "saved" with no limitations or conditions.

Question #1 for our consideration: Is this concept true? Do those who "fall away" belong in a class who simply were never fully "converted" to our Lord and were never actually "saved" in the first place?

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We find many in the religious world today who teach that once we have "accepted Jesus into our lives", we are eternally "saved" with no limitations or conditions.

Question #2 for our consideration: Or, is it possible for baptized believers to squander the hope which we have been given through a lack of faithfulness and a failure to do those things (i.e. disobedience) of which God expects from a Christian?

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As we begin this study, one thing must be made absolutely clear. If indeed it is possible for any man or woman to "fall away", it is a result of decisions he or she makes, **NOT** that of God!!

1. God has already done his part by sending Jesus to die on the cross!! (John 3:16)
2. God is Faithful! (I Cor. 1:9, 10:13, II Cor. 1:18)
3. God does not forget our faithfulness (Hebrews 6:10a, 10:23)

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The primary text for our study this morning comes from the book of Hebrews.

1. Hebrews is a letter written primarily to Jewish converts who were being tempted to revert to Judaism or to try to Judaize the gospel.
2. But the teachings from Hebrews equally apply to all Christians who are tempted to abandon their faith and revert to a life not centered upon faithfulness to Christ.

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The primary text for our study this morning comes from the book of Hebrews.

3. The theme of Hebrews is actually quite apparent; “Jesus is better!” Better than Moses, better than the angels, He brings a better sacrifice, He brings a better covenant, and He is a better High Priest!

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But one of the underlying principles which comes forth from the teachings found within the pages of the book of Hebrews are warnings that our salvation comes with conditions.

In some of the verses we will consider, this is clearly stated. Other verses are more subtle, but the inference (one of our hermeneutical principles) is abundantly clear.

Let's begin our journey through the book of Hebrews and consider the "conditions of our salvation!"

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Hebrews 2:1

¹ For this reason we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away *from it*.

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Hebrews 3:6

⁶ but Christ *was faithful* as a Son over His house—whose house we are, if we hold fast our confidence and the boast of our hope firm until the end.

Companion Verse – Revelation 2:10(b)

¹⁰ Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.

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Hebrews 3:12

¹² Take care, brethren, that there not be in any one of you an evil, unbelieving heart that falls away from the living God.

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Hebrews 3:14

¹⁴ For we have become partakers of Christ, if we hold fast the beginning of our assurance firm until the end

Companion Verse – I Corinthians 15:1-2

¹ Now I make known to you, brethren, the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received, in which also you stand, ² by which also you are saved, if you hold fast the word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain.

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Hebrews 4:1

¹ Therefore, let us fear if, while a promise remains of entering His rest, any one of you may seem to have come short of it.

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Hebrews 4:11

11 Therefore let us be diligent to enter that rest, so that no one will fall, through *following* the same example of disobedience.

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Hebrews 4:14

14 Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession.

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Hebrews 5:9

⁹ And having been made perfect, He became to all those who obey Him the source of eternal salvation

(Note that references to our “obedience of faith” stand as the great “bookends” to the book of Romans: 1:5 and 16:26)

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Hebrews 6:1(a)

¹ Therefore leaving the elementary teaching about the Christ, let us press on to maturity

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Hebrews 6:4-6

⁴ For in the case of those who have once been enlightened and have tasted of the heavenly gift and have been made partakers of the Holy Spirit,

⁵ and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come,

⁶ and then have fallen away, it is impossible to renew them again to repentance, since they again crucify to themselves the Son of God and put Him to open shame.

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Hebrews 6:10-11

10 For God is not unjust so as to forget your work and the love which you have shown toward His name, in having ministered and in still ministering to the saints.

11 And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence so as to realize the full assurance of hope until the end,

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Hebrews 10:23

²³ Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful;

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Hebrews 10:26-27

²⁶ For if we go on sinning willfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins,

²⁷ but a terrifying expectation of judgment and THE FURY OF A FIRE WHICH WILL CONSUME THE ADVERSARIES.

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Hebrews 10:23

³⁶ For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God, you may receive what was promised.

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Hebrews 11:6

⁶ And without faith it is impossible to please *Him*, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and *that* He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.

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Hebrews 12:3

³ For consider Him who has endured such hostility by sinners against Himself, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.

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Hebrews 12:15

¹⁵ See to it that no one comes short of the grace of God; that no root of bitterness springing up causes trouble, and by it many be defiled;

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Hebrews 12:25

²⁵ See to it that you do not refuse Him who is speaking. For if those did not escape when they refused him who warned *them* on earth, much less *will we escape* who turn away from Him who *warns* from heaven.

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And one final passage by way of encouragement:

Hebrews 13:7

⁷ Remember those who led you, who spoke the word of God to you; and considering the result of their conduct, imitate their faith.

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Our Conclusions:

1. The Hebrew letter was written to Jews who became Christians and were considering going back to Judaism. But the Hebrew letter is also applicable, in every way, to any of us who allow our lives to return to the darkness of sin!

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Our Conclusions (cont.):

2. As surely as we were once converted to become followers of Christ, we can be tempted and again seduced by the power of Satan, fall away from our faith, and squander our salvation!

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Our Conclusions (cont.):

3. Apostasy is seldom a bold and dramatic turn away from the Lord. But the defection, imperceptible at first, is marked by a such a gradual departure that the unwary soul is blind to the impending doom until the storms of the great gulf of sin bring eternal ruin.

Let each of us be ***emboldened*** in our exhortation of our fellow Christians!

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Our Conclusions (cont.):

4. The conditional warnings which emanate from the Hebrew writings must be taken with special attention. Nowhere else in the NT do we find such repetition and insistence that failing to stay true to the Christian walk is the test of reality for our salvation.

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Our Conclusions (cont.):

5. There is a fearful and inevitable consequence of rejecting the sacrifice of Christ for the sin of all mankind. This rejection results in a judgement of eternal fire. (Hebrew 10:26-27) May each of us heed the warnings!

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The Inspiration of the Holy Scriptures

Our Conclusions (cont.):

6. But let us never forget, **God is faithful!** He has already done His part by sending Jesus to die for us (John 3:16) and the promise of our salvation is assured! But, our own obedience and faithfulness make our salvation conditional.

On us!!

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The Inspiration of the Holy Scriptures

Our Conclusions (cont.):

7. As the great theme of the Book of Hebrews teaches us, no matter how seductive the allure of sin, no matter the how great the temptation which Satan puts in our path, ***Jesus is Better!!***

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